

Approved 7/11/05

TOWN OF HAMPDEN, MASSACHUSETTS
BOARD OF SELECTMEN/BOARD OF HEALTH

June 21, 12005
6:30 pm

625 Main Street
Town House

Present: James Smith, Duane Mosier, John Flynn
Residents in attendance: Dick Gouvan, Bonnie Choiniere, Pat Clark, Virginia Schneider, Jackie Weissbach, Doris Ouimet, George Choiniere, Cynthia Bailey, Rita Vail, Mattee Nichols, Barbara Tobin, Audrey Burger, Arthur L. Burger, Shirley I. Gouvan, Dick Jones

Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm by James Smith.

6:30 pm Tracy Sicbaldi, Town Treasurer: James Smith started the discussion of the Town's contribution rate for health insurance and the fact that it is based on the highest cost health plan and the Town's contribution rate being 50%. James' position is that our past practice has been to match the dollar contribution that we currently pay for the Tufts plan (the highest plan available) for the time being, but that the Board should review contribution rates for future years. Duane agreed that past practice has shown that we have used the higher funding, but that we would have to make changes in steps, and that we would have to negotiate with the unions.

John Flynn would like to see a business model, and agreed that it would be unfair to make a change at this point, but that it should be looked at for the future.

Motion made by Duane Mosier directing Pam Courtney to provide premium schedule to insured employees based on the town paying 50% of the Tufts plan and a dollar equivalent for other plans offered. Second by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

6:45 pm Cliff Bombard – Town Accountant – Cliff came in to discuss accounts that have a surplus and those that are in deficit, and the need for money to be shifted around before year end.

James discussed monies owed the School District – approximately \$34,000. Interest payments are owed. Need documentation from Cliff regarding these amounts, some is from money that was not paid last year, which ended up in free cash.

James is asking for breakdown of missed payment from Cliff. Cliff would like this taken care of by July 15th (which is the last warrant for FY05).

7:00 pm Walk-Ins

Ellen Bump – Library – When the last salary is paid and some additional expenses, the library account may have only \$200 left.

June 30th 6:00 pm rally for the library – funded by private citizens, and paid for by Friends of the Library.

Library would not be accredited until 2007 if we do open in 2006.

7:15 pm Personnel Committee re: Police Chief Search: The Board voted to search and interview within the current Police Department. Criteria for a search must be established. We can review what was used in the recent past, see what is relevant and determine where to go from here. The Personnel Committee will put a job description together, as well as a job posting and see what candidates come forward.

Acting Chief is here with less than 2 weeks left on his appointment. How long shall we continue his appointment for? How long does the job need to be posted? Is there a minimum? We will default to State statute.

Carol Fitzgerald, Personnel Committee thinks a 6-8 week timeframe would be manageable for their work to be complete.

Who will do the screening? Interview?

The last time the Board accepted 5 referrals initially.

Can limit steps due to a small pool of potential candidates.

Some questions had been developed the last time which were forwarded to the Board for their use.

Committee will try to meet within the next two weeks to start the process.

Fire Chief, Peter Hatch arrived to discuss bid proposals for the fire truck. He would like to reject all bids, and go out to re-bid. Price is one of the problems as well as a bid not meeting specs. Issue to be discussed with Dave Martel.

Motion made by Duane Mosier to reject bids for fire truck based on Legal Counsel's approval. Second by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

7:30 pm Police Reserve Officer Interview – Jeffrey Wojcik

Jeff Farnsworth introduced Jeff Wojcik as a candidate for the reserve position.

He brings the right demeanor and has good scheduling availability.

James says that history shows that the Department chooses candidates after careful consideration. James went on to state that the police in Hampden are highly visible and the Town wants it that way. We want professionals on the job, firm when necessary, open and friendly as well. James emphasized that he get to know the community and to be available.

Duane wanted to emphasize how important community policing is in Town and ensure that Jeff understands that.

Jeff Wojcik is 31 years old and has an Associates Degree in Criminal Justice. He works at Holyoke Community College, works in fire safety, fire drills, in the military, and is a tactical sgt. in the Air Force.

John Flynn notes his impressive resume, thinks he will be an asset to the force, and to the community as well.

The question was asked whether any certifications are necessary prior to his appointment. He will need firearm certification.

