

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING  
NOVEMBER 5, 2019

PRESENT: David Lage, Chairman, John Veaser, Bert Hamill  
Scott Butcher – Town Administrator  
Finance Advisory Committee member Marc Fortier  
Stearns Burton Trust members Mary Fortier, Al Jenks, Kitty Waitt  
Souhegan Valley Ambulance Service COO Darel Oja  
DPW Director Peter Goewey

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

Stearns Burton Trust: Selectman Veaser started the discussion concerning how the Stearns Burton Trust (SBT) funds are approved for events. His understanding is that those funds are only to be used for educational or historic reasons and noted that some of the funds have been used for entertainment at times. The recent example he gave was the \$500 to hire Mike Ordway for musical entertainment for Autumnfest for the Parks & Rec. Dept. Selectman Veaser said some other questionable expenditures had been brought to his attention by groups that had been turned down by the SBT for funding. He also questioned the use of funds for a mentalist at the library and money for the fishing derby.

Chairman Lage said he didn't recall entertainment being approved by the Selectmen. Mary Fortier and Al Jenks stated that the Selectmen had given the SBT members carte blanche to decide what activities qualify or not. Selectman Veaser asked why \$500 was approved for entertainment that he feels is outside of the guidelines for the SBT. Chairman Lage gave an example of something that was entertainment, but had also included an educational element. Al Jenks said there is a fine line between something that is strictly entertainment and what is educational. That's what the SBT members debate amongst themselves all the time. Selectman Veaser stated that using the SBT guidelines, entertainment has to include a lesson, historical or scientific knowledge. He went on to cite an example of the request by a church for a puppet show that included education on how puppets are made. The SBT had denied funding for the puppet show.

Al Jenks stated that there is a lack of input from the community on how to best use the SBT funds. Chairman Lage asked whether it would be beneficial for the SBT members to proactively seek events to fund rather than waiting for someone to apply for funds. Mary Fortier said that would difficult to do and may require a subcommittee to be formed to identify those events. She thought it would be hard to find volunteers for a subcommittee. She went on to say that even amongst SBT members, they are not always unanimous in their decisions on what to fund or not. Chairman Lage suggested that there needs to be more frequent communication between the SBT members and the Selectmen. Al Jenks reiterated that the Selectmen had given the SBT members carte blanche to make the appropriate decisions and that they had met with the Selectmen a 1-1/2 years ago to establish that. Chairman Lage stated that if they hadn't talked with the Selectmen in

1-1/2 years, then they are operating on an island, not working together. Al Jenks said call us in more frequently, you are in charge, we're here at your pleasure. Chairman Lage suggested meeting with the Selectmen twice a year. He also stated the NH RSAs give direction on how trust funds such as this are utilized. Selectman Hamill reiterated Chairman Lage's position, apply the standards that are written in the trust as to how the funds can be used. Selectman Veaser said that there needs to be consistency on how applications for funds are handled. He also suggested that the application be modified to emphasize that educational aspect of events. Al Jenks stated that there is an educational value to the fishing derby for people that don't know how to fish. Chairman Lage stated that the original Stearns bequest was for the funds to be used for lectures and the Burton bequest was to be used for music and entertainment for the public benefit. Selectman Veaser gave an example of a request for funding for a lecture on identifying mental illness in teens that was not welcomed. SBT members said that was not the case. It was mentioned to them, and they would've supported it, but a formal request was never made.

Selectman Veaser brought up situations where applications had been denied because there was some other revenue generation to the lecturer or fund raising activity going on. The SBT members said they look at those on a case-by-case basis. Al Jenks stated that he doesn't like the idea of money exchanging hands at the events. Mary Fortier agreed. Selectman Veaser said he is just trying understand the guidelines so that he can explain to people why the SBT may have denied their application for funding. Several scenarios were discussed.

Al Jenks asked if there was a way they could know what the total amount of funds they have available to fund events. He said that would be very helpful to allow them to allocate the funds over the entire year and not spend it all too early. Chairman Lage said those numbers are published in the Town Report and that the Trustees of the Trust Funds could give them a balance of available funds. The SBT can spend the interest earned on the invested fund balance.

Souhegan Valley Ambulance Service M.O.U.: The Selectmen met with Darel Oja, COO for the Souhegan Valley Ambulance Service (SVAS) to discuss the remaining issues preventing SVAS from entering into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Town of New Ipswich. Darel asked if the discussion should take place in an open forum. Chairman Lage stated that the Selectmen could only go into a nonpublic session for specific reasons. Darel said it was a personnel related issue dealing with someone's reputation and that was impacting putting the MOU in place. The Selectmen discussed if going into a nonpublic session was necessary. Chairman Lage said that they should err on the side of caution and enter into a nonpublic session.

At 6:38 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 7:29 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.

DPW & Transfer Station Budget Review: DPW Director Goewey presented the budgets for the Dept. of Public Works and the Transfer Station. Directory Goewey calculated labor based on a 53 week pay period in FY2020, the Selectmen recalculated based on 52 weeks. There was discussion about final numbers for FICA, Medicare, and retirement. The education and training budget was reduced to \$300 from the \$400 requested. Health insurance requested decreased because of the change in status for an employee.

