



**Town of Boylston 221 Main Street, Boylston, MA 01505**

## **Board of Selectmen Minutes 03/03/2014**

Date of Meeting: Monday, March 3, 2014

Location: Town Hall, 221 Main Street

Time: 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

Members Present: Chairman James Wood; Michael May; Martin McNamara, Town Administrator, Lori Esposito, Administrative Assistant; (Others as listed on attached Sheet)

Financial Warrants signed in approval.

### **Board of Selectmen/Finance Committee Joint Budget Meeting**

Finance Committee members present: Dave Butler, Vin Sasso and Eric Brose

Free cash certified at \$426K.

- **Selectmen's line items** briefly reviewed:
  - Line 122, overall budget down 1.1%
  - Administrative Assistant increase due to procurement certification
  - Selectmen's Clerical increase
  - Discussion regarding regional human resources sharing. That line could be set aside for that.
  - Town Administrator's salary reduced to reflect current salary plus some extra.
- **Group Health Insurance** no increase
- **Pension Expense** up 5.7%
- **Unemployment** down from \$45K to \$12.5K. Never used for anticipated school layoffs last year.
- **Municipal Office Building (Town Hall)** need to increase maintenance to \$25K
- Mike May wants to be sure money is included to invest in linking tax/tax title system balances.
- **Tax title account** currently has approximately \$27K in it; will be using it to collect taxes in arrears.

Dave Butler of the Finance Committee had questions:

- Treasurer/Collector's pay and the increase from 26 to 32 hours/week, \$12K per year.
- What does it cost to run tax bills? Mailings have been reduced from four to two, but the line was never reduced. We need an answer from the Treasurer for the cost of two mailings. They are outsourced, so we just need the invoice from the company.
- Is the Accountant's salary correct? Yes, it is contracted out.
- Assessors' Admin and Clerk: are the salaries now correct? They are.
- Police Dept. new vehicles; they currently have six, including an older SUV. Most vehicles on the road at any given time is three. He would like a replacement vehicle as a line item in the budget going forward,

but what fleet size is needed? The Chief would like to do two cars this year, one purchased and one leased. Dave suggests purchasing one this year, get rid of the SUV and keep the highest mileage vehicle as a spare. Five vehicles should be workable? Chief Sahagian thinks that would be pushing it. If we get rid of the SUV, one vehicle is the Chief's, then three vehicles with one spare means two vehicles are running 24 hours a day with no rest. He would not allow a vehicle for details. He put 2,300 miles on the old SUV plus 984 hours on the engine for 170 details. He needs the flexibility and doesn't see the purpose of getting rid of the SUV at this point.

Mike May asked if we are getting any premium for a vehicle change? The Chief said not many in the area do that. Mike said we should be getting paid for the vehicle when it goes out on a detail. This should be explored to offset vehicle costs. He would support a maximum three-year vehicle, then update, with a lease program. He feels the Chief needs to decide how many vehicles need to be on the road.

Dave Butler said he doesn't see the benefit to leasing other than us paying interest. In this case, there is no residual value and he doesn't want us to pay interest. Chief Sahagian said he didn't purchase a vehicle last year so we're now behind and need two vehicles. He feels one purchased and one leased would be more palatable to the community. Six vehicles work well for him.

Jim Wood is estimating \$7K/year for a lease. It is a heavily depreciated asset and he doesn't feel we should be purchasing without assessing cost versus lease. The Chief said it cost \$9,429 per year for a four-year lease for the last vehicle leased.

- **Dispatch line item:** Mike May wants to have a conversation regarding regionalizing. We should be targeting cost control going forward into next year. There is no challenge to the current numbers but we need to make them more efficient.
- **Vehicle insurance:** Discussion about replacement value versus not. He would like a spreadsheet to compare and look for cost savings.
- **Fire Dept. New Ladder truck:** Dave Butler feels the best way to finance this would be to include it in the Fire Department budget as a lease. This would provide a better rate than going out to bond. The Chief might be able to contribute up to \$100K toward the truck. It is recommended that \$100K be put down with a five year lease with a buyout at the end. Mike May asked why five years instead of ten? Dave said it would mean less interest paid. Mike asked if there is enough cash flow from the ambulance account to offset the yearly cost. Dave said he was not sure; it depends on how soon the Chief needs an ambulance. There would be a ten-year payment of \$93,736/year, not including the \$100K down payment. The payment would come down to about \$83K/year with the down payment. Overall, the Finance Committee is recommending a lease for the fire truck versus debt exclusion. They are not sure if the ladder truck is required or not, but they support the purchase of a new truck as the other is old. The insurance rating for the Town is more favorable I fall fire vehicles are in compliance; residents save on their insurance if the Town is rated well.
- **Library:** The Library is looking for an additional \$2K for snow shoveling and removal. The Town Administrator said they can purchase a snow blower but have no place to store a new unit. If a smaller unit were purchased, they might be able to store it inside. The other option is a storage shed. Mike May suggested getting a small trailer to transport the snow blower from Town Hall or the Highway Dept. Dave Butler said we are not leaving \$2K in the budget every year for snow removal.
- **Parks and Recreation:** The Clerk's salary has gone from \$15K to \$26K for 30 hours a week. She is currently paid out of the revolving fund, which only covers 15 hours/week. Dave Butler said part of the problem is a declining revolving fund due to less participation in programs. Yet, we want to increase administrative support at some level. Mike May said it seems the clerk does 95% of the work of keeping the program up and running while there is not much support from the Parks & Rec Board. He has no answer for the best solution. Dave asked about increasing fees to support expenses. Baseball and soccer are taking care of their maintenance, improvements, etc. They are self-supporting and no support is needed from Parks & Rec. Mike said the community needs the Parks & Rec program. Dave asked if we need guidance from the Board of Selectmen. Possibly fund part of the proposed increase? The Board agrees it is important to at least partially fund this line request.

A brief discussion was held regarding the Warrant Articles above. Some anticipated Articles include funding the OPEB fund.

Mike May said we need to allocate funds to the Business Marketing Committee to accelerate the 140 development/sewerage project. We primarily need engineering costs covered. Shrewsbury wants an inter-municipal agreement to share the costs of development.

- **Employee raises:** Dave would like to do a COLA increase of at least two percent for employees which is not currently in the budget. Marty McNamara said it would be helpful since there will be no health care increase and it won't eat up the increase.

Mike May said Marty has been working toward additional revenue increase; we need to keep moving in that direction. He asks for suggestions if the Finance Committee comes up with any.

**Capital Planning Committee:** Dave Butler said, personally, he doesn't feel we need one, based on his experience. However, he agrees the By-law amount should be increased from \$10K to \$100K.

**Septic System Failure:** Mike May said we have a significant failure with the septic system as the sewer has been leaking since December.

**Zoning Changes:** The Town Administrator said Town Counsel sent additional information regarding possible changes to consider. The Planning Board Chair doesn't feel they will be ready to make any changes, articles regarding zoning changes (marijuana, adult entertainment), etc. Mike and Jim both feel zoning needs to be addressed. Town Counsel also suggested the Dimensional Table. Marty will speak with Town Counsel.

*At 8:00 PM Mike May made a motion to adjourn. Jim Wood seconded the motion; voted all in favor.*

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lori Esposito, Administrative Assistant