

March 28, 2011

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
MARCH 28, 2011**

Present: Thomas Creamer, Chairman
Mary Blanchard
Scott Garieri
Shaun Suhoski, Town Administrator

Mary Dowling was absent.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. following the Pledge of Allegiance.

T. Creamer announced that he and a member of the audience were audio recording the meeting.

Town Meeting Warrant

Barbara Barry, Finance Director, and Greg Morse, DPW Director appeared before the Board. B. Barry said that FY12 rates for the water and sewer operations will need to substantially increase, due primarily to increased debt service associated with Town Meeting approved capital improvements. She noted that there were increased electricity and chemical costs for the upgraded Wastewater Treatment Plant. She said that water rates will need to rise between 35% and 55%, while sewer rates will grow from 55% to nearly 80%, depending on the selected rate structure.

S. Suhoski submitted to the Board the recommendation of the Town Administrator, Finance Director and DPW Director. S. Suhoski noted that there is a balance of \$1.5 million in the water fund; they recommended utilizing \$150,000 from the fund balance, along with an increase in the flat sewer rate. For the sewer rate, they recommended an increase in the flat sewer rate from \$108 to \$150 (38.9%) and utilizing \$150,000 of the sewer fund balance.

T. Creamer noted that the average home will have an increase of approximately \$62 for water over the course of the year. He said that in looking at the \$1 million in today's terms, compared to \$100,000 16 years ago, it is almost like things are at status quo. M. Blanchard pointed out that the number of customers has increased over the years.

S. Suhoski said that the same approach would be used with respect to the sewer operation. T. Creamer recommended that the Board approve the recommendations as presented by the Town Administrator, Finance Director and DPW Director relative to the water and sewer rate options.

MOTION: That the Board approve the water rate, utilizing \$150,000 water fund balance, \$4.41 per 100 cu. ft.; and approve the sewer rate utilizing \$150,000 from the fund balance, at a rate of \$7.10 per 100 cu. ft., and increase the flat sewer rate from \$108 to \$150, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: S. Garieri

Vote: All in favor.

Article 23: Water Department Capital Request Surplus Emergency Generator Near Well #5

S. Suhoski explained that Article 23, in the amount of \$83,775 would allow reuse of a surplus generator from the Wastewater Treatment Plant through installation at Well #5, which currently has no backup power. The funds are for installation, including purchase of a weatherproof enclosure for the unit, which will also provide backup power to Well #3.

MOTION: To accept the warrant as provided to the Board of Selectmen, with additional information as presented to the Board on March 28, 2011, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: S. Garieri

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 23, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: S. Garieri

Vote: All in favor.

Article 24: Water Department Capital Request Water Treatment Facility at Well #1

S. Suhoski explained that Article 24 funds construction and engineering for improvements to the water treatment facility on Waterworks Road. He noted that this project is required by Mass. DEP to mitigate any potential for contamination by surface water on Well #1. The plant has been sized to also treat water from Well #3 and Well #5 if needed. S. Suhoski suggested that a uniform billing approach could be used in terms of charging all customers the same, as opposed to charging by usage.

T. Creamer questioned whether it would be fair for a single homeowner, who uses a small amount of water, to pay the same rate as someone who uses more water. He noted that it would be better answered at Town Meeting. M. Blanchard suggested looking into it for the future, not for this budget year. T. Creamer said that he would prefer to maintain the current practice for now.

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 24, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: S. Garieri

Vote: All in favor.

Article 20: Establish Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 20, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: S. Garieri

Vote: All in favor.

Article 21: Capitalize OPEB Trust Fund

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 21, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: S. Garieri

Vote: All in favor.

Article 4: Community Preservation – Administration

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 4, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: S. Garieri

Vote: All in favor.

Article 5: Community Preservation – Sturbridge Trails Committee

T. Creamer felt that Article 5 was ambiguous. M. Blanchard said that it needs to be broken out, and noted that there are still questions about the river land. It was the consensus of the Board to hold action on Article 5.

Article 6: Community Preservation – Historic (Tillyer Papers)

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article #6, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: S. Garieri

Vote: All in favor.

Article 7: Community Preservation – Recreational Fitness Life Trail

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 7, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: S. Garieri

Vote: All in favor.

Article 8: Community Preservation – Memorial Conference Rooms

T. Creamer noted that the fund amount was missing. S. Suhoski said that the proponent should have the final quotes by next Monday. It was the consensus of the Board to hold action on Article 8.

Article 9: Community Preservation – Trail Bridges

S. Suhoski said that one of the crossings was completed; one is under review by the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. He said that they would like to reallocate funds towards other trail crossings as needed, but he did not have coordinates of where they might be located. T. Creamer said that he would like to know how many and where, and how much would be left over. Additionally, he felt it important to see a plan representing the proposed work. It was the consensus of the Board to hold action for further definitive information.

Article 12: Sewer Project Debt

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 12, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: S. Garieri
Vote: All in favor.

Article 13: Community Preservation Debt Service

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 13, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: S. Garieri
Vote: All in favor.

Article 1: Town Reports

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 1, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: S. Garieri
Vote: All in favor.

Article 2: Community Preservation Committee Report

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 2, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: S. Garieri
Vote: All in favor.

It was the consensus of the Board to hold action on Articles 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Article 14: Revolving Funds

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 14, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: S. Garieri
Vote: All in favor.

Article 15: Board of Health – Pay-As-You-Throw Program

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 15; and to delete the first bullet under Department receipts (“Any grants obtained in support of the PAYT Program”), by M. Blanchard.
2nd: S. Garieri

Vote: All in favor.

It was the consensus of the Board to hold action on articles 16 and 17.

Article 18: Capital Improvement Plan

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 18, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: S. Garieri

Vote: All in favor.

Article 19: Ambulance Stabilization Fund

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 19, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: S. Garieri

Vote: All in favor.

Article 22: Borrow Authorization – Tantasqua Regional Junior High School Roof Replacement

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 22, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: S. Garieri

Vote: All in favor.

It was the consensus of the Board to hold action on articles 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34.

Article 35: General Bylaw Amendment – Removal of Finance Committee Member

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 35, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: S. Garieri

Vote: All in favor.

Article 36: General Bylaw Amendment – Clarification of Language

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 36, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: S. Garieri

Vote: All in favor.

It was the consensus of the Board to hold action on articles 37, 38, 39.

Article 40: Authorize Lease of Landfill Land – Solar Power Agreement

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 40, by M. Blanchard.

2nd: S. Garieri

Vote: All in favor.

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Article 41: Authorize Special Act Relative to Elections

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 41, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: S. Garieri
Vote: All in favor.

Article 42: MGL C. 59, Sec. 5K – Senior Municipal Service Program Exemptions

It was the consensus of the Board to take the former, not the latter; and strike everything after “to provide such services to the city or town” on the third line.

MOTION: That the Board place and support Article 42, deleting from the third line down to the last line, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: S. Garieri
Vote: All in favor.

It was the consensus of the Board to hold action on article 43.

Article 44: Citizen Petition – Charter Amendment

MOTION: That the Board place Article 44, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: S. Garieri
Vote: All in favor.

Article 45: Citizen Petition – Charter Amendment

MOTION: That the Board place Article 45, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: S. Garieri
Vote: All in favor.

Article 46: Citizen Petition – General Bylaw Amendment

MOTION: That the Board place Article 46, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: S. Garieri
Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To adjourn, by M. Blanchard.
2nd: S. Garieri
Vote: All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

March 28, 2011

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date