



Town of Plaistow ♦ Board of Selectmen
145 Main Street ♦ Plaistow ♦ NH ♦ 03865

PLAISTOW BOARD OF SELECTMEN

MINUTES:

DATE: Monday, December 29, 2008

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 6:38 pm

SELECTMEN PRESENT:

Chairman, John Sherman
Vice Chairman, Daniel Poliquin
Selectman, Charles Blinn
Selectman, Robert Gray
Sean Fitzgerald – Town Manager

SELECTMEN ABSENT:

Selectman, Lawrence Gil - excused

MINUTES:

Motion by D. Poliquin to approve the Minutes of December 1, 2008 as presented.

2nd by R. Gray.

Vote 4-0-0.

Motion passes.

Motion by R. Gray to approve Minutes of December 8, 2008 with no changes.

2nd by D. Poliquin.

Vote 4-0-0.

Motion passes.

Motion by D. Poliquin to approve Minutes of December 15, 2008 as presented.

2nd by R. Gray.

Vote 3-0-1.

Abstain by C. Blinn.

Motion passes.

Motion by D. Poliquin to approve the Minutes of December 22, 2008 with changes to page 6.

2nd by R. Gray.

Vote 3-0-1.

Abstain by C. Blinn.

Motion passes.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public wishing to speak.

AGENDA:

Update on 2008 Budget , Review of 2009 Operating Budget and Review of 2009 proposed Warrant Articles

S. Fitzgerald discusses his report that he has passed out to the Selectmen regarding the list of 2008 Encumbrances that have been submitted to date, the total figure of \$386,440.01 and all the expenditures.

J. Sherman inquires as to what the Highway Block Grant is.

S. Fitzgerald notes it is money that we have yet to receive out of the State plan.

J. Sherman inquires if these come with Sean's recommendations.

S. Fitzgerald notes yes and they have been reviewed by the Finance Department.

C. Blinn discusses the 2009 budget and inquires if these items are all ear marked.

J. Sherman notes yes these items are what have been ear marked.

Motion by R. Gray to encumber the amount of \$386,440.01 from the 2008 Budget to the 2009 Budget per the list presented by the Town Manager on December 29, 2008.

2nd by C. Blinn.

S. Fitzgerald notes he will analyze each budget and work with the Department Heads on how to budget appropriately.

J. Sherman notes the number is higher but not the encumbrances.

Vote 4-0-0.

Motion passes.

S. Fitzgerald reviews the handout labeled Updated Information for Warrant Articles as of 12/29/08 that he has given to the Board members. He discusses the line items and reads them for the understanding of the Board and discusses the Warrant Article packet that he has given to the Board.

J. Sherman inquires if Sean has received the updated packet that he emailed noting that his packet had numbers for Warrant Articles.

S. Fitzgerald notes he did receive it and will go look for it and print copies for the Board. He notes while he is looking for that the Board can review the handout from the Finance Department regarding the Actual & Budgeted Expenses & Encumbrance Report.

S. Fitzgerald returns and discusses the updated Warrant Articles. **Public Safety Complex Capital Reserve** has had the language tightened up and notes he has worked with a number of the Staff regarding such and it has been reviewed by Shelly Gevlarneau a DRA Auditor and Assistance Director for legality and compliance with DRA regulations. He discusses the additional phrase “into said fund” that has been added.

J. Sherman notes the Warrant Article number is 14 and we have changed the wording not the purpose of this Warrant Article.

S. Fitzgerald notes the change is to add the wording “into said fund”.

R. Gray notes that the Warrant Article is fine but the Intent needs to be changed, (HVAC system?) either needs to be changed or deleted.

S. Fitzgerald notes he will remove and add to the section marked as Notes.

J. Sherman suggests waiting until the Budget Committee meeting tomorrow night for a fresh set of eyes to look at the wording.

D. Poliquin wants to add included but not limited to.

Motion by D. Poliquin to approve the Warrant Article P-09-14 Public Safety Complex Capital Reserve with the changes noted.

2nd by C. Blinn.

J. Sherman notes he does not think we need to vote on every Article just the ones with wording and/or dollar changes.

Vote 4-0-0.

Motion carries.

