

Board of Selectmen
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Rooms 1/2
February 22, 2020
Special Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: R. Smith; T. Govert; C. Quinn

Also Present: D. Angersola; E. Blaschik; M. Callahan (left at 12:25 pm); C. Mansfield; R. Miller (via conference call); Martin Ryczek (left at 9:35am); D. Shelberg; F. Tencza (via conference call); T. Varriale; C. Varricchio; L. Zemienieski, and other members of the public

1. Call to Order

First Selectman Smith called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 9:07 a.m. Ms. Varricchio distributed updated expenditures and revenue summaries, as well as a summary of capital requests and potential funding sources for them. She also distributed the Long Range Capital Improvements Project Committee's rankings of capital requests. She explained the process for grading each project and noted that the Committee did not complete their review of all the capital project requests. There was a general discussion regarding several of the ranked projects and Ms. Varricchio noted several adjustments to capital requests that she and Mr. Smith had made. She recommended the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance meet to discuss future planning for capital requests.

In response to a question raised by Mr. Ryczek, Mr. Smith advised that, in the absence of a Town Facilities Director, he and Superintendent Reas, or his delegate, will carry forward the plans for the athletic complex, including the track. It was noted that the members of the Long Range Capital Improvements Project Committee are also aware of the athletic complex proposal and the details of the proposed plan.

2. 2020-2021 General Budget Review Workshop

A. Culture & Recreation

1. Lakes Association: Mr. R. Miller advised that the Town's lakes compose 19.4% of the grand list and stated that keeping the lakes clean will keep property values up. Mr. Miller advised that they are requesting \$67,216.00 for the Town's share of the 50/50 match, which is approximately 5% of lakefront property owners' contribution to property taxes. He noted that \$50,000.00 of that request is related to the cost to comply with the state's mandated updates to the dam at Lake Hayward. He also recommended that the Town establish a policy that, at the end of each fiscal year, any lake's unspent operating capital will be transferred into reserves. Ms. Varricchio noted that it would be the Board of Finance's decision to make that policy change and such a change would also require approval at a Town Meeting.

Mr. Miller discussed the Eco-Harvester purchase for Moodus Reservoir. Ms. Govert noted that, next year, the state will have grant funds available for the control of aquatic invasive species. There was a general discussion regarding potential grant funding and Ms. Govert agreed to keep the Lakes Association members aware of the opportunities and program parameters. Ms. Varricchio suggested the Neighborhood Assistance Act and Sustainable CT programs may be sources for funding for their projects.

The Lakes Association representatives responded to several questions from the Board. Mr. Miller responded to questions from Ms. Govert regarding Lake Hayward's exclusive reserves and annual operating budget. In response to a question from Ms. Govert, it was confirmed that Moodus Reservoir is the only lake with general public beach access.

B. Public Safety Budgets

1. Fire Marshal: Fire Marshal Angersola reviewed the Fire Marshal's activities and staff and noted that the majority of his time is spent on inspections. Mr. Angersola noted that the only change in the budget was the placeholder for a 2.5% increase to the salaries line. Ms. Varricchio advised that the Fire Marshal's department generates a small amount of revenue each year. Mr. Angersola responded to several questions from the Board.

The Board took a brief recess at 10:22 a.m. The meeting reconvened at 10:32 a.m.

2. Emergency Management: Mr. C. Mansfield provided an overview of the status of the radio system project and the Committee's efforts to partner with other entities to contain the Town's recurring annual costs for the system. He noted that the system is ready to be launched and reviewed several related changes in the annual operating expenses, including a projected \$50,000.00 annual contract charge for equipment maintenance and servicing, etc. Mr. Mansfield reviewed projections for long-range capital funding needs for equipment replacement. He responded to several questions from the Board.

Ms. Varricchio advised that Emergency Management receives some revenue from grant funding.

Ms. Varricchio reviewed several budget changes recommended by Mr. Smith, including a full-time Human Resources position and several other staffing revisions. There was a general discussion regarding the request for additional Public Works staff. Ms. Varricchio and Mr. Smith responded to several questions from the Board. The Board discussed the Public Works snow removal and Transfer Station budgets.

