

Approved 2/4/14

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

January 27, 2014
6:00 pm

625 Main Street
Hampden, MA 01036

Board Members: John D. Flynn, Norman Charest, Vincent J. Villamaino
Norm Charest was unable to attend the meeting.
The meeting was called to order a 6:00 pm.
Mike Cooney was in attendance as well.

Chief Farnsworth: The Chief introduced Michael Gralinski to the board to be appointed as a Reserve Officer. Sgt. Cooney was in attendance as well. Jeff stated that Michael had worked for us some time ago, but because of work and family obligations he was unable to work the required hours for the job. He now works at Hallmark Cards as a manager and has been there for twelve years. The Chief was pleased with his past performance and Sgt. Cooney stated that he was a good addition to the department. A motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to appoint Michael Gralinski as a Reserve Officer, for a probationary period of 120 days to allow all training to be completed, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Chief Farnsworth, Budget Review: The board reviewed the budget proposed by the Chief and recognized the capital project request for new defibrillators to replace those used by the Police Department, Senior Center and Fire Department. There are a total of 10 needed and Jeff has investigated getting a better price if purchased all at the same time. He is seeking \$20,000 to replace the units. The budgeted amount for new car has been increased to \$36k as Jeff has learned that Ford has a substantial increase in their vehicles and projects an increase in the new equipment needed for the new car. The other increases are based on contractual obligations, a slight increase in training costs, an increase in general expenses and a decrease in the Career Incentive line item with the retirement of Sgt. Henry. John praised Jeff on doing a good job on the budget. There was further discussion about the internet and broadband and a decision as to who the town should go with, as Charter Cable is increasing the cost to us and Broadband options may be outside of our budget numbers. This will continued to be discussed.

Chief Gorski, Budget Review: Chief Gorski came before the board to present his budget and capital request. Mike has pursued grants for Scott packs; this being the third year in a row. The current packs are twenty (20) years old and do not meet current standards. The packs are defined as obsolete at ten years or older. These units are essential for firefighting operations when dealing with smoke and toxins. The useful life of new units would be 10 – 20 years. The department has 20 packs, one per seat, and two that are for rapid intervention; assisting someone being rescued. John asked if part of this purchase could be staggered over a few years. Given

that it is a safety issue, Mike would prefer that financing become available. John then suggested taking some money out of the stabilization fund.

The Department will be looking at a truck in a few years, and Mike's concern is that anything new will not fit where the 97 tanker is currently parked. Current trucks will be 1.5% larger than the older trucks. He also wondered if there was a place where the old truck could be housed, but neither John nor Vinnie had any ideas that were not cost prohibitive.

Training remains constant throughout the year and when asked about the retention rate for his volunteers, Mike's response was that for every five that come into the department, two leave. The cost of the first year of training is between \$500-600. The Fire Marshal requires that fire volunteers use equipment that is less than ten years old.

Patty Jalbert: Ms. Jalbert from 202 Somers Road came before the board to ask about a bill she received from the police department relative to false alarms they respond to during a year. She has been broken into four times over the past seven years or so and has now been charged for false alarms at her home. The bylaw was passed in 2005 that after three false alarms, the homeowner would be charged \$25 per call for additional false alarms. Ms. Jalbert contends that the police are out on duty and if a call comes in, then responding is part of their job. The board suggested that she check with her alarm company to see if a service call should be made to alleviate the problem. Sgt. Cooney came in to relate this information to Ms. Jalbert and the board will seek additional information from the Chief as to the protocol for these charges.

Becky Moriarty, Budget Review: Becky came before the board with two COA board members, Deanna Vermette and Ray Crowley. Becky started by explaining the demands on the outreach coordinator who in effect has become the social service for the town. She works with fuel assistance, food stamp assistance, home visits and she saw 310 people last year. She still coordinates volunteer drivers. She had been doing the trolley scheduling, but that job has gone back to the East Longmeadow COA. She currently works about 9 hours for outreach and 15 hours for transportation scheduling. She does receive grant funding for the position but Becky feels as though she needs additional hours to service the needs of the people. Becky would like an additional 14 hours which would give her 24 hours a week doing outreach work.

Wendy has also been very helpful with families trying to get their parents into assisted living. Becky is trying to maintain her position and as this is a federal grant, Becky will look to Greater Springfield in the future for possible funding as well. Becky noted that most communities have full time outreach positions.

It was also noted that Karen Leger has left the board.

Vinnie then asked about the operations at the Senior Center and Becky and the board members offered the following information:

- Our senior center has a large number of brown bag recipients.
- Database provider has increased.
- Outreach should be fulltime to accommodate the needs of our residents.
- Custodial is good at this point.
- There is hope that the new phone and the old phone will be a wash.
- John mentioned that computer upgrades will have to be done in the near future as the XP program will no longer be technically supported.
- Total increase in budget is \$12,250.

Dana Pixley, Budget Review: Dana came before the board to review again the budget and the board wished to clarify some numbers from the last meeting. There was a misunderstanding of the recommendation made by the board at the last meeting and they would like \$1k added to the Street Sweeping account and an additional \$3k to the number Dana had already increased the Catch Basin Cleaning Account by. This will allow for cleaning of approximately 30% of the basins in town annually.

Tree warden account will allow the use of tree trucks for five days in the coming year.

The board would like to increase the amount to achieve a fully funded department with no further reliance on State money to pay for payrolls. This year an additional \$13,584 will be added to the budget.

In addition, the board asked that the Snow and Ice Account be increased by \$10,000.

Dana also presented a letter regarding the Snow and Ice Account and the unexpended balance of \$8,644. Since this amount is insufficient to pay current bills, Dana asked that the board vote to allow him to “run the account in the red”. A motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to allow the Highway Superintendent to run the account in “the red” through the rest of the winter season, seconded by Norm Charest. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

It was also confirmed that the Board of Selectmen would add another \$5k to the gasoline account. Dana also brought up the issue with two of the sanders that are nearing the end of their usefulness. His department worked on them to have them ready for the rest of this season, but anticipates another year or so after this one. He did not trade in the old sander when he got the newest one, so he has five sanders at this time and will work with those for as long as he can. This will be discussed at some future date. He just wanted to make the board aware of the situation.

Charter Cable Update: John has made contact with a few vendors and is still negotiating with Charter as we may have to go with them for internet access. The other options may be too costly.

Warrantless Entry Policy: Norm has to review these before the board will sign off on them.

Warrant and Articles: For review at a later date.

Minutes of January 21, 2014: The minutes were not reviewed as Norm Charest was not here to review them.

Fred Frangie: Chairman of the Park and Rec Commission came before the board to discuss proposed warrant articles for the ATM. One is for another pavilion to allow full use of the park during camp hours by residents and the other is for replacement of the playscape that is currently in disrepair. The board stated that those were typically funded through fund raising efforts by residents and not supported in a warrant article.

The issue of the gym usage by the schools and the park department was discussed again. Fred will revisit the correspondence, redistribute schedules and get back to the board at a later date.

With no further business, a motion was made by Vinnie Villamaino to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 pm, seconded by John Flynn. VOTE: All in favor and so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela B. Courtney
Administrative Assistant

/pbc