S. Fitzgerald notes there is no change to Highway Equipment Reserve Fund Article P-09-02 which is page 4 of his handout and no change to Replace Highway Department Dump Truck Article P-09-03 which is page 5.

S. Fitzgerald discusses page 6, Fire Suppression Water Capital Reserve Fund Article P-09-07, noting the number has been adjusted downward. He discusses the pipe to be used for the water suppression system noting the estimates have been adjusted downward based on the scheduled projects by NHDOT working on Route 125.

J. Sherman notes there are two changes: 1. We are going with PVC pipe, a savings of \$133,767 which is a worthwhile savings and 2. Take out the line "This money can only be spent by future vote at Town Meeting" which is found in the Intent.

Board discusses PVC pipe quality and is in agreement with the cost benefit savings and type of pipe chosen.

J. Sherman notes he and Sean were looking at cash flow and discusses the work going to be done in 2010 to make sure we have enough money in the Warrant Article through 2010. He discusses the Intent and how it is worded and reasons for it.

Motion by R. Gray to approve Article P-09-07, Fire Suppression Water Capital Reserve Fund.

2nd by C. Blinn.

Vote 4-0-0.

Motion passes.

S. Fitzgerald discusses the Cell Tower Maintenance Capital Reserve Article P-09-12. He discusses after the 30 year life cycle and the revenue to the Town.

Board discusses Recommended to include language pertaining to that of the life cycle value.

J. Sherman notes to delete XXX from Intent and to print approximately 90K. Delete XX from the sentence "The cost of maintenance of the tower is estimated to be XX over 30 years."

Motion by R. Gray to approve the wording changes in Article P-09-12, Cell Tower Maintenance Capital Reserve.

2nd by C. Blinn.

Vote 4-0-0.

Motion passes.

J. Sherman notes that Sean is to change the Recommended section.

S. Fitzgerald notes minor changes to page 8, Playground at Old County Road, Article P-09-15.

Carli Malette is here to discuss the new Warrant Article from the Recreation Committee for Recreational Capital Reserve.

C. Malette approaches the podium and discusses purpose is to generate revenue by selling signs. Signs are to be put on the fencing and the money from selling signs will come back and go into a

capital reserve account and that money is to be used for maintenance on the fields. She notes they will start with their own money and it will take a vote of the Selectmen to spend money out.

R. Gray discusses capital reserve and questions taking an unknown quantity of money sometime in the future without raising and appropriating that money.

C. Malette discusses spending money like a revolving account, noting a little bit more controlled by the Board of Selectmen.

D. Poliquin notes not taking money out but putting money in.

J. Sherman notes this has to be passed by bond counsel and questions if there is reference to RSA.

R. Gray notes he is in favor of this however his concern is for the deposit of the money not taking the money out.

C. Malette notes she will call LGC even before going to bond counsel regarding the language. She notes this is to help with the revenue, to get something behind them, to help to fix items out there on the field when it occurs and notes the Selectmen will be in control of the money.

J. Sherman notes his concerns: money cannot be spent out of this account without the Board's approval; it doesn't say in the content of the article that it is for fundraising purpose; it does not state where money comes from and he inquires if this may be needed to be added.

C. Malette notes she will ask the LGC. She discusses large deposits of donations and discusses a variety of wording that may be able to be used. She discusses trying to offset the general revenue, repairs and maintenance issues and discusses signs and the contract for such along with profitability from these signs.

J. Sherman notes we will not be voting on this tonight, just getting questions answered.

C. Blinn discusses Selectmen are agents of the funds and will be aware of what is in the fund. He inquires as to what is her budget every year and is this going to go in to repair without taking away from the budget line.

C. Malette discusses what is in the budget such as mowing and notes no money to back up items to fix things.

C. Blinn inquires as to what type of problems she would be using this money for.

C. Malette notes her intent is to keep money for problems that arise such as irrigation, something could happen with fencing, pump house, the well and she notes she is out of her warranties.

C. Blinn questions if she would fall under the emergency money that is put away.

S. Fitzgerald believes that might be the area that may qualify however building systems may need to be looked at to see how broad that definition may be.

