

Town of Farmington
Board of Selectmen – Public Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 8, 2015
Selectmen's Chambers
356 Main Street

Town of Farmington
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Thursday, January 8, 2015

Board Members Present:

Charlie King, Chairman
Paula Proulx, Vice Chairman
Arthur Capello
Brian St. Onge

Others Present:

Town Administrator Keith Trefethen
Finance Administrator Pam Merrill

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance:

Chairman King called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Public Comment:

Planning Board Chairman Paul Parker came before the board to discuss whether to hire a full time, part time or interim Planning Director following the resignation of Kathy Menici. Parker told the board that he felt that it is not a good move to put off hiring a full time planning director. He said hiring a part time planning director would realize only minimal savings on the tax rate, about one to two cents per \$1,000 evaluation and it would result in paying half of the price for one-quarter of the time provided by a full time planner.

Selectmen said they were not convinced of the need for funding a full time planning director as there are presently no major subdivisions or big developments planned in town, no major review or revisions of the Master Plan or Site Plan Review regulations planned and the Planning Board does not seem to be particularly busy. Chairman King added that some of the planner's time is charged to the applicant, not to the town.

Parker said property owners in Rochester are currently undergoing an increase in property tax assessments on commercial and retail businesses and that combined with the passage of the TIF District warrant article at Town Meeting this year may be enough to bring those businesses to Farmington. He said when the issue was brought before the town last year Planning Director Menici told him there were several business owners who expressed interest in coming to Farmington if the TIF District plan passed. He said the town has been working hard for 20 years to encourage business to come to town and there needs to be an individual there to respond to any interest by potential new businesses. He urged the board to keep the entire amount budgeted for a full time planner in the proposed 2015 budget and added that any unexpended funds could be used to offset taxes next year.

3. Review and Finalize Municipal Budget Request for 2015:

Vice Chairman Proulx provided board members with a list of potential budget cuts that could save the town as much as \$63,513. The list included requested line item amounts, suggested cuts to those lines and how much savings would be achieved if the board agreed to her suggestions. Selectmen agreed with the suggested cuts to the following line items:

<u>Department</u>	<u>2015 request</u>	<u>Proulx Proposed</u>	<u>Savings</u>
<u>Executive Account:</u>			

Town Training	\$ 400.00	\$ 300.00	\$100.00
Mtg. Min. Secretary	\$ 3000.00	\$ 2500.00	\$500.00
<u>Personnel Admin:</u>			
Personnel Liabilities	\$16000.00	\$ 10000.00	\$6000.00
<u>Planning:</u>			
Strafford Regional	\$ 500.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 300.00
<u>Police Dept.:</u>			
Office Supplies	\$8,000.00	\$7,000.00	\$1,000.00
Tires	\$3,000.00	\$2,500.00	\$500.00
New Equipment	\$11,000.00	\$9,500.00	\$1,500.00
<u>Fire Dept.:</u>			
Secretary	\$9,000.00	\$8,500.00	\$500.00
Per Diem Fire	\$49,920.00	\$43,680.00	\$6,240.00
Office Supplies	\$4,370.00	\$3,000.00	\$1,370.00
Expense	\$12,000.00	\$11,000.00	\$1,000.00
<u>Bldg. Inspection- Dues</u>	\$750.00	\$600.00	\$150.00
<u>Emergency Management:</u>			
Civil Defense	\$4,600.00	\$3,600.00	\$1,000.00
<u>Highway Admin.:</u>			
Outside Services	\$6,500.00	\$3,500.00	\$3,000.00
<u>Landfill:</u>			
Repairs and Parts	\$3,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$1,000.00

Selectmen did not agree with Proulx's suggested cuts for the following items and the amounts were left as requested:

General Gov. Bldg.:

Custodial	\$20000.00	\$18000.00	\$2000.00
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Fire Dept.:

Software	\$3150.00	\$2500.00	\$650.00
Protective Clothing	\$22600.00	\$20000.00	\$2600.00

Highway Admin:

P.T. Help	\$30123.00	\$25000.00	\$5123.00
Uniforms	\$5000.00	0	0

Highway Streets:

Crushed Gravel	\$30250.00	\$25250.00	\$5000.00
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Selectmen also discussed anticipated revenues such as reimbursement for ambulance services, motor vehicle registrations, the sale of tax deeded properties and the expected health provider refund. Finance Administrator Pam Merrill said she would be comfortable estimating \$230,000 in revenue from ambulance service reimbursements for 2015. She said that the revenue amount for the sale of tax deeded properties would become available when the MS-4 form is completed and added that she would check into changes in motor vehicle revenues, possibly due to a loss of commercial vehicle registrations. Trefethen said the refund from the Health Trust is expected to total approximately \$30,000. Vice Chairman Proulx said she would like to get an overall big picture of the budget by looking at the operating budget as well as the revenues coming in which would allow the board to see what the town needs to raise and the impact on the tax rate. Trefethen asked if the board wished to make a policy decision to make anticipated revenues estimates. Chairman King said it may be possible to do so as many of the revenues are fairly consistent.

Selectmen also discussed some funding requests included as warrant articles seeking to withdraw money from special revenue funds. The board then approved putting the Building Inspector's entire salary (\$62,962) in a warrant article and putting \$28,000 in anticipated revenues in the building permit line.

Chairman King reported that the collective bargaining agreement for the highway department has been ratified by the union members and will appear on the warrant. He said the article shows an \$8,341 decrease in 2015 due to switching the health insurance provider. The second and third year of the agreement will cost an additional \$16,652(2016) and \$14,977(2017) if approved by voters.

Motion: (King, second Proulx) to take a 10 minute recess passed 4-0 at 6:50 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 7:00 p.m.

At this point, \$34,160 was cut from the budget request which would result in an additional 21 cents on the tax rate Trefethen said.

The board then returned to a discussion of the Planning Director position. Selectmen noted that a memo from the former Planning Director Kathy Menici advised the board to hire an interim part time planner as the Planning Office and the Planning Board are not very busy during this time period. She suggested Selectmen consider Mike Gerrapy of Gerrapy Planning Consultants for the position.

Trefethen said he agreed with Menici's recommendation and suggested the board also approve moving the Department Secretary from part time to full time. He said that because the Planner and the Building Inspector are frequently out of the office, someone should be in the office daily to address people's questions. More than 32 hours a week is considered full time he said.

Selectmen agreed there needs to be more coverage in the office, but were not convinced the secretarial position requires full time hours. But they did agree that the hours should be on a more consistent basis so that residents and contractors know when the office is open. Discussion included how many hours to assign to the planner and to the secretary and whether to set early morning office hours or later in the day. Chairman King suggested the planner start at 10 hours a week and increase the secretary's hours to 31 hours a week. Selectman Capello said he would agree with the plan providing the board agreed to look at town policy and consider changing the definition of a full time employee from 32 hours to 35 hours. Chairman King asked Trefethen said consult with town counsel to review the legality of such a change.

4. Next Meeting: Monday, January 12, 2015 at 6 p.m.

5. Non-Public Session:

Motion: (King, second Proulx) to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A: 3 II (c) passed 4-0 on a roll call vote (King, Proulx, Capello, St. Onge- yes) at 7:20 p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Kathleen Magoon

Recording Secretary

Chairman, Charlie King

Paula Proulx

Arthur Capello

Brian St. Onge