Board of Selectmen
On-Line Via Zoom & YouTube Live
March 10, 2021
Special Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: R. Smith; T. Govert; C. Quinn
Also Present: D. Angersola; C. Varricchio; S. Wheeler; L. Zemienieski, and other members of the public via virtual media

1. First Selectman Smith called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 4:01 p.m. and provided information on how the public could submit their questions, comments and concerns to the meeting.

2. 2021-2022 General Budget Review Workshop

   Mr. Smith reviewed adjustments to salary deficiencies across Town staff that the Board had agreed to at their March 6th Budget Workshop meeting. He reiterated their agreement to recommend adjustments to the non-union hourly and professional staff to achieve the minimum average across the board.

   Mr. Smith advised that the First Selectman position is currently approximately $13k below the minimum average and approximately $18k under the mid-average as determined by the 2007 and 2018 salary studies. He recommended increasing the First Selectman's stipend to just under $101k and reiterated that he recuses himself from taking the related salary increase during his term(s) as First Selectman for the Town.

   A motion was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to increase the First Selectman's stipend to $100,901.00 yearly.

   The Board discussed Mr. Smith's motion and Ms. Govert supported it, stating that the increase is needed to attract talented and competent people to run for the office. Ms. Quinn stated she was not in favor of increasing the First Selectman's stipend at this time because she feels that the focus this fiscal year should be on the staff positions that are significantly below the minimum average rates.

   The Board voted on the above motion and Mr. Smith and Ms. Govert voted Aye; Ms. Quinn voted Nay. The motion passed by a majority of ayes.

   In response to a concern raised by Ms. Quinn, Ms. Varricchio provided clarifying information regarding the hourly rates paid to the union and non-union fire fighters. Mr. Smith advised that it is his belief, based on his conversations with officials from surrounding towns, that the salaries paid to the East Haddam fire fighters are very competitive.

   Mr. Smith reviewed several new positions that were proposed as well as recommendations to change part-time staff to full-time. He noted that there is a consensus among the Board to recommend the Board of Finance authorize a FTE Crew Leader position in Public Works and a FTE Systems Specialist for the Technology department. He reviewed the request to increase the part-time Grounds Crew position to full-time. Ms. Quinn stated she did not support that request.

   A motion was made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Govert, to recommend to the Board of Finance that they authorize the Grounds and Facilities Department Grounds Lead part-time position be made a

full-time position. Mr. Smith and Ms. Govert voted Aye; Ms. Quinn voted Nay. The motion passed by a majority of ayes.

Mr. Smith reiterated that it is his understanding that the Board recommends to the Board of Finance that adjustments to the non-union hourly and professional staff salaries be made to achieve the minimum average across the board. There was no objection from the other Board members.

Mr. Smith reviewed a number of changes that the Board had made to the FY2021-2022 budget based on their prior deliberations. He stated that there are three significant unresolved items in the budget calculations that they will forward to the Board of Finance: the amount of financial stimulus the Town will receive from the Federal Government, the surplus that remains in the Municipal Office Building Committee's budget which could be used to fund some of the items in the budget, and the Fire Department's Capital Improvements Budget.

There was a brief discussion regarding the status of the Food Bank and the Clothing Bank.

A. Budget Review, Discussion & Deliberation

1. General Government Budgets: No specific General Government Operating Budgets were reviewed at this meeting.

2. Public Safety budgets: No specific Public Safety Budgets were reviewed at this meeting.

3. Public Works Budgets: No specific Public Works Operating Budgets were reviewed at this meeting.

4. Health and Social Services Budgets: No specific Health and Social Services Operating Budgets were reviewed at this meeting.

5. Culture and Recreation Budgets: No specific Culture and Recreation Operating Budgets were reviewed at this meeting.

6. Capital Budgets: No specific Capital Budgets were reviewed at this meeting.

3. Public Comment: There were no public comments discussed at the meeting.

4. Potential Budget Resolution

Motion made by Mr. Smith, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to recommend to the Board of Finance for fiscal year 2021-2022, a budget of $14,438,600, which represents town government, debt service and reserves and capital that is funded through grants and reserves. The Board of Selectmen budget has made no provision for any capital that would be funded by taxation. The Board of Selectmen requests the opportunity to work with the Board of Finance to evaluate capital needs (in accordance with the new Capital Policy and the evaluation process conducted by the Long-Range Capital Improvement Committee) any state and federal grants, the potential additional funding that can be utilized from the Municipal Office Building Committee and any change in reserve and capital funding for the Fire Department. Unanimous aye.

The Board, each in turn, thanked all of the individuals involved in getting to a resolution for the FY2021-2022 budget for their efforts.

5. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made Ms. Govert, seconded by Ms. Quinn, to adjourn the meeting at 5:04 p.m. Unanimous aye.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Theresa Govert, Secretary