C. Malette discusses money being put somewhere that it could benefit and discusses the fencing is Town property.

S. Fitzgerald discusses that Carli has showed great entrepreneurship, identified additional revenue and maintained core services.

J. Sherman notes Carli is to bring information back to the Board next week and that the Budget Committee does not need to get involved because there is no funding to this Warrant Article. He notes no change to page 8 Playground at Old County Road, just change to Intent which needs more complete description of playscape and what shelter means, whether open or fully enclosed. He suggests including what it is made out of for example: wood.

C. Blinn notes more information the people can have the better for them to make a decision.

C. Malette notes she will work on this tomorrow to bring in front of the Budget Committee meeting tomorrow. She discusses page 8, Playground at Old County Road.

S. Fitzgerald discusses change suggested from DRA regarding page 10, Fire Truck Replacement, Article P-09-05 regarding after the last sentence of the Article to add, “out of this amount \$240,000 to be withdrawn from Fire Department Capital Reserve. The Remaining \$10,000 from Impact Fees.”

J. Sherman discusses the sense of the written sentence and needing clarity of their suggestion. He notes just to add two sentences to the end. “This amount of \$240,000 to be withdrawn from the Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund. The \$10,000 used for deposit was paid by Impact Fees.”

Motion by D. Poliquin that Article P-09-05 is to be approved with the changes of the two sentence addition.

2nd by R. Gray.

Vote 4-0-0.

Motion passes.

S. Fitzgerald discusses page 13, Establish Revolving Fund – Rescue Vehicle and Emergency Medical Equipment Reimbursement, Article P-09-18. He discusses that the word “Ambulance” needs to be added to the wording due to the reference of the Article RSA 31:95-h.

Motion by R. Gray to accept Warrant Article P-09-18 with the wording change of adding the word Ambulance in front of Rescue Vehicle to read Ambulance Rescue Vehicle.

2nd by C. Blinn.

Vote 4-0-0.

Motion passes.

S. Fitzgerald discusses page 14, Deposit Revenue for Sale of Snorkel into the existing Fire Department Capital Reserve, Article P-09-06. He notes we cannot take the proceeds from the sale and put it in the existing capital reserve, we would need to raise an appropriate amount in the unreserved fund and notes DRA advised us to include a specific and reasonable amount. He notes he will meet with the Chief tomorrow to go over this and bring it back to the Board.

J. Sherman notes that this is okay.

S. Fitzgerald discusses page 15, Westville Road Widening Project, Article P-09-16, and the wording regarding \$15,000 shall be funded by the Town. He notes DRA wants specifics as to where the funds are located.

J. Sherman questions where the money came from noting Home Depot. He inquires if in fact the \$15,000 was left over money from Home Depot and the project money from Route 125. He discusses the money received and the General Fund.

S. Fitzgerald notes he would have to look into that and can ask the Town Treasurer.

J. Sherman notes he has prepared something and hopes there is no conflict with what Sean has already prepared which is a Summary of Warrant Articles. He hands paperwork to the Board. He discusses this is similar to the document that Jason prepared last year, list of Warrant Articles and tax impact. He notes the amount and compares to Warrant Articles of last year noting the tricky thing is tax impact; he discusses Westville Road Widening has no tax impact, dollars that will hit tax rate and the reason for putting this together was because Jason had done similar analysis last year and he thought it was interesting. He notes he wasn't sure if Sean has done something like this.

S. Fitzgerald notes that this is great.

S. Fitzgerald discusses copy of revenue estimates sent to DRA this past September, estimate of \$2,784,804 and breakdown of receipt.

J. Sherman discusses that Craig presented this back in September.

S. Fitzgerald notes that yes that is correct. He discusses information for the Budget Committee Meeting tomorrow night.

R. Gray discusses the Operating Budget and the 5.73 % increase which he does not think is going to fly with the voters. He suggests that he is willing to go back and look at budget or that Sean can go back to the Department Heads and see if they can lower the rate.

C. Blinn inquires as to what number Bob would feel comfortable with.

R. Gray notes he is not sure but it will be lower than what they have in front of them.

D. Poliquin suggests to Sean to request the Department Heads to knock out 2% of their budget.

D. Poliquin and R. Gray hold a discussion regarding the decrease.

C. Blinn inquires as to what last year's budget.

R. Gray discusses that the Town has taken on certain obligations that they are required to pay which will need to be factored in.

