

Approved 3/18/13

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

March 11, 2013
5:30 pm

625 Main Street
Hampden, MA 01036

Board Members: Vincent J. Villamaino, John D. Flynn, Norman Charest

Guest: Tyler Witkop, The Wilbraham-Hampden Times

The meeting was called to order by Vinnie Villamaino at 5:30 pm.

Highway Department Budget: Dana Pixley came before the board to finalize budget numbers prior to meeting with Advisory. Some of the discussion focused on the 40k salary number that is not funded to the department on an annual basis. This causes Dana to find other ways to fund the salaries for his staff. Typically this money comes from the annual state funding. John would like to fund the total amount over a number of years rather than doing the 40k all at once. Norm feels as though the budget deficit should be dealt with in one year, since the salary money decreases the money that Dana has to work with on road improvements. It also requires a good deal of shuffling for Dana during the year.

The next line item discussed was the gasoline account that Dana manages as the tanks and usage system are located at the garage. Dana recommends that the budget be increased by \$15,000 to allow for additional costs for the tank maintenance. This was a state mandated program that will cost approximately \$5k annually. Additionally, there is an increase for gas costs and an increase in gas consumption. This account will run short this year by about \$15k. Advisory will be made aware of this.

Dana also remarked that he is waiting for Federal reimbursement in the amount of \$173k. John has checked with Gale Candara's office and learned that many communities are still waiting as well.

The group discussed the issue of the bond they wish to put on the warrant, trying to determine the amount to ask for; the projects to concentrate on, etc. This will be discussed with Advisory as well.

Planning Board: Neil Flynn came before the board to discuss the proposed warrant articles dealing with zoning bylaws. He explained the minor changes made, and approved by Town Counsel, Dave Martel. They will be heard at a public hearing, and then posted on the warrant for Annual Town Meeting.

Budget Review with Advisory: The board and Dana Pixley met with Advisory to discuss highway numbers for warrant articles. With some further number crunching done by Dana, he was able to reduce the money needed for the equipment replacement. For the four articles Dana was able to get the numbers under \$100k, all of which will come out of stabilization.

The two groups also discussed the salary issue and fully funding or partially funding the 40k this year. Doug Boyd and John Flynn wish to partially fund the line over a few years.

The Gasoline account was discussed as well. Given the new monitoring that must be done, it was suggested that the account have another line added to the account to fund expenses. A note will be sent to Cliff Bombard, Town Accountant asking that line 35.1 be marked for Fuel and 35.2 be marked for Expenses. Advisory will make the adjustment in their budget sheets as well.

The last item discussed was the bond and the amount that should be voted on at town meeting and the following election. Given the many highway projects requiring repair and the amount of projects the highway department was able to accomplish, the two groups feel that a bond for \$2 million should be sought.

Minnechaug Land Project: Sherry Himmelstein came before the board to discuss a warrant article for additional property to be acquired to add to the West Brook property acquired last year. The plan is for this to be funded with Community Preservation money. This property is owned by Morton and Sherry Himmelstein is getting an appraisal prior to making an offer to purchase. The grant program allows a 66% state match, instead of the normal 50%, with the other 35% being funded by CPC money. Sherry will have to first borrow the money to purchase, and then wait for reimbursement which would be done in the same fiscal year. Sherry will have an appraisal by month end and will forward that to the board.

Chief's contract resolution: The board has not finalized working on the Chief's salary issue with his contract. This will need to be resolved in the next few months.

Police Department Seniority Clarification: The Police Union sent a note to the board relative to two new hires as full time officers. It clarifies the issue of seniority as it relates to the two officers, Michael Meaney and Tom Yvon. So noted by the board.

Reserve Officer Position versus Auxiliary Officer Position: Currently, the Police Department has the position of Reserve Officers of which a dispatcher has been appointed to this position. A problem arises in that working as a reserve in an overtime situation requires the department to spend more money for this service than for a full time officer. Because of that the board will suggest that Chief Farnsworth develop a job description for an auxiliary officer, allowing them to work detail work only, which is contracted through others and does not come through the department's salary line. The Chief will work on this and get back to the board

Warrant Review: This will be reviewed at the next meeting as well, and any last minute changes will be made.

Stormwater Proposal: Tighe and Bond were asked for a proposal to do our annual report for stormwater practices. Their proposal is for a lump sum fee of \$2,000. A motion was made by Norm Charest to accept the proposal and proceed, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Insurance Rates: SVRHT has set the rates for insurance for the coming fiscal year. Blue Cross/Blue Shield will go up 8.5% and HNE will go up 4.5%. These increases will be figured into budget figures.

Minutes: The minutes of February 25, 2013 were reviewed and a motion was made by Norm Charest to approve as presented, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Building Permits: Report noted.

Hollow Road reopening: The board received a letter from a Wilbraham resident inquiring about the possibility of reopening Hollow Road which was closed years ago at the urging of the Wilbraham Selectmen. Hampden agreed to the closure after much discussion and a gate was installed at the time. Wilbraham Highway Department did not want the burden of maintaining the road. John Goodrich from Wilbraham is seeking Hampden's support to reopen the road to take before the Wilbraham Selectmen. This board will follow up with the Wilbraham board.

Chair lift proposal: The board reviewed the lift proposal from the State Vendor list which allows the town to buy directly from them rather than putting it through Central Register.

Charter Agreement: The board has received a renewal contract from Charter Communications for a ten year extension. The board will have to hold an ascertainment hearing which is a public hearing at which time residents can have their questions answered before the board signs the renewal.

Landfill Monitoring Proposal: Our water operator, Mike Framarin forwarded his proposal for the spring monitoring at the landfill required by DEP. The proposal has not changed in scope or cost from last year. A motion was made by Norm Charest to approve the proposal for monitoring in the amount of \$12,920, seconded by Vinnie Villamaino. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Constable Replacements: The board recently received a letter of resignation from former Police Chief George Stone in his position as Constable. The board was also made aware that Charles Wood was also not interested in running for the position again. There are two positions open now. The board understands that Dennis Hackett and Dave Lussier are interested in the positions. This will be discussed further prior to the election.

With no further business, a motion was made by Norm Charest to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 pm, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela B. Courtney
Administrative Assistant /pbc