

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

Nov 2, 2021

MINUTES

PRESENT: Shawn Talbot, Chair; Jason Somero and Bert Hamill Selectmen
Jim Coffey, Town Administrator; Susan Mallett

Also attending in audience: Becky Doyle, Jen Minckler, Wendy Ledger, Bob Romeril, Debbie Deaton

Open Meeting in the Town Office with the Pledge of Allegiance at 5:00

Resident (Diane) voiced concern about speeding on Appleton Road. Some signs exist, she asks whether more signs might be helpful. Jason will follow up with the Police Chief

Also, she notes, there are a lot of dead branches on Greenville Road and she is concerned it may cause an accident. Bert spoke with Peter Goewey about this and Peter is having a hard time getting a contractor to trim. Bert will speak with him again.

SVAC Budget: Jim referred the SVAC budget to the Selectmen. Wendy Ledger also handed out a document showing income and expenses from 2014 into 2022. She noted cost of service is split between New Ipswich and Greenville and she adjust the split percentage. They are at 61 calls higher than this time last year. Jim noted 6000+ NEW car registrations year to date in New Ipswich, and perhaps the increase of vehicles has contributed to accident calls along with all the new homes that were built in last year. Wendy noted they are down one day person and on Nov 15th, they will be down a second person.

Tax Rate Setting Process: Jim reviewed the MS-434 form numbers and how they changed. Jim noted strong revenues, especially on motor vehicles. Jim reviewed the timelines and reminded them to keep tax rate setting separate from the budget. Jim reviewed 3 options and made recommendation for \$22.22 as the tax rate. Bills going out this month.

Selectman Somero made a MOTION to utilize \$200,000 from the undesignated fund balance to offset taxes. Selectman Hamill SECONDED, all were in favor.

Emergency Management Budget: Keeping the budget the same, no changes at this point.

Moderator/Elections/Supervisors of the Checklist Budgets: March Town elections, September State Primary, November State/Federal election. No increases requested. Becky Doyle asked if the meals can go under another budget. Also to move the clerk stuff under the Town Clerk.

Jason expressed concern with machine counting, the time to do this would depend on how many warrant articles and candidates there are. Bob guessing 2 to 5 hours to just count, would also have other tasks done, such as packaging everything else.

Milford has started the process for new machines, and hope to have them ready for the 2022 elections. Bob feels the old machines are safe, but new ones are safer.

Tax Collector / Town Clerk: Added pension, (457) 14% of pay from town and the employee puts in 7%, Will be vested in 10 years. Added money for extra hours for the Deputy "Deputy in Name only" (she can't do vital stats or elections because she is out of Town). Debbie noted that the increased hours would allow for the office to be opened during elections as well as necessary due to the larger volume of transactions. She also reviewed archiving older documents and records preservation grants from the Moose Plate (must apply in September). Total Lotus is a company that helps do the research on tax liens. Shawn reminded that BOS is looking to lean up the budget.

Becky brought up the line items she feels need to be moved: Machine maintenance from Supervisors of the Checklist to the Town Clerk. Town pays for town ballots, state pays for state election. Ballot printing to Clerk budget. Move meals to Bob / Moderator. Ballot clerks are excluded from taxes could do a subset for them. Moves were agreed to and made accordingly.

Bob Romeril discussed the voter check-in line, he put in a request for a check-in via laptop instead of the manual check-in based on last name. The cost is a one-time \$5K for license and laptops, after that, it would be maintenance only. This might be eligible for ARPA money and should streamline the check-in process.

Library Budget – Brenda Pelletier: Acknowledged a warrant article is necessary as usual. Announced that they have a new director, Michelle Pelletier. She noted the Rec Center project/partnership. Long term goal for the library is that they are out growing the building hence the Park & Rec project. They also have issue with the basement flooding, and will cause mold issues over time. Discussion is all over the place whether to repair or replace. They can't have large event attendance in the building due to the size of the building. Bert mentioned we have some properties that will be auctioned off, and others may become available, perhaps a thought is that the town could donate a property of an acre or more. BTLA 9 & 12 library form for tax exemption with Balance Sheet from library needs to go to the assessors. Shawn want the Community Center aspect to be tightened up, so that it is clear which budget is funding and how much they will fund.

Cemetery Budget: Ollie handed out a form with budget numbers. Jim noted that those numbers are different than the budget. Labor costs were moved into one line rather than multiple lines, Ollie noted that this doesn't allow for a detailed breakdown. Discussion on what is included in each line was reviewed. Discussed stone cleaning, Jason noted that someone cleaned 3 of the stones. It turned out to be volunteers not cemetery workers that did that work.

General Government Buildings: Nothing out of the ordinary. Shawn did mention whether lawn care can be done in house.

Treasurer: No change in budget, however she needs a deputy to cover when she is out.

Town Administrator Search: We need to propose, advertise or do a more formal search. Would like to have Finance / State forms experience. Shawn would prefer passion for the job vs experienced and money driven. Someone known in the community, people oriented but able to be strong when situation

warrants. Jim suggests advertising in NHMA and on the Town Website. Hope to have interviews in December. Jim will put together ad for NHMA, and Susan will post on the Town Web site and Facebook.

Board Assignments/Candidates: ZBA is short a member, there is a candidate interested (replacing David Lage). Reaffirm whose terms are active and ended and when they need to be reaffirmed.

Looking for Board Members: Susan will create an ad for the website to see if we can gather interest.

OLD NEW BUSINESS

The Planning Board submitted docs for bond release. It's a new Subdivision that has common land, but also the road, which the developer should deed to the Town. Bond expires Nov 5th. Bert asks for renewal and notes normally done in Planning Board meeting.

Bert MOTIONS to release bond and accept recommendation of Planning Board, Shawn SECONDED, all were in favor.

Bert asks Shawn for status on CIP from Planning Board.

At 10:10 Shawn MOTIONED to adjourn, seconded by Bert, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted, Susan Mallett, Land Admin

Minutes approved by BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Shawn Talbot, Chairman:

Jason Somero:



Bert Hamill:


