

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING  
OCTOBER 22, 2019

PRESENT: David Lage, Chairman, John Veaser, Bert Hamill  
Scott Butcher – Town Administrator  
Finance Advisory Committee Members Jack Low, Jeff McCabe, Nicole Saczawa, Marc Fortier

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Office.

Chairman Lage began the discussion regarding the \$75,312 additional state aid received and that a public hearing was required to accept and spend the money. The Selectmen discussed the possible ways the money could be utilized. Some of the suggestions were completing the salt shed for the Highway Dept., replacing streetlights with LED unit to save money on electricity, take down the old Highway garage, put funding toward the new Police Station warrant article, or apply it to lower the tax rate. Selectman Veaser clarified that Selectman Hamill is in favor of the Police Station, but is concerned about the estimated cost.

The Selectmen discussed the cost of converting streetlights to LED units and the reduction in electricity costs. Chairman Lage said there is typically a 2-3 year payback on the LED units. Selectman Veaser suggested that any of the remaining money from the state aid be put toward the completion of the salt shed for the Highway Dept. The Selectmen agreed unanimously on that. It was agreed to schedule the hearing regarding the unanticipated state aid for November 19<sup>th</sup>.

The Selectmen also discussed trying to firm up a meeting with the State of NH concerning the Smithville cemetery. The suggested date was October 30<sup>th</sup>. In preparation for that meeting, the Selectmen agreed to meet on October 24<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. to review the issues with the cemetery and prepare a recommendation and requests to the State of NH to resolve the issues.

At 6:34 p.m. Selectman Veaser made a motion to enter into a nonpublic session under RSA 91-A:3 II (c). Selectman Hamill seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

At 7:05 p.m. Selectman Veaser made a motion to return to public session. Selectman Hamill seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Selectman Veaser made a motion to seal the minutes of the nonpublic session. Selectman Hamill seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

The Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) met with the Selectmen to begin reviewing FY2020 budgets. The FAC members voted unanimously to elect Marc Fortier as their Chairman.

Welfare FY2020 Budget Review: The Selectmen and FAC met with Welfare Director Carrie Traffic to review the Welfare budget. The only item she is asking to increase is her annual

stipend, going from \$5,000 to a requested \$7,800. Director Traffic indicated her stipend has remained the same for at least a decade. She indicated that other nearby towns use a factor of \$1.50 to \$2.00 per resident in the town to calculate annual stipends for her position. There was some discussion about how much time it takes her to do the job. Director Traffic stated that it was hard to determine because she performed a lot of small tasks such as telephone calls and e-mail at any time day or night as the position requires. The Selectmen asked if she travels on town business. Director Traffic indicated that it is rare, but she is obligated to go to the client if they can't come to the town offices. She also travels for training occasionally. She does not currently ask to be reimbursed for her travel or the use of her personal cell phone.

There was discussion between the Selectmen and FAC members about how to calculate the total number of hours Director Traffic works annually. Jack Low, Marc Fortier and Jeff McCabe stated that at 600 hours per year, the \$7,800 that Director Traffic is requesting represents \$13.00 per hour. Director Traffic offered that she gets \$20.00 per hour in another local town performing the same duties. Chairman Lage indicated that New Ipswich doesn't pay a \$20.00 per hour wage. Jack Low said the stipend needs to be rationalized and justified and considering that she doesn't get reimbursed for mileage or use of her cell phone, the request may be reasonable. Director Traffic said she would provide information on her contract in Jaffrey for comparison. Chairman Lage said the town often relies on wage information from the NH Municipal Association for similar size communities. Selectman Hamill suggested that Director Traffic keep track of her time and how many residents she handles to assist in the budgeting process next year. Jack Low concurred that any data would be helpful to justify the requested budget. After some discussion the Selectmen and FAC agreed to increase the stipend to \$7,000.

Treasurer's Office FY2020 Budget Review: The Treasurer was not present to review the department's budget. The Town Administrator presented the budget and read the comments the Treasurer provided including that the workload has increased and the Treasurer's office in new Ipswich functions more like a Finance Dept. in other towns with additional responsibilities. The requested budget for FY2020 is less than \$3,500 more than for the current year. That includes an increase in the Treasurer's stipend from \$14,000 per year to \$16,000 and an increase of \$2.00 per hour for the Deputy Treasurer, or \$9,948 total. After discussion between the Selectmen and FAC members, they adjusted the Treasurer's stipend to \$14,500 and increased the Deputy Treasurer's hourly rate to \$14.50 per hour, or \$9,048 total for the year.