The Uniforms & Boots line item remained level funded below the requested \$11,708. This line item includes the Transfer Station employees. There was discussion about other alternatives to Cintas Uniform Service to reduce costs. Chairman Lage and Selectman Hamill wanted to know if it was cheaper to buy the clothing outright rather than rent them through a service. The current service also provides shop rags on a monthly basis.

The Drug and Alcohol Testing budget will be level funded for FY2020 at \$300. The heating budget for the DPW garage and Green Center will increase to \$6,000.

The Vehicle Maintenance budget is overspent for FY2019. Chairman Lage questioned why the line item has been exceeded and wanted to know if there is a particular vehicle responsible for it. Director Goewey said as vehicles age they require more repairs. It's not just the mileage, it's the number of hours they are operated. Selectman Hamill wanted to know if there is a vehicle that is a problem that should be replaced. There was discussion about several of the vehicles in the fleet and their repairs. Selectman Hamill wanted to know at what point is it that a vehicle is no longer worth repairing. The Selectmen decided to increase the funding in the Vehicle Maintenance line item to \$50,000 for FY2020 from \$40,000 in FY2019. Chairman Lage would like a vehicle by vehicle breakdown of expenses moving forward.

The Communications, Internet, and Cell Phone line item was funded at \$3,614 for FY2019 and the year-to-date spending is \$3,416 and is expected to go over the budget by year's end. The Selectmen wanted to know why. Director Goewey said that the cost for the phones has gone up.

Year-to-date spending is currently \$6,300. The FY2020 request is for \$8,000. The Selectmen settled on \$7,000. The Paving line item request for \$20,000 was reduced to a \$1 place holder in the budget. Calcium line item request was reduced to \$8,000. The Tree Removal line item request for \$1 place holder was increased to \$2,500. Roadside mowing request of \$5,000. \$6,200 was spent so far in FY2019. Chairman Lage admonished Director Goewey for overspending on a few line items and requested that he stay within budget. Director Goewey said if the Selectmen keep cutting some of the line items that it is difficult not to overspend.

The DPW Salt budget requested for FY2020 is \$45,000. There was discussion about alternative to using salt like brine, or liquid sodium chloride. Director Goewey stated that special equipment is required and would require a significant investment.

The Gas/Fuel line item request for FY2020 is \$41,600 versus \$38,000 for FY2019. There was a discussion around ways to conserve fuel or reduce the number of miles driven. Chairman Lage asked what had changed that required an increase in the budget. Director Goewey said it was an estimate and that depending on what work needs to be done or the amount of snow removal required will have an impact on fuel consumption for the year. FAC member Marc Fortier commented that there are so many factors involved. The DPW has already spent \$40,000 this year against a budget of \$38,000. Chairman Lage stated there must be a lot of unnecessary driving going on including on breaks. Selectman Veaser recommended setting the budget for FY2020 at \$40,000.

Chairman Lage questioned what was being billed to the Highway Block Grant. Director Goewey stated that culverts, stone, and patching materials are bill to the grant. Also the cost for screening gravel and acquiring gravel, approximately 6,000 yards. Chairman Lage asked what will be charged to the Highway Block Grant in FY2020. Director Goewey said it depends on what work they end up doing. Chairman Lage said the Selectmen have a fiduciary responsibility to monitor what is coming out of the grant monies. He also questioned why money was coming out of the grant to rent an excavator and what other equipment had to be rented for \$982 out of the Equipment Rental line item. Director Goewey stated that a roller had to be rented when resurfacing some of the roads. He stated about \$4,000 came out of the Highway Block Grant for street sweeping. Selectman Hamill asked if fencing for the Greenville Rd. property should be included in the DPW budget. Chairman Lage said it should go in another budget.

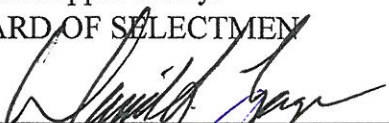
The discussion moved to the Transfer Station budget. Chairman Lage asked where the line items was for uniforms and footwear. Director Goewey said that was included in the DPW budget. Selectman Veaser said to move \$350 from the DPW budget to the Transfer Station budget for that purpose. The Selectmen agreed to increase the Transfer Station budget by the \$350 for footwear. Chairman Lage questioned why the General Supplies line item was overspent so far this year by \$429. There was discussion about when the trash bags for the Transfer Station are purchased. Since none have been purchased so far in FY2019, Chairman Lage suggested ordering them now using this year's budget and set the line item budget for next year at \$1 as a place holder. He also wanted to make the Transfer Station more accountable by possibly rearranging the layout to ensure that the disposal fees are being paid. Director Goewey thinks the current layout works fine and helps the flow of traffic. Chairman Lage stated that there have been discussions in past and nothing has changed.


Landfill Cap Testing & Maintenance Budget Review: Director Goewey stated that due to changes in testing requirements require more frequency because of the PFAS issue in the area, but they can split up the number of monitoring wells tested between this year and next. As a result, the FY2020 budget should be \$11,365 for testing.


At 9:26 p.m. Selectman Veaser made a motion adjourn the meeting. Selectman Hamill seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Scott Butcher, Town Administrator

Minutes approved by:  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
David S. Lage, Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Veaser

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bert Hamill