

**OFFICE OF SELECTMEN
6 HOLLAND STREET
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MOULTONBOROUGH, NH 03254**

Selectmen's Work Session

September 2, 2010

MINUTES

Present: Selectmen: Joel R. Mudgett, Karel A. Crawford, Edward J. Charest, Jim Gray; Carter Terenzini, Town Administrator.
Absent: Betsey L. Patten (w/prior notification)

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

I. Update on Assessing:

The Town Administrator updated the Board on the final review that had resulted from the 08/26 meeting and the various documents that had now been posted to the website for people to review. He spoke to the fact that all of these documents were going up as PDF's in accord with the policy decision of the BoS at the time of expanding their web site. He asked for any other questions or directions by early next week. Otherwise he said the values were ready to be presented for final action on 09/16. The Town Assessor, Gary Karp would be present and he was asked to have Vision present as well. The TA will also see if the Auditorium at the Academy is available.

II. 2nd Quarter:

Heidi Davis presented the second quarter results. Karel asked if the tax collections were on par with previous years. The TA said he recalled the Tax Collector saying they were within a percent or so. A question was asked if there were any departments running over. It was explained that with the exception of Human Services (as noted last quarter) and the Fire Department (driven by a large front end expense for the Lakes Region Mutual Fire Association) all others seemed on target. He asked for any other questions or directions by early next week so he could finalize a response to the ABC on their questions.

II. Budget & SWEPT Overview:

The TA said he needed to understand if there was any sense of direction for the Staff on budget. This was particularly important given the discussion as to how much – if any – of the SWEPT increase we were expected to “eat” within our operating budget. He reviewed several scenarios and noted that any effort to eat this recurring expense (SWEPT) really needed to come from reductions in recurring operating expenses not one time deferrals of capital equipment. Karel said the County is not going to absorb any of this and it is unrealistic to think we can eat it. In fact it is unhealthy for the organization. She felt the Board will scrutinize the budget immensely and look twice at all proposals, but she did not want to end up like Laconia which took years to recover from aggressive cuts. Joel agreed that unsound cuts are simply something you pay for in the future. Ed said that last year we said we would level fund but we didn't. He continued to say that we need to look at trying to delay some things and he'd like to see a 3% cut. Karel said you can talk about that, but the money is in people. If you want to cut you need to look at where you

don't need something. Ed said that Governor Bentson cut budgets and the state did not cut services. After some discussion there was an initial consensus for a 3% reduction in the budget. The Town Administrator said he would present his total head to head comparison as he does each year and bring them a budget recommendation within that 3% cut.

Jim Gray asked how the ABC felt. Jean said the Committee had not gotten to this yet, but she would lean toward not using a percentage target, but a "bare bones" budget. She did agree that any reductions needed to be looked at for their long range impact and sustainability. Alan Ballard agreed these should not be across the board cuts. Carter said that would not be his approach. He cited the Tax Collector's office which simply could not take an across the board cut with only two people in the office. He said some departments may be up, some may be flat, and some may be down more than others. After further discussion the consensus in the end was for the Administrator to present a "bare bones" budget. He said he would and had a level funded (as opposed to level services) budget in mind as what he would shoot for in packaging the requests into his recommendation.

IV. Hours:

The TA said that the Town could expand Town Hall hours by 2.5 hours a week without having to expend any additional monies by rearranging some of the scheduled hours. He had consulted with the staff as to how they might want to see that added in. Six persons favored starting at 7:30 a.m. and holding the current ending hour. Five favored holding the current start time and staying until 4:30. Not one person favored adding an evening. Joel thought starting at 7:30 a.m. would be more beneficial to residents as did Jim. Their thought was that they might be able to come in for service on their way to work as opposed to trying to get here after work. Karel said she was OK either way. Knowing the Board was leaning toward a 7:30 a.m. start the TA said he would now reach out to the two offices that set their hours to see what they might change so a decision can be made all at once.

V. Bi-Weekly Payroll and Payables:

The TA noted that he had recommended, with his first budget, converting from a weekly payroll and AP to a bi-weekly system. The ABC has also recommended this. He and Heidi presented a proposed timetable for the conversion starting on December 31. He has obtained the approval of the NH Department of Labor to the proposed changes. He now needs to confirm the Board still wanted to do this and if this timetable was agreeable. It was and he will notify the staff and departments over the next few weeks.

With no further business the Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:41 p.m.

Approved

Date
Respectfully Submitted
Carter Terenzini, Town Administrator