A motion was made by John Flynn to appoint Jeffrey J. Wojcik as a probationary Reserve Officer for a period of one year, contingent upon successful firearms certification within 90 days of appointment. Second by Duane Mosier. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

A motion was made by John Flynn to extend Jeff Farnsworth, Acting Police Chief's contract for 90 days from expiration of June 30, 2005. Second by Duane Mosier. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

7:45 pm

IBPO – Staffing Discussion

Motion by Duane Mosier to go into Executive Session for IBPO for the purpose of discussing the impact of staffing as it relates to police officers in the department with return to Open Session. Second by John Flynn. VOTE: James Smith yes, Duane Mosier yes, John Flynn yes.

The Board moved out of Executive Session at 8:45 pm and resumed their previously scheduled appointments for the night.

8:00 pm Becky Moriarty – Director, Senior Center closing

Becky came before the Board to discuss final costs and details of center closing.

Need projected costs to close out accounts so transfers can take place.

Total buyouts are presented to the Board. Longevity is typically paid on July 1st – prorate for anniversary date purposes.

Relocation of an office for senior center purposes, outreach coordinator will be on board until September or October. Becky will apply for that grant to continue.

Formula grant has also been applied for.

Becky will continue to supervise the outreach program (on a five hour a week schedule) which is mandated or we will lose funding. They will need a locked file cabinet as there are privacy issues as well.

The senior aide has a 20 hour week. 9-1 timeframe, Becky prefers that one space be available. Large meeting room would probably be the best choice.

Need computer hook up and phone line as well. Phone jacks are already in the room.

Mailing address has been changed to the Selectmen's office.

Who will check on the senior center on a routine basis? Rudy Voight will do building checks on his daily walks, flush toilets, run water in the sinks, our custodian has agreed to help out on an as needed basis with the fire call list as well.

COA meets on the 28th as well. Becky will see if someone from the Board will agree to go on the list as well.

Building is sprayed monthly for ants/termites for 27/mo? Shall we continue? We may cut back in the winter months. Becky will continue to coordinate for spraying.

Fire extinguishers, should she maintain the schedule for December check? In 2006, there is an itemized list of checks that need to be performed.

The Board wants the COA to stay involved, and for grant approval, they need to stay in existence.

Change phone service so 5588 number calls come into town house.

Congregate meal site has changed to Bethlehem Baptist Church for a 6 month probationary period. Gen Ford has stepped forward to be the lead for the meal site.

8:30 pm Patty Ehlers: Petition Discussion

Patty Ehlers contends that information was never disseminated to the general public as to the ramifications of a failed override.

James feels that the Board made the necessary information public.

Duane Mosier pointed out that out of 3300 potential voters, approximately 60% voted and failed the override.

John Flynn stated that the State is running a surplus, but this part of the state gets a reduced share. The Board met with Mary Rogeness and pleaded our case for state funding. Minimal increase in our budget in comparison to the State's.

If local aid comes in higher than projected, it becomes a town meeting decision to determine how the money is spent.

Items for Discussion:

1. Lightship Telephone Service Proposal: A local phone service company came in with a proposal to reduce costs for phone service. The Board will speak with Verizon (our current carrier) to see what they can offer.
2. TWB improvements: The group heading up improvements has moved forward with engineering drawings for the proposed modifications.
3. TWB DEP notice: Mike Messier is working on the solution to the DEP letter. The Board will send a letter requesting that they be copied on any correspondence to ensure that we are complying with all requests.
4. BOS meeting schedule –Change Tuesday's meeting to Monday's to accommodate deadline date of Wilbraham/Hampden Times, so more information gets out on a timely basis. There was also discussion of going to a weekly meeting schedule after the summer. Will be discussed at a later date.

Motion made by Duane Mosier to change Board's meeting schedule to Monday evenings. Second by James Smith. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

The Board will notify the Republican and Reminder regarding meeting date change.

5. Meeting Minutes of June 7, 2005 – Minutes were reviewed and a motion was made by John Flynn to approve as corrected, seconded by Duane Mosier. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.
6. Town House Lights – Duane presented quote for emergency lighting upgrade in Town Hall. Discussion about disposal of old lights and installation cost. The Board authorizes Duane to go forward with light installation up to \$2,000.00
7. Unemployment hearing – James Smith will contact Jeff Farnsworth and ask that he speak with Doug Mellis regarding a hearing to contest paying an unemployment claim.
8. Mass Electric: Need to be contacted regarding turning off street lights.

Motion made by Duane Mosier to go into Executive Session at 11:15 pm for the purpose of discussing negotiations with IBPO, without return to Open Session, second by John Flynn.

VOTE: Duane Mosier yes, James Smith yes, John Flynn yes.

Respectfully submitted:

Pamela B. Courtney
Administrative Assistant

/pbc