

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
APRIL 14, 2015**

Present: Mary Blanchard, Chairman
Priscilla Gimas
Mary Dowling
Craig Moran
Michael Suprenant
Suzanne Kennedy, Interim Town Administrator

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. following the Pledge of Allegiance.

M. Blanchard welcomed the newest member of the Board of Selectmen, Michael Suprenant, and welcomed back Craig Moran.

Review of Draft FY 2016 Budget

Barbara Barry, Finance Director, appeared before the Board.

M. Dowling arrived at 6:04 p.m.

M. Blanchard proceeded to review the FY16 budget by line items.

P. Gimas arrived at 6:17 p.m.

MOTION: That the Town Administrator's Salary, Line #6, be changed to \$132,000, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To change Merit Based Incentive, Line #8 to \$21,346, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

#16 Town Accountant Salary

M. Blanchard considered it to be an extraordinary increase. She noted that it would bring Christopher Geraghty's salary to the 70th percentile range for that position. She asked how many other employees were in the 70th percentile. B. Barry said that most are above that. P. Gimas expressed concern that it would set a precedent to others, and that it would not be fair to the rest of the employees. M. Dowling said that she would defer to the recommendation of the Finance Director and Town Administrator. She felt that it should be handled on a case by case basis. C. Moran said that C. Geraghty has shown his abilities and

is entitled to an adjustment, but not to the magnitude being suggested at this time. M. Suprenant said that he did not have the benefit of the memo from the Finance Director, and would defer to the Finance Director's judgment.

MOTION: To approve line item #16 as written, by M. Dowling.
2nd: M. Suprenant
Vote: M. Dowling and M. Suprenant in favor; M. Blanchard, P. Gimás and C. Moran opposed.

MOTION: To approve \$61,250 for Town Accountant Salary line #16, by C. Moran.
2nd: P. Gimás
Vote: Three in favor; M. Dowling and M. Suprenant opposed.

MOTION: To approve all line items not on hold, by P. Gimás.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

MOTION: To approve \$300 for line #41, by P. Gimás.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

M. Dowling commented that line #41 should not read "Board Salaries."

#72 8 Brookfield Road Purchase of Services

C. Moran asked whether that would cover everything needed to get the proposals done. S. Kennedy said that this number is in flux, conditioned upon an engineering estimate to bring the facility up to public safety and code compliance standards. She said that she had just received the report. She will review the report and will provide a copy to the Board. She said that the estimated amount of money to bring the building up to code would be over \$400,000.

B. Barry said that this number is in line with having someone use the building. She said that the number could be adjusted, and noted that there are many variables.

S. Kennedy said that there is an issue with the way that the drainage was constructed, and the building is not insulated. She noted that the article will be discussed at the meeting of April 21, as by then the Board will have had a chance to review the proposal.

It was the consensus of the Board to hold line item #72.

#79 Police Dept. Capital Outlay

M. Suprenant requested an explanation of why it does not go through capital planning. B. Barry said that it is considered operating capital. She noted that in

the past one cruiser was funded; two cruisers should be funded at a minimum, and the third would be funded through capital. She explained that putting it through capital would take away from other things for capital. She said that Chief Ford tends to fund purchases at the end of the fiscal year.

MOTION: Regarding line item #79, to take 50% of the cost of one cruiser and let one cruiser go through capital outlay and the other through the other line item, by C. Moran.
2nd: M. Suprenant

B. Barry suggested having Chief Ford meet with the Board to explain the situation. M. Dowling suggested putting the motion on hold until the Chief explains why three cruisers are needed, and to provide the mileage on the ones to be replaced. B. Barry said that she would ask the Chief to attend the meeting on April 21st.

C. Moran said that MHQ has a base line cruiser package, and every town that calls in gets the same price. S. Kennedy said that it usually takes months to obtain a cruiser. B. Barry commented that they rotate the equipment as much as they can.

It was the consensus of the Board to hold the motion on #79.

#82 Fire Dept. Overtime Expenses.

B. Barry said the Fire Chief will not need the money in training for FY16, as he had used it this year.

MOTION: To approve \$191,457 for line #82, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: Four in favor; M. Suprenant abstained.

#87 Building Inspector Salaries/Wages

B. Barry said that the former Administrative Assistant had been transferred to another department, and another person transferred to the Building Department.

MOTION: To approve \$22,965 for line #87, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

#92 Inspectors (Electrical and Plumbing)

MOTION: To approve \$40,000 for line #92, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

#97 Tree Warden Purchase of Services

S. Kennedy informed the Board that the Tree Warden had requested a \$9,600 Reserve Fund Transfer to take down a tree located adjacent to the nursery school. S. Kennedy did not think it constituted an emergency.

P. Gimas said that during one of the recent storms, a limb had fallen from a tree onto the car owned by a teacher at the nursery school, which is the reason for concern.

M. Dowling requested information about the plan of action. She wanted to know which trees are considered to be environmental concerns, and asked which trees will be treated. She asked about the effect of pesticides on wells in the area. B. Barry noted that the Finance Committee had asked a lot of questions at the budget meeting. S. Kennedy suggested getting a written response from the Tree Warden.

S. Kennedy said that there are five trees of concern, three at the Senior Center and some stumps to be removed. It was the consensus of the Board to hold item #97.

#101 Education Tantasqua Town Share

MOTION: To approve \$5,870,542 for line #101, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

#102 Education Tantasqua Transportation Assessment

MOTION: To approve \$189,157 for line #102, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

#128 Inspections & Testing Public Health Inspector

MOTION: To approve \$20,250 for line #128, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

#130 Council on Aging Salaries/Wages

MOTION: To approve \$54,629 for line #130, by P. Gimas.

2nd: C. Moran

Vote: All in favor.

#141 Veterans Services Veterans' Benefits

MOTION: To approve \$65,000 for line #141, by P. Gimas.

2nd: M. Dowling

Vote: All in favor.

#148 Recreation Dept. Head Salary

B. Barry noted that this is the first year for unfreezing steps for non-union hourly employees. Lynne Girouard's status has been switched to department head. She is part of the merit pool, and is an hourly employee; she should not be both. She is a salaried employee, even though she is a grade 9. M. Dowling added that she has not been getting the merit increase for a number of years, and she is not in the same situation as the other department heads.

S. Kennedy suggested placing Lynne Girouard in another grade so that she would be treated as other department heads.

MOTION: To support line item #148 as written, by M. Dowling.

There was no second.

MOTION: To approve \$32,921 for line #148, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: Four in favor; M. Dowling opposed.

#154 Debt Service Principal Burgess Elementary Project

MOTION: To approve \$857,000 for line #154, by P. Gimas.
2nd: M. Dowling
Vote: All in favor.

#167 Unclassified Group Insurance

S. Kennedy said that she and B. Barry have been working with an outside consultant on this matter. She said that the Town had gotten a substantial increase in March this year from MIIA, and she has been hearing from other health insurance groups. She noted that the Insurance Advisory Committee will meet on April 28th to decide upon the matter. They will make a recommendation to the Town Administrator, who will in turn present it to the Board of Selectmen. B. Barry added that if the Town changes insurance carriers, it will have the same benefits but by another carrier. It was the consensus of the Board to set a meeting to vote on the matter on April 29th and April 30th at 10:00 a.m.

MOTION: To adjourn, by P. Gimas.
2nd: C. Moran
Vote: All in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Knowles

BOS Clerk

Date