



Town of Boylston 221 Main Street, Boylston, MA 01505

Board of Selectmen Minutes 03/17/15

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, March 17, 2015
Location: Town Hall, 221 Main Street
Time: 6:30 p.m.-7:45 p.m.
Members Present: Chairman James Wood, Jamie Underwood, Mike May
Martin McNamara, Town Administrator, Dave Butler,
Howard Drobner, Eric Brose, Karen McGahie, Steven Dorval,
Nina Gardner – recorder

Mr. Wood called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. as a joint meeting with the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee presented an overhead spreadsheet of the budget draft for FY 16. The Town Administrator informed the Finance Committee that the 2% town increase needed to be added to the Administrative Assistant to the Selectmen and the Clerk to the Selectmen's salaries. Dave Butler stated the Finance Committee has all the budgets, but the school still had some final numbers to submit. He explained that as part of Vocational School choice, students can go to Agricultural School and the closest one is in Franklin. There is a student who has applied and the tuition cost is \$21,000.00 and the transportation is \$30,000.00. The additional \$50,000.00 has been added to the school budget. The budget will have to go to print with that figure, but it could be lowered at Town Meeting if the student is not accepted or does not go. Ms. Ekstrom may work something out with the parents as far as transportation also.

The proposed increase for the Town is \$310,000 which is 6.4% and the School budget is at \$345,000. Mr. Butler feels this is not doable because it would raise taxes \$1.00. For every 600,000, the taxes go up approx. 1.00. He reminded the Board that there is a 5-year lease on the new fire truck for 129,000 which is in the regular budget. That was voted and approved at Town Meeting last year so it is not listed as a debt exclusion. Therefore, that amount can be taken out of the 310,000 so that brings it down to \$180,000.

Every year a police cruiser is purchased for 40,000 which could be taken out and purchased with free cash. Other expenses in the budget are pension - 29,000, highway expenses -17,000, group insurance – 15,000 and 14,000 for veterans' benefits. The town gets 12,000 of the 14,000 for veterans back. So, the town increase would be 168,000 if the Fire Truck and Veterans refund are factored in. Other Town salaries were listed as part of this increase.

The Town has \$800,000 in free cash. Mr. Butler proposed to use \$302,575.00 from free cash to retire the hillside bonds next September. The Town would save \$10,800 in interest. When the 150,000 comes off the Bond, the town increase would be 30,000. There is an article by Steve Mero for a highway truck for \$210,000. The Town has the cash to purchase it and it would not affect the tax rate. The Finance Committee would be in favor of keeping that article. Mr. May asked if ambulance funds can be used to purchase a command vehicle that the Fire Chief would like to purchase. The Town Administrator stated ambulance funds that are generated are to cover new ambulances and salaries. Mr. Butler was not sure if excess ambulance funds can be moved. Mr. May feels it is not the year to use excess funds and that it can go to free cash if possible. Mr. Underwood stated that the vehicle they now use is old.

The ending balance is \$325,000 in the ambulance account as of June 30, 2014. \$103,000 was deposited the prior year and 82,000 spent. Mr. Butler stated he was comfortable with the cuts they made and stated they could take 40,000 more. Mr. Wood asked about the library increase. The library board requested an increase of 13% for the Director and the Board felt that was too high. The library did survey of surrounding towns and they ranged from 41,000 to 89,000. The Board recommended 6.4% which falls at 47,000. The dispatchers will be negotiating their contract on Friday, March 20th. Mr. Butler reviewed figures such as; group insurance amount cannot be cut, refund from veterans of 12,000 and an estimate of 120,000 in new growth. So, an additional 132,000 new funds will be received.

The School is @345,000 which includes the additional 50,000 for vocational choice. They should know before Town Meeting if that will remain in budget. Discussion about school building assessments and payments should have gone down, not up. Regular education-868,404. Mr. Butler suggested that the Board of Selectmen speak with the School Committee regarding cutting the budget. A big part of the budget is two new high school teachers. Ms. Ekstrom emailed the selectmen that there were 13 new students, not 60 or 80 as previously stated at the February 17th meeting. The new transportation contract is included in the budget and is lower than previous contract. Mr. Butler had discussed new construction with Building Inspector and how that effects new growth. The excise tax jumped last year so it helped free cash which can be used to offset taxes. \$150,000 - 200,000 can be included as an article for Town Meeting.

The Board discussed if the Library Building and new Highway building both get approved at Town Meeting what the impact would be. The Library would be .33 cents at 20 years and the highway would be 3.5% at .39 cents for 20 years. There is state money for the highway building of 200,000. If only one gets approved it could be for 10 years, but both would be 20 years. 10 years the interest would be 2.55, which is 1/3 less interest. 201 to 258 the first year. Mr. Drobner stated that residents would want to know at Town Meeting the impact difference in cost from 10 to 20 years. Mr. Butler will run the Highway building at 3.1% and email the numbers to Library and Highway at 20 and 10 years. There is 1.2 million in stabilization fund. The Finance Committee and Selectmen agreed to pay down Hillside.

Mr. Butler again asked the Board to send a message to the School Committee to see where they are at and they will finalize the budget at the Selectmen's meeting on March 30th. There was a brief discussion regarding if the new principal salary is included in the budget and current principal leaving in June.

The budget is 64% on the Town side which is not a big impact. The Cemetery Commission has requested funds from the town cover veterans' flag holders and medallions instead of the families covering those costs. The Treasurer gets a 1,000 stipend for yearly certification. It should be a separate line from the salary line. New line for clerical help for highway at 1500 will be added.

The Town Administrator had two requests for transfer of funds.

The Treasurer requested 4,000 be moved for bills for 2015. A new postage meter was purchased and needs postage. A new computer was purchased and funds were used for that.

Ms. McGahie motioned to transfer funds from the reserve account for \$4,000 to the Treasurer's account. Mr. Brose seconded; all voted in favor.

The Assessor's Office requested a transfer of funds in the amount of \$4,200 to cover the cost of the software from Vision. She stated she had carried over funds from previous year, but the Accountant states no funds were encumbered. There was some discrepancy during Mr. Butler's review of the accounts. He requested more clarification from the Assessor's office before they could approve the transfer.

Mr. May questioned a number of items listed in the school budget and would like more clarity. For example; guidance salary 113,000 plus a 6,000 raise, 23,000 for new computers – is that every year? Some items need discussion. There are sports fees but they appear to be going to the general budget. Mr. Butler again suggested speaking to the School Committee regarding these issues.

Mr. Underwood motioned to adjourn at 7:45 p.m. Mr. May seconded and all voted in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nina Gardner