J. Sherman notes that it goes deeper than the 5.73 increase. He discusses why we focus on the operating budget, noting this is how much going up, discusses Warrant Articles and comparisons, noting new minus old divided by the old. He discusses Budget going up \$407,000, Warrant Articles going up by \$130,000, Revenue going down \$50,000 and the Total impact to the tax payer is \$587,000.

S. Fitzgerald notes the percentage change from last year to this is 36.5% change which is an increase.

R. Gray questions out of the \$587,000 how much is obligations that we are responsible for.

S. Fitzgerald discusses contractual obligations, noting he would have to itemize and bring them back. He discusses contracts, insurance, health care noting not a lot of fat in the budget. He discusses the default budget, existing contractual obligations that we have and notes it is going to be tight.

C. Blinn suggests all to look at this before Monday.

S. Fitzgerald notes big increase this year, Direct Assistance was \$40,000 in 2008 to \$64,000, when times get tough items like this increase. He notes there is a Staff meeting tomorrow and will have all take another look to see where we can make cuts.

J. Sherman inquires as to when they will have updated new copies of budgets.

S. Fitzgerald notes right after the meeting to take a look at email.

J. Sherman notes Government Buildings is up \$34,000, Police is up \$150,000 and it is not always easy to tell by percentage. He notes looking at increase it is tough to see increase. He asks Sean to please add another column to his spreadsheet to see the differences. He discusses that the Board should suggest to Sean to reduce the Operating Budget by (input #).

S. Fitzgerald discusses concerns: revenues coming in and people paying timely.

C. Blinn suggests getting as creative as possible: one real money maker is Friday off, really sends a good signal, make personnel roll up sleeves, try anything to make it work better.

S. Fitzgerald notes he has to look at a lot of things.

R. Gray inquires as to how much havoc the Board would wreak if requested to reduce by 2%.

S. Fitzgerald discusses finding reduction.

R. Gray notes hardship for somebody: example, if you are trying to get there by eliminating raises then would Tax Collector need a Warrant Article.

J. Sherman not sure why Warrant Articles are off limits.

R. Gray not saying Warrant Articles are off limits.

D. Poliquin notes lower it; get it down to 2% increase.

R. Gray notes 6.6% drop to 2%.

S. Fitzgerald inquires if they want him to present discretionary changes and make cuts.

R. Gray notes essentially yes.

Board discusses figures for budget.

S. Fitzgerald notes including loss revenue.

R. Gray questions what he thinks revenues for next year projections will be.

S. Fitzgerald notes fairly conservative will sit with Department Heads and present to Board next week. He notes this is a tough fiscal new year.

D. Poliquin notes this will be interesting to see.

J. Sherman notes to ignore revenue and try to reduce total expenses down to 2%.

D. Poliquin discusses his recommendation to reduce by \$350,000.

S. Fitzgerald discusses serious responsibility he will do what he has to do, notes lean administration, discusses quality Staff and notes not a lot of discretionary items noting serious conversation with Department Heads.

R. Gray notes he will have a hard time going to the public with an increase of 6%.

S. Fitzgerald will get recommendations that we will have to do without.

R. Gray discusses if it truly makes sense and is logical then that is what we can present to voters.

C. Blinn notes tangibles are pretty close to being lean, see it come out of things we can get away with, notes to cut into things we can do without, we do in our own houses and we will show the public what we can do, he notes the Board of Selectmen will back Sean and that they are putting him on the spot.

S. Fitzgerald notes tough times, discusses Budgets come in and he discusses core services.

D. Poliquin inquires if he wants suggestions.

S. Fitzgerald notes that he welcomes suggestions. He notes people are priorities. He discusses travel, conferences and training that may have to be looked at differently. He notes it will impact some of the services and he will look for discretionary items. He discusses fiscally challenging times and recognizes challenges that all are facing.

C. Blinn suggests using networking.

S. Fitzgerald notes he used them for utilities.

J. Sherman notes a default budget isn't always lower; the increase that we proposed last year was 1%. He discusses the Operating Budget, Warrant Articles and Loss in Revenues. He notes he would like to have a motion for this activity.

Motion by D. Poliquin to direct Town Manager to come back with proposed \$350,000 budget reduction.

2nd by C. Blinn.

Vote 4-0-0.

Motion passes.

S. Fitzgerald discusses passbook savings account cannot be touched and funds being locked up.

D. Poliquin discusses snorkel truck.

S. Fitzgerald discusses core services and the \$350,000 is going to hit the bone. He notes his concern is for Warrant Articles keeping community going during tough times.

J. Sherman discusses Department Heads noting the Board of Selectmen is directing him to do this and the Department Heads should not be too surprised.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT:

S. Fitzgerald notes he is reporting on only Budget and Warrant Articles. He had conversation with Attorney representing Town regarding Comcast and he assures the Board they are more

than interested in Cable Fees and they are willing to come back to the Board and discuss the proposed contract.

J. Sherman suggests late in January.

OTHER BUSINESS:

J. Sherman discusses he got up on Christmas morning and had no electricity. He went to the Safety Complex and spoke to the Dispatcher. He discusses that the Police Officer on duty had noticed a light in sky at 2:30 am and that had gotten reported to Unitil and the crews were in Plaistow working on it. At 7:00 am he went to the Corner Pocket on Route 125 which is major substation to Unitil and there were two crews. He noted the 4 guys working were not Unitil employees, however employees working for Reed in Raymond. He noted Unitil was working on it and pinpointing the problem. One of the guys had not been home for 2 weeks; he lived in Raymond and was working in Fitchburg. He was very cordial. They were optimistic that this was not wide spread, one place that caused the problem and once found they would be able to fix it. The other guy there was working in Plaistow previously and notes they often worked out of the woods and that is why a lot of people did not see them while they were working in Plaistow during the outage. He noted that the lights came on at 10:30 am for about 5 minutes then they went out again. He then went to the Safety Complex again and reported it again. The Dispatcher called Unitil and they noted crews were working on Maple Avenue Substation. The Dispatcher spoke to the Supervisor there who found a switch problem and noted there in fact were crews on site and they were working just as soon as it happened. He apologized to all for the inconvenience on Christmas Day.

C. Blinn notes the insecurity people have every time when there is a blink of a light bulb, he notes this left a lot of us nervous.

SIGNATURE FOLDER:

S. Fitzgerald discusses the Contract from Cable noting it does not require more signatures but it is here in case you would like to sign more. He discusses Carli's Red Sox tickets and the required paperwork and needed signatures.

J. Sherman inquires about the manifest.

S. Fitzgerald notes there is no manifest, however you will get an email tomorrow to come by and sign.

SELECTMEN'S REPORTS:

C. Blinn wishes Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all. He notes we are all working hard in Plaistow. He is really proud of the Town Manager for showing his concern for this Town during their time of need. He notes we did as good as we possibly could have done and this is one of the times that he was proud to be in the Town of Plaistow.

J. Sherman notes no selectmen report just that the Budget Committee meeting was cancelled last week however they will be meeting tomorrow.

D. Poliquin notes that the committee meetings that were scheduled last week were cancelled due to the weather and rescheduled for the next coming week. He notes a nice old fashion Merry Christmas by candle light and good time had by all.

R. Gray discusses the Public Hearing for the proposed zoning change which is this Monday at the Library and there will be no Selectmen Representative at that Public Hearing. He discusses the Town Report Committee meeting which is tomorrow night. He discusses the email he sent to the Board of Selectmen regarding the Public Service in NH and the RSA that revolves around rate changes and how they are set. He discusses the commission responsibility in setting rates noting there is not much in there in terms of holding people responsible. He discusses that there is the position of the advocate position who advocates on behalf of public boards however they do not take individual complaints only for boards and public committees. He notes this may be an avenue to pursue to file after action items with them. He discusses the only leverage we have is to have Norm come in here for Legislative wise. He wishes a Happy, Healthy New Year and for all to stay safe and notes we will be back at it next week like clockwork.

J. Sherman questions if the Non Public meeting is needed.

S. Fitzgerald notes no Non Public Session is needed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:34 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Audrey Michaud