



Office of the
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
272 Main Street
Townsend, Massachusetts 01469

Nicholas Thalheimer, *Chairman*
Andrew J. Sheehan,
Town Administrator

Sue Lisio, *Vice-Chairman*

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SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 16, 2013 - 6:00 P.M.
SELECTMEN'S MEETING CHAMBERS

I PRELIMINARIES

- 1.1 The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:00PM and roll call showed Chairman, Nicholas Thalheimer (NT); Vice-Chairman, Sue Lisio (SL); and Clerk, Robert Plamondon (RP) in attendance.
- 1.2 NT gave notice that the meeting is being tape recorded.
- 1.3 There were no additions or deletions.

III MEETING BUSINESS

- 3.1 National Public Safety Telecommunications Week: Vote to issue a proclamation acknowledging April 14-20 as National Public Safety Telecommunications Week. RP read the proclamation into the record and moved to issue. SL seconded. Unanimous.

V WORK SESSION

- 5.1 Board of Selectmen Updates/Reports – None
- 5.2 Town Administrator Updates/Reports – None
- 5.3 Review/Sign Payroll Warrant: RP moved to sign warrants out of session. SL seconded. Unanimous.
- 5.4 Review/Sign Bills Payable Warrant: RP moved to sign warrants out of session. SL seconded. Unanimous.

III MEETING BUSINESS (continued)

- 3.2 FY14 Budget Workshop. Discussion of FY14 budget. Mr. Sheehan began with an overview of revenues and recap of changes to the FY13 budget as a result of the override votes. Revenues are projected to be similar to FY13. The Proposition 2 ½ increase will be \$350,000, meals tax should be consistent; there will be the \$20,000 increase from the Inter-municipal Agreement with Dunstable. Also \$203,000 will be taken out of Capital Stabilization for the debt service for the Spaulding roof replacement project. The projections for local aid and receipts are conservative. The Town Accountant has reviewed Mr. Sheehan's projections and given her approval. With regard to salaries, all non-union salaries are based on a 2 ½% increase, contracts have been negotiated with contracted personnel, and collective bargaining agreements have not been finalized at this point.

In reviewing the budget department by department, the following were of note:

- Accounting - \$20,000 salary difference because of the agreement with Dunstable. Annual license agreements moved to the MIS budget.
- Treasurer - \$8,000 from professional services moved into the MIS budget.
- MIS – increased to \$11,800 with the shifts from the Accounting and Treasurer's budgets. Equipment has been raised to \$6,000 and will continue to increase in future years.
- Clerk and Elections – increase in salaries, decrease in elections (no Presidential or Senatorial elections in FY14).

- Conservation – money saved with the job consolidation.
- Facilities – increase in energy to \$75,000 from \$71,000 as a cushion. Professional services from \$38,000 to \$40,000. Janitorial contract is currently out to bid.
- Total increase in General Government of \$7,000.
- Police – salaries, vehicles, training and communications: increase of \$25,000.
- Fire – increase of \$13,000 mostly per diem wages.
- Building – wages and travel stipend/vehicle-related items: change of \$350.
- Education - assessments: NMRSD up slightly, NVTHS goes up about \$40,000.
- Highway – discussion on increasing the Snow and Ice line item. Fin Com voted to support \$175,000 for Snow and Ice. The amount will be raised and appropriated from the tax levy.
- Street lights – up from \$15,000 to \$17,500. The Energy Committee is looking at purchasing them as a cost-savings option.
- Curbside trash collection – the next contract for trash pickup will commence in FY15.
- COA and Senior Center have been combined.
- Veteran’s Agent – benefits amount can be increased at Town Meeting if needed. Salary has been adjusted consisted with other stipend positions.
- Library – moved \$4,036 from Sunday staffing to other wages will allow them to adjust their staffing to meet demand. Eliminating Sunday hours due to increased use during the week. Total increase of about \$9,000.
- Recreation – SL asked what happened to the money they were going to provide for the new tennis courts. Mr. Sheehan believes they agreed to provide \$40,000 and will look into where that stands.
- Long-term debt – down almost \$100,000 from FY12 to \$589,232.

RP asked if we have had a response regarding the \$180,000 increase in retirement. Mr. Sheehan said we have not received a response or even our assessment for FY14. RP moved to direct the Town Administrator to send a strongly-worded letter to the Middlesex County Retirement inquiring as to the rationale and the justification as to the amount of the increase and an explanation as to the lack of a response and expectation for the coming years. SL seconded. Unanimous.

- Health insurance – 6 ½% increase from MIIA. There may be some changes as a result of collective bargaining. Budgeting a 10% increase in property and liability.
- Offsets – i.e. ambulance receipts, Comcast receipts, cemetery lots, etc. total \$312,634.
- Overall general fund budget increase of \$371,689 or 2.1% over last year.
- Water Department Enterprise budget – only difference is the Inter-municipal agreement, the money they pay for certain services we provide.

As soon as the final own Meeting version of the budget is ready it will be posted on the web site.

Fin Com Chairman, Nancy Rapoza said members of the Finance Committee have questions for the Board about the Town Administrator’s contract. NT provided her with a survey of FY13 Town Administrator salaries. A prolonged discussion ensued. NT pointed out that this is about bringing the salary up to the market and making the position attractive for future applicants. SL believes it is partially retention and partially making sure we are grading the position correctly. Ms. Rapoza pointed out that attracting and retaining the right people is important. Hiring a new Administrator every three years it’s not good for the town. We need stability. SL calculated that the average of the salary comparison would be \$102,000; the proposed salary is \$95,000. Questions were also raised about the severance package and reimbursement for travel.

The meeting adjourned at 7:37PM