

Minutes
Nottingham Selectmen's Workshop
December 9, 2013

6:30 PM Chair Rafter opened the meeting.

Members Present: Hal Rafter and Mark Carpenter Absent: Mary Bonser

Others: Charles A. Brown – Town Administrator, Dawn Wirkkala – Secretary

Budget Review:

Moderator: Discussion took place about the Moderator stipend. Ms. Bonser provided written documentation and did not support an increase. Mr. Carpenter stated there are many who participate on other boards and committees, putting in a significant amount of time and work and they are not asking for additional financial support.

Chair Rafter stated an increase in the stipend amount may provide incentive to have more people run for the position; in addition there may be a need to recognize an increase in the type and number of duties required of the Moderator with changes in the voting process.

Mr. Carpenter stated he would be willing to consider supporting an increase to the stipend but not for a Deputy Moderator. The Secretary of State Moderator training indicates the Deputy Moderator is encouraged for municipalities that have multiple polling places.

Mr. Brown stated the Selectmen do have more time to consider an increase in the budget process and an increase could also take place with an amendment during Town Meeting.

Fire Department: Mr. Brown asked the Selectmen about the requested 1% merit increases for the Fire Fighters 1 and 2, which is above the suggested 2% COLA. Mr. Carpenter stated Chief Vilchok has indicated neighboring similar sized towns provide a higher regular salary amount and asked if there were another reason for the merit increase.

After discussion the Selectmen agreed additional information was needed to determine the specifics of increase; whether it should be a salary increase for 2014 or a one time bonus for performance in 2013. It was stated Fire Fighter 3 was changing to a higher rate because he is also transitioning from his probationary hiring period.

The Selectmen agreed the department does have a significant overall budget increase, but all reasons seem justified.

Police Department: Mr. Brown stated he would provide the Selectmen with the merit increase amounts for the Police Department Staff.

Highway: Mr. Brown reported the Town will have to file an after the fact permit for the dry hydrant on Deerfield Road which will be scheduled for repairs in 2014. It was installed when the bridge was replaced; an estimate calculating the land disturbed with installation will take place and the late filing which might include a fine. The final plans will also need to change to include the dry hydrant.

Mr. Carpenter requested further information about whether or not the Impact Fees can help repair or replace the dry hydrants and cisterns. Mr. Brown wasn't sure the impact fees could be used for the dry hydrant repairs but agreed to research the issue.

Encumbrances: Mr. Brown reviewed some of the areas and accounts that will have encumbrances for 2013 funds; including the Library weed eradication, new maps with Strafford Regional and work at the Old Town Hall.

Mr. Brown stated notice was received that the Recycle Center will need repairs to a rusted trailer hitch. Also, if funds are available, could they help pay for the Recycle Center roof. The Selectmen agreed it would be a good idea if a contract could be signed. Mr. Brown stated a contract could be

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signed as two quotes have already been received at an approximate amount of \$12,000.00, however the work will not start until spring 2014.

School Highway Department Request: Mr. Brown reported an official request has been received to plow the back road from the school past the soccer field out to Priest Road. The Road Agent indicated this should not be a problem and could be done, and it was stated it would be an approximate 300 additional yards. The Selectmen agreed to the plowing request.

Town Office:

Rymes/Fernald Permit: Chief Vilchuck reported the meeting between Mr. Cricenti and the Fire Marshall would take place on December 20 but none of the follow up information has been provided by Rymes or the engineer, Mr. Cricenti. The Selectmen requested Mr. Brown contact Mr. Cosseboom for the missing information, which was now two weeks late.

Mr. Carpenter stated he has received information from the Propane Association of New England, and a representative would be willing to come in and meet with the Selectmen to provide additional information about the propane tanks and even training to Fire Department staff.

Mr. Carpenter stated he would like specific information about the possible impact the new installation of the propane tanks would cause; impact on the roads and Fire Department services and/or equipment. Mr. Brown stated he has heard there are no towns which have the necessary equipment available to respond to a critical emergency, which is part of the concerns the Fire Chief has expressed.

Mr. Carpenter stated an impact is already being seen because the school is requesting additional plow work to be completed by the Highway Department. Funds to pay for the additional time come from the municipal budget, and while not a significant increase, an increase is still seen.

Recycle Center: Mr. Brown stated the recommended fee changes will need to have a public hearing, discussion took place about postponing the selling of stickers and the Selectmen stated stickers could still be ordered and sales start as soon as they are delivered.

Discussion took place about Recycle Center budget changes, including those items being recommended by the Recycle Center Committee and requests from the Center Supervisor. The Selectmen requested information about storage use and whether one or two trailers should be purchased. The Selectmen asked to have Mr. Cinfo attend a meeting and review the purpose and management of the two trailers, can he get by with one and what will he do with the new available space.

The Selectmen also discussed the request for additional hours and the option of bulk mailing to let all property owners know of the upcoming changes. Mr. Carpenter stated the bulk mailing of a letter could be completed with an approximate cost of \$365.00.

Future Agenda: Mr. Carpenter wants to invite Emily Buchanan, a third grade Nottingham School student, to present her fundraising plan and efforts to raise funds for repairs and replacement of the school playground equipment. Mr. Carpenter asked to invite Ms. Buchanan to the December 30th meeting.

Chair Rafter stated concern has been expressed about the candidate options for membership on the LGC HealthTrust Board and support is being requested for the City of Dover candidate who will support the positions of Towns on the board. After discussion the Selectmen requested Mr. Brown to attend the meeting and vote for the Dover candidate, Ms. Cheney.

Budget Questions: Chair Rafter requested more information about the Fire Department boat request from the Fire Chief which was presented at the Budget Committee meeting.

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Chair Rafter asked about removal of the cistern/dry hydrant expendable trust fund as a warrant article and Mr. Brown agreed.

Chair Rafter asked about the discontinuance of Winter Street and Gravel Pit Road. Mr. Brown stated some of the abutters do have concern, but there did not seem to be any significant objection. Discussion took place about the roads and the Selectmen agreed with eliminating a possible future need to support a road that hasn't really been a public road for many years. The discontinuance eliminates obligation or responsibility on the part of the Town. The Selectmen requested the discontinuance of Winter Street and Gravel Pit Road be included as warrant articles.

Chair Rafter asked about the Heating and HVAC trust fund and asked if the amount is enough as proposed and if there is a way for the account to be more inclusive for any alternative general building repairs and should it be changed to a different type of account and not an ETF. It was stated if the furnace needed to be replaced in 2015, the trust fund would not have enough to make a difference in a potential \$25,000 replacement cost.

Mr. Carpenter stated it might be a good idea to create a building repair capital reserve fund to help pay for any necessary building repairs, electric, construction, heating or other options; the intent is a good idea to help support building maintenance and prevent getting into a financial bind with unplanned building repairs.

Chair Rafter asked about the proposed changes to the exemptions amounts and asked to discuss the matter when Ms. Bonser returns.

Discussion took place about the formatting for the budget worksheets and trying to separate out those warrant articles that affect the tax rate and those warrant articles that don't affect the tax rate, including separating out the difference between those expenses proposed from funds that were previously raised and will come out of a separate fund. Ms. Wirkkala will rearrange where items are located in the spreadsheet. Mr. Carpenter asked about the proposed tax impact. Mr. Brown reviewed the calculation and would provide the Selectmen with the estimate.

Tax Collector Salary/Stipend: Mr. Carpenter stated the Selectmen should also review the Tax Collector request for increase of stipend; a Budget Committee member asked if there is a difference between the Tax Collector and Moderator request for stipend increase.

ADJOURNMENT: Having no further business,

8:20 PM **Motion:** by Mr. Carpenter, second by Chair Rafter to adjourn.

Vote: 2 – 0 in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Wirkkala