

**TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON  
JOINT MEETING  
GREAT BARRINGTON SELECTBOARD & FINANCE COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 14, 2012  
6:00 P.M. – TOWN HALL**

**PRESENT:**           STEPHEN BANNON  
                          ANDREW BLECHMAN  
                          ALANA CHERNILA  
                          DEB PHILLIPS  
                          SEAN STANTON  
                          KEVIN O'DONNELL, TOWN MANAGER

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:**  
                          TOM BLAUVELT – Chairman  
                          BUD ATWOOD  
                          MARK LEFENFELD  
                          ANDY MORO  
                          JIM STARK

**6:00 PM - PUBLIC SESSION - BOARD ROOM**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Sean Stanton called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

**2. FY 13 BUDGET OVERVIEW BY TOWN MANAGER**

Kevin O'Donnell reviewed his budget message as written in the budget packet.

Kevin stated that there are no service reductions or lay-offs. The town is 72% tax dependent.

The budget is \$900,000 less than the levy limit. Kevin stated that the demographics are not changing.

The school district levy is up 3%.

Kevin stated that 70% of land is open or may be undeveloped, but not all is usable so the tax rate will never decrease dramatically.

Kevin said that there is a meeting next week with the Department of Transportation regarding the changes that were made to the Main St. Reconstruction Plan. The public hearing will be scheduled by the D.O. T.

Kevin O'Donnell said that debt is low with 20% indebtedness. There will be borrowing for the road improvements. He said that bridges will be a focus in the future.

Kevin said that an energy consultant has been hired and there will be a meeting with him on February 22. There is continued movement toward becoming a Green Community.

Kevin O'Donnell showed the outlying years and the budget for such.

Kevin reviewed the CIP for the outlying years.

**3. REVENUES**

Kevin O'Donnell said that capital borrowing is 5%, taxes are 62.6%, state receipts are 3.1 % and local receipts are 4.3 %.

Bud Atwood asked about the cost to go to the Zoning Board of Appeals, which is \$150, and suggested an increase in this cost.

There was discussion about the town's use of social media and Andrew Blechman asked if we are looking into using You-Tube.

Kevin replied that streaming can happen with the help of Virtual Town Hall and additional equipment. He said that he will continue to pursue this option.

Andy Moro asked about the budget total indicated as 'travel'.

Kevin said that all staff is included in this amount and he will get a detailed breakdown.

Sean Stanton asked about the number of laptops that was indicated in the budget.

Lauren Sartori replied that laptops are being used more and they are better for presentations. She said that there are more planned for the library, one for Town Hall, and one for the police department.

Kate Deviny, Library Director, said people don't prefer to work in stations any more and laptops give more flexibility to move around. She said that there are a large number of people that come in to use the computers.

#### **4. FY 13 BUDGET**

**a. Selectboard/Manager** – slight increase in salary budget

**b. Finance/ Accounting/ Technology** – see above

**c. Assessor**

Chris Lamarre, principal assessor, said that they will be hiring a company to do a complete audit of personal property. He stated that Pittsfield and 2 other towns in Berkshire County have done this and have realized new growth. Chris said that this will bring in new revenue for the town. The cost will not be annual, only initial.

**d. Treasurer / Veteran Services** – treasurer not present; budget presented

**e. Town Clerk**

Marie Ryan said that her budget shows only a small increase for elections.

**f. Conservation Commission** – budget presented – only increase is in salary

**g. Town Planner**

Jim Stark requested to see a report of grants in each department.

Kevin O'Donnell said that he will provide a list of grants.

**h. Misc.** – Kevin O'Donnell reported that there is a decrease in Health Insurance due to the new health care plan design that will be implemented.

**i. Council on Aging**

Rebecca Tillinghast said that she has 1.5 people employed. She has asked for an increase of \$3319 to be used to for an increase in salary for the assistant. She said that this position is not only clerical position. She stated that she needs an increase in staff, as well.

Kevin O'Donnell responded that he does not agree with a \$15 an hour position.

Deb Phillips said that she would like to see the position re-classified and supports giving the money to fund it.

**MOTION:** Deb Phillips to put \$3100 into this budget for the increase in salary.

**SECOND:** Steve Bannon

**VOTE: 5-0**

**MOTION:** Mark Lefenfeld to put \$3100 into this budget for the increase in salary.

**SECOND:** Tom Blauvelt

**VOTE: 2-2-1** Jim Stark and Andy Moro against, Bud Atwood abstains

Kevin O'Donnell said that he will re-assess the job description and their needs.

Tom Blauvelt recommended looking at the Directors responsibilities and compensation.

Rebecca Tillinghast said that the department should be re-assessed because it is outdated and it is a liability and safety issue.

Rebecca said that there is money in the 'gifts and donations' account to pay for an outside evaluation.

All agree to this use of money.

Alana Chernila stressed that this has been a difficult year at the Senior Center and there needs to be a renewed commitment to this population.

**j. Library**

Kate Deviny, Library Director, reported that she had created a portfolio with business information to ensure that the Library is a communication center.

Kate asked for an increase in non-print and print resources.

**5. ADJOURNMENT:**

On a motion by Mark Lefenfeld, seconded by Andy Moro, the Finance Committee adjourned its meeting at 8:20 P.M.

On a motion by Deb Phillips, seconded by Steve Bannon, the Board of Selectmen adjourned its meeting at 8:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cara Becker". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Cara Becker  
Recording Secretary