3. 2020-2021 Full Budget Review

A. General Government Budgets: The Board discussed the following budgets:

- Assessor: The Board made no changes to this budget at this meeting.
- Building Maintenance & Operations: The Board made no changes to the budget at this meeting.
- Collector of Revenue: The Board made no changes to the budget at this meeting.
- Elections/Registrar: The Board discussed whether or not it is necessary to maintain an ADA compliant voting telephone line and Ms. Varricchio agreed to verify whether or not the \$600.00 expense can be cut from the budget.
- Finance Office: In response to a question from Ms. Govert, Ms. Varricchio advised that, even though the Town has signed a contract with ADP for payroll services, she anticipates a need for the department's overtime budget. The Board made no changes to the budget at this meeting.
- Land Use: The department's operating budget and revenue were discussed. The Board made no changes to the budget at this meeting.

- Municipal Office Complex/Central Services: The Board discussed several lines in this budget but made no changes to it at this meeting.
- Probate: The Board made no changes to the budget at this meeting.
- Selectmen: Ms. Varricchio stated that she has been working on a survey of the salaries/stipends that the surrounding towns pay their Board members and expects to report her findings at the February 25th Budget Workshop meeting. The Board made no changes to the budget at this meeting.
- Town Clerk: The Board discussed several lines in this budget but made no changes to it at this meeting.
- Town Office Building: The Board discussed the expense of heating the old Town Office Building. They made no changes to the budget.
- Fringe Benefits: The Board discussed health insurance costs and Ms. Varricchio responded to several questions. No changes were made to the budget at this meeting.
- Insurance (Risk Management): Final budget indications have not been received from our insurance carrier at this time. Most likely any increases or decreases to this budget will happen during the Board of Finance review.
- Legal: The Board made no changes to the budget at this meeting.
- Agriculture Commission: The Board made no changes to the budget at this meeting.
- Board of Assessment Appeals: There was a brief discussion regarding this budget and the Board made no changes to the budget at this meeting.

The Board took a lunch break at 12:25 p.m. The meeting reconvened 1:17 p.m.

A. General Government Budgets (continued) – The Board discussed the following budgets:

- Board of Finance: Ms. Varricchio provided a brief review of this budget and responded to several questions from the Board. No changes were made to the budget at this meeting.
- Conservation Commission: Mr. Smith clarified the reason for the increase to the Conference line of this budget. In response to an inquiry from Ms. Quinn, Mr. Smith stated that it would be difficult to fundraise for the Community Events expense. The Board made no changes to this budget at this meeting.
- Economic Development Commission: Ms. Varricchio stated that she had researched participation in the tax incentive program and she reported that three applications have been approved and there is one currently in the works. She noted that, following up on an earlier discussion with the Board, she had removed the request for \$10,000.00 to conduct an engineering study of extending the sewer lines to the Four Corners area. There was a brief discussion regarding the printing budget line. No additional changes were made to this budget.
- Historic District Commission: Ms. Varricchio stated that she had adjusted the budget line for the recording secretary's salary following Mr. Brady's presentation at the February 19th Budget Workshop. The Board made no additional changes to this budget.
- Open Space Commission: The Board discussed Mr. Smith's suggestion to increase the Other Professional Surveys budget line and agreed to maintain the expense in line with last year's budget.
- Zoning Board of Appeals: The Board made no changes to this budget at this meeting.

B. Public Safety Budgets: The Board discussed the following budgets:

- Building Department: The Board discussed several lines in this budget. Ms. Varricchio researched the historical Telephones expense and it was agreed to increase that line to \$648.00. No other changes were made to this budget.
- Emergency Management Department: The Board made no changes to the budget at this meeting.
- Fire Department: Ms. Varricchio and Mr. Smith responded to several questions from the Board about this budget. The Board discussed the Fire Department's request for an additional full-time staff person and agreed to approve the request. Mr. Smith questioned the significant increase to the department's Equipment Repairs budget line and advised that he has requested a report from Mr. Auld that would justify the increase. The Board discussed several other budget lines and no additional changes were made at this meeting. Ms. Varricchio agreed to follow up on several items.
- Fire Marshal: The Board made no changes to the budget at this meeting.
- Paramedic Services: The Board made no changes to the budget at this meeting.
- Police Officers: The Board discussed improvements in several of the Police Department's statistics. They reviewed the overtime budget and Ms. Varricchio responded to several questions. She confirmed that the Police contract is currently being negotiated and, consequently, she included a 2.5% increase in the Salaries budget line as a place holder. No changes were made to the budget at this meeting.
- Animal Control: Ms. Varricchio noted that the accounting of the Regional Animal Control is within the Special Revenue Fund.
- Resident State Trooper: The Board briefly discussed the Town's reimbursement to the state for its Resident State Trooper. No changes were made to the budget at this meeting.

