

**BOARD OF  
SELECTMEN  
MEETING  
MINUTES**

**March 20, 2013**

Fire & EMS Headquarters, 20 Church Street , Training Room  
Chairman Kenneth Picard, Selectman James Brochu, Selectman Robert J.  
Fleming Town Manager, Blythe C. Robinson, Executive Assistant,  
Sandra Hakala

1 The meeting was called to order at 7:15pm

2  
3 The Selectmen joined the Finance Committee at their regularly scheduled meeting to discuss the  
4 FY 13/14 budget.

5  
6 The Finance Committee asked the Town Manager to present the FY 13/14 proposed budget.

7  
8 Ms. Robinson began by siting the budget adjustments that she made to create a favorable budget.  
9 The operating budget was adjusted by reducing fire wages (\$12,936) from 10K in overtime and  
10 the Chief's contract; by reducing the Veteran's Benefits (\$2000); and increasing the BVT budget  
11 to \$836,029 per request.

12  
13 The revenue budget adjustments were created by adding \$111,651 to the debt exclusions to  
14 account for the 3<sup>rd</sup> well field and by removing the snow/ice deficit Ms. Robinson relayed to the  
15 Finance Committee.

16  
17 Ms. Robinson proceeded to review the warrant articles that are reflected in the current proposed  
18 adjustments;

- 19 • Increased the Retirement Contribution to the full assessment
- 20 • Reduced the Electronic permitting grant to \$6,000
- 21 • Funded the Town Hall from free cash for \$50,000 and the balance by borrowing
- 22 • Fire Chief's SUV – funded through free cash
- 23 • Fire Building Improvements cut to \$8,000
- 24 • Police Station – \$160,000 funded from Free Cash
- 25 • Drainage Repairs – deferred
- 26 • DPW Director SUV – reduced to \$28,000 and funded from Free cash and a prior year's
- 27 borrowing
- 28 • Road Repairs – reduced to \$50,000
- 29 • Sidewalk program – deferred
- 30 • Cemetery Mowers – defer until a decision is made on cemetery maintenance. DPW says
- 31 they can keep the current mowers in service
- 32 • Field Mower – defer until fall, 2013 STM
- 33 • Conservation Fund – reduce to \$2,000
- 34 • Town Clerk – Trailer – add \$4,535
- 35 • Budget Transfers - \$41,000 from free cash for paramedic expense and fire wages
- 36 • Transfers to Stabilization - \$100,000 from free to general, \$26,446 from an old article to
- 37 school stabilization, water & wastewater free cash to stabilization
- 38

39 A brief discussion ensued on Town Hall be funded from free cash for \$50,000 and the balance by  
40 borrowing and that Road Repairs – reduced to \$50,000 was had. The Finance Committee was in  
41 agreement with the proposed recommendations.

42 Steve Bern noted an inaccuracy in the DPW's budget regarding the information that was reported  
43 by Mike Goodwin on the allocation of the Department Specialist's wages. The 50/30/20% of  
44 wages appeared to be incorrect. Ms. Robinson agreed and check to see if an adjustment is  
45 needed.

46  
47 The Town Manager also asked the Finance Committee to consider deferring \$60,000 for library  
48 renovations until the completion of Town Hall project and use those monies for restoring the  
49 funds for road repair; and determine the amount of snow/ice deficit and fund from free cash up to  
50 \$100,000.

51  
52 John Calianos asked the Selectman to consider a vehicle use policy in order to discourage setting  
53 a precedent for use of town owned vehicles being taken to the user's residence. Chairman Picard  
54 expressed to the Committee a precedent had been previously established and there are already  
55 contractual agreements in place allowing the practice.

56  
57 Chairman Picard explained to the Finance Committee that it is the policy of the Town that  
58 certain positions require employee access to Municipal Vehicles, either during their work shift or  
59 on a 24-hour on-call basis. The Police Chief, Fire Chief and DPW Director are officially  
60 designated with 24 hour on-call status; are required for frequent emergency availability during  
61 non-working hours; and issuance or other equipment is contained in their vehicles.

62  
63 Selectman Fleming also addressed the questions that the Finance Committee asked concerning  
64 the compensation and recent contract negotiations with the Town Manager. He stated that as the  
65 sole hiring authority for this position the Selectmen recognize that the Town is paying for the  
66 worth of the position and to respect the fact that the Selectmen are being financially responsible.  
67 Chairman Picard added that a market analysis showed that Upton is below the median grade  
68 level and is being progressive and financially responsible as well. He also stated that this was an  
69 executive decision to protect the interest of the position and the Board will continue to be  
70 transparent and will look at alternative ways to disseminate the information once an agreement is  
71 reached.

72  
73 Selectman Fleming initiated a discussion on the salaries (stipends) of elected officials if all are  
74 set \$1000 and handed out an analysis of the current structure. Selectman Fleming pointed out the  
75 inequities in the rate structure and suggested that all elected officials should be equally  
76 compensated. John Calianos suggested that possibly no one should receive a stipend, that serving  
77 was an opportunity to give back to the community.

78  
79 All agreed that more data was necessary and each committee/board would compare four other  
80 towns' of similar size to aid in further discussion. The Board would supply the Finance  
81 Committee with which towns to gather information from, specifically on the Board of Assessor  
82 salaries.

83  
84 The discussion then moved to Article 14 on the warrant, changing the Town Clerk from an  
85 elected to an appointed position. The purpose of this article is to seek the Town's approval, and if  
86 passed it will also require a Special Act of the Legislature be approved before it takes effect.  
87 Selectman Brochu stated that this would allow for the most qualified person be appointed to the

88 position and because we have a qualified person today we do not know what will happen in three  
89 years.

90  
91 John O’Sullivan inquired as to why both elected positions were not being pursued at the same  
92 time. Chairman Picard stated that this was an opportune time for the Town Clerk position to  
93 change because this position was up for election and the Treasurer/Collector position will be  
94 looked at in two years when it is up for election. Chairman Picard also pointed out that a job  
95 description and contract are being considered for the position of Town Clerk at this time.

96  
97 The Board of Selectmen then moved the meeting to the adjourning room and continued their  
98 meeting to discuss the church lease. The church had responded to the lease earlier in the day the  
99 Town Manager reported. The church requested a security deposit, not to guarantee any utilities,  
100 not to fix the doors, and not to pay taxes. The Selectmen agreed to have the Town Manager meet  
101 with the church officials to review their terms and continue negotiations.

102

103 **ADJOURN MEETING**

104

105 **Motion #9:** At 9:00 Motion was made by Selectman Brochu to adjourn the regular meeting.

106

107 Second: Selectman Fleming, Unanimous: Chairman Picard.

108

109

110 Respectfully submitted,

111

112 Sandra Hakala

113 Executive Assistant