Health Department FY2020 Budget Review: Health Officer Kim Sheridan reviewed her requested FY2020 budget with the Selectmen and FAC. She requested an increase in her annual stipend from \$2,500 for the current year to \$3,000 for FY2020. Also requested was an increase in the Health Supplies line item from \$30 to \$75. The remaining budget items requested were level funded. There was a lengthy discussion between all parties as to what the Health Officer's duties and responsibilities are. Health Officer Sheridan reviewed the training and certifications that are required to perform her duties. FAC member Jack Low asked how many hours it takes to get her job done. Health Officer Sheridan responded that it varies week to week, but that it has been busier in the last year. There is a lot of follow up required and the need to revisit sites.

She keeps logs on most of her activity, but not on everything she does. The number of calls she has received this year are more than double the previous year. After reviewing each line item, the Selectmen and FAC agree to increase the Health Officer's stipend to \$3,000, reduce Education line item from \$200 to \$100, keep Dues & Subscriptions at \$35 and Supplies at \$30, and reduce Mileage and Postage to \$1 each as a place holder.

Vertex Cell Tower Discussion: Selectman Hamill gave an update of the Planning Board discussion with the applicant about reserving space on the tower for municipal use. The applicant stating that if the town needed more space than he was offering in his standard lease agreement, he may have to charge for that additional space. Selectman Hamill felt the lease agreement was written mostly in the applicant's favor. The Town Administrator stated that it is difficult to negotiate with the applicant when the town isn't sure exactly what needs to be installed on the site for municipal communications at this point. Requirements have to be developed to determine how many antennas, communications equipment, and whether a generator for backup power will be necessary. The Town Administrator said a meeting has been set up with the communications vendor to get answers to those questions. Selectman Veaser stated he was concerned if at some point trying to use the space on the cell tower becomes cost prohibitive when everything else is factored in. FAC member Jack Low gave an overview of how communications generally works and whether the cell tower site should be used as a repeater site versus the primary site. The Selectmen asked the Town Administrator to send a letter to the Planning Board requesting that they delay the vote to approve or disapprove the cell tower beyond the November 6<sup>th</sup> Planning Board meeting and/or when the Selectmen and the applicant can come to agreement on the terms of the Municipal Tower Use Agreement.

Southwest Regional Planning Commission: Selectman Hamill offered his resignation as one of the town's representatives to the Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) and stated that Lou Alvarez would have agreed to take his place. Selectman Veaser made a motion to accept Selectman Hamill's resignation. It was seconded by Chairman Lage. The vote was unanimous. Selectman Veaser made a motion to appoint Lou Alvarez as Selectman Hamill's replacement on the SRPC Board. Selectman Hamill seconded. The vote was unanimous.

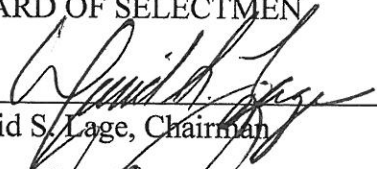
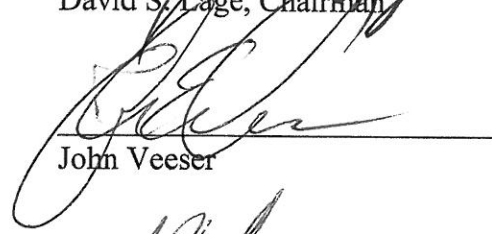
Ambulance Service Memorandum of Understanding: Selectman Veaser said he forwarded some additional information to Souhegan Valley Ambulance Service (SVAS) and discussed the genesis of the MOU and that it was not intended to be one-sided. Also discussed with SVAS representatives that the requirement to provide statistical data should not be a huge task.

Police Gifting: Finance Advisory Committee member Jack Low asked if it would be possible for a citizen to provide a donation to the community through the Police Dept. Chairman Lage asked it was going to be less than a \$5,000 value? Mr. Low said "Yes", and he was seeking the Selectmen's approval to do so. The Selectmen agreed to allow it.

The Selectmen voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Scott Butcher, Town Administrator

Minutes approved by:  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David S. Lage, Chairman  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Veaser  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bert Hamill