C. Public Works Budgets: The Board discussed the following budgets:

- General Highways: The Board made no changes to the budget at this meeting. It was noted that the budget currently includes one additional position.
- Snow Removal: The Board made no changes to the budget at this meeting.
- Transfer Station: Ms. Varricchio stated that she had requested additional information regarding this budget from Director Lunt. No changes were made to the budget at this meeting.
- Tree Care and Removal: Mr. Smith stated that he had requested the Public Works Director provide a cost-benefit analysis regarding plans to deal with dead/diseased trees and he expects to have it for the next Budget Workshop meeting. There was a general discussion concerning the tree problem and options for addressing it. No changes were made to the budget at this meeting.

D. Health & Social Services Budgets: The Board discussed the following budgets:

- Cemeteries: Mr. Smith noted that the Cemetery Commission will be re-established this fiscal year and will be researching property for a new Town cemetery. Ms. Varricchio and Ms. Zemienieski responded to several questions. No changes were made to the budget at this meeting.
- Chatham Health District: Mr. Smith noted that there was a change in this budget in that the Town is now sharing the cost of the Everbridge system. There was a brief discussion regarding the water testing expense. No changes were made to the budget at this meeting.
- Human Services: The Board made no changes to this budget.
- Senior Services: The Board made no changes to this budget.
- Youth & Family Services: The Board made no changes to this budget.

- Early Childhood Council: Ms. Varricchio advised that she is planning to meet with the Coordinator of this program to determine if there are any funds in the budget for scholarships. She responded to several questions from the Board and no changes were made to this budget.

E. Culture & Recreation Budgets: The Board discussed the following budgets:

- Lakes Association: The Board reviewed the Association's request for an increase in their operating and capital budgets. Ms. Varricchio agreed to request a breakdown of the Association's operating expenses for FY 2019-2020 and more specifics related to their capital requests. The Board postponed any decision on this budget at the meeting.
- Libraries: The Board discussed the Director's request for an increase to the Books & Periodicals budget line and agreed to increase the budgeted amount to \$2800.00. They discussed several other budget lines and no other changes were made at this meeting.
- Recreation Commission: Ms. Varricchio provided an update on several changes that were made to the Recreation department's original budget proposal. The Board discussed several items in this budget; no additional changes were made.
- Town Greens, Grounds and Fields: The Board made no changes to this budget.

F. Debt Service: The Board had a brief discussion regarding this agenda item. Ms. Varricchio noted that the Board of Finance has established a threshold of \$2.2M for the Town's debt service and reviewed several lines in this budget. There was a general discussion regarding the Fire Department's changes to its capital requests.

Ms. Varricchio reviewed the Town's current debt schedule and noted when several debts are scheduled to retire. She also noted that the Town may be able to refinance the USDA loan at a lower interest rate.

G. Interfund Transfers: Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.

H. Shared Services: Ms. Varricchio explained several proposed increases in the Shared Services budget and responded to several questions from the Board. There was a general discussion related to IT staffing and the proposed Human Resources position.

I. Capital Improvement Detail: Ms. Varricchio reviewed the Long Range Capital Improvements Project Committee's buildings and improvements rankings. The Board discussed some of the requests and agreed it would be prudent to move several items out to future years. Ms. Varricchio recommended that the Board of Selectmen schedule a joint meeting with the Board of Finance to strategize a sustainable capital improvements plan.

Ms. Varricchio distributed a copy of the Fire Department's 2019-2020 FY capital plan so the Board could compare it to the current proposal. Mr. Smith reviewed a report generated by the Police Department showing average hours/miles use per year for the police cruisers. There was a brief discussion regarding the use of hybrid vehicles for police cruisers.

J. General Fund Revenue Detail: Discussion of this agenda item was postponed.

K. Other Budgets Items: No other budget items were discussed at the meeting.

4. Public Comment: Mr. E. Blaschik suggested it might be helpful to install meters on the Fire Department vehicles that will record the in-use hours.

5. Potential Budget Resolution: No budget resolution was made at this meeting.
6. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Quinn, seconded by Ms. Govert, to adjourn the meeting at 4:20 p.m. Unanimous aye.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Theresa Govert, Secretary