

TOWN OF WENHAM

Board of Selectmen  
Meeting of, Saturday, December 5, 2015  
Town Hall, 138 Main Street

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30 A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Board of Selectmen (BOS) was held on, Saturday, December 5, 2015 at 8:30 am in the Selectmen Chambers.

**WELCOME: CALL TO ORDER**

With a quorum present, Ms. Harrison called the Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting to order at 8:30 am. Selectmen present Catherine Harrison, Chair; Jack Wilhelm, Vice Chair; John Clemenzi, Clerk. Also Present: Peter Lombardi, Town Administrator; Catherine Tinsley, Recording Secretary. Finance Committee members attending not participating: Mike Lucy, Chair; Ned Flynn; Richard Quinn, Alex Begin, Mike Therrien.

The purpose of this joint meeting was for the leadership team to give an overview of their department preliminary FY 17 budget to the Selectmen. The Finance Committee was in attendance but non-participatory.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was none.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were none.

**LEADERSHIP TEAM PRELIMINARY BUDGET PRESENTATIONS**

The Board was provided with the FY17 budget books and a summary of each department budget plan as prepared by the Department Head.

Mr. Lombardi introduced the presentations saying the Department Heads were instructed to prepare a level service budget. The preliminary budgets do not include any changes or adjustments to salaries.

**ADMINISTRATION** – Peter Lombardi, Town Administrator

- This budget includes the Town Administrator, Selectmen, Executive Assistant, Recording Secretary, Town Hall expenses, Legal, Annual Audit, and Information Technology.
- Reductions in the expense line are a result of the budget better reflecting actual spending.
- Regarding the legal budget, Mr. Lombardi continues to work with Town Counsel Paul Weaver, on Mr. Weavers' retirement and a transition plan. Currently municipal law firms are being interviewed to commence upon the retirement of Town Counsel; the proposed legal budget includes a retainer.
- Various union contracts are in negotiations. Mr. Lombardi stressed the proposed budget does not include increases or projected assumptions but the goal is to have this information before finalizing the budget.

LAND USE - Emilie Cademartori, Planning Coordinator for Conservation Commission, Planning Board, & Zoning Board of Appeals

- A reduction in this budget due to Legal fees and the Permitting Coordinator salary being moved to other line items

INSPECTIONAL SERVICES – Jackie Bresnahan, Permitting Coordinator not in attendance

Mr. Lombardi presented the Inspectional Service budget

- The FY 17 budget will include costs associated with the GEOTMS tracking software, and the Permitting Coordinator's salary, therefore increasing the budget.
- Permitting fees are being reviewed.

BOARD OF HEALTH (BOH)

Mr. Lombardi presented the budget for the Board of Health.

- A slight increase in the FY17 budget due to the BOH requesting an increase in the Public Nurse's hours from one to three hours a week at the same pay rate.
- The Assistant Health Agent recently resigned and the position will soon be posted; the Health Agent will fill in where he is able until the position is filled.

FIRE - Fire Chief Blanchard & Deputy Kavanagh

Chief Blanchard reviewed the age and condition of each apparatus, observing that FY 17 was the projected year that the pumper would be refurbished to extend the life of the truck to the maximum 25 years; the estimated cost was \$50,000. Chief Blanchard recommended this be budgeted for FY 18.

- Includes the mechanic's portion of the salary to reflect work done for the Fire Department.
- Rescue Truck needs to be considered for replacement.
- The Fire Department is currently staffed at 25 call firefighters compared to a fully staffed department at 30 firefighters.
- An internship program has been instituted with the High school – there is limited interest
- There is no request for capital in the FY 17 budget

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS – Bill Tyack, Director

Highway

- Maintenance of police/ fire vehicles is billed accordingly to the respective departments.
- This budget does not include the replacement of the 1992 medium (6 wheeler) with a plow/sander dump truck that is unlikely to pass inspection. The BOS supported inserting funding for a 5 year lease agreement in order to add the new vehicle back into the budget. with an They also suggested an aggressive maintenance program to extend the life of the fleet.
- Additional state funding was received for street maintenance (\$22,000) this year towards road repair due to the harsh winter conditions
- State Ch. 90 money to the town is estimated at \$150,000. This can be accumulated and saved year to year for larger projects.
- Mr. Tyack noted the DPW is responsible for mowing the two cemeteries and the school, which takes the crews away from street maintenance.

- The underground fuel tank to be maintained but as it ages it becomes more expensive to maintain, inspect, and insure. Mr. Tyack supports shared tanks with the town of Hamilton as an option. These would be above grounds tanks that would best be placed on the Iron Rail property.
- The Town Administrator was encouraged by the Board to review unapproved roads in town and to send a letter be sent to these homeowners to remind them that the town does it's best to plow unapproved streets in the winter but is limited in what they can do, mostly due to the narrowness and roughness of the road and it is therefore ultimately the homeowners responsibility.

#### Building Grounds

- Summer help is utilized for painting and maintenance.
- The Energy Manager is in her third year and is no longer state grant funded. Her contract is in this budget.
- The program has been very successful in saving the town money and conserving energy i.e. street lights retrofit (projected savings \$12,000 minimum).

#### Iron Rail

- A comprehensive capital plan is needed for the Iron Rail facilities along with a marketing plan to maximize use and revenue.
- Grant funds will be used this year towards the boiler replacement.

#### Tree Warden

- Last years' tree planting budget was used for tree removal only, due to the amount of the emergency tree work needed, so no trees were planted.
- There is a trust account specifically earmarked for tree planting. It was agreed by the Board that an arborist be consulted on a tree planting plan for the town. Estimated cost of \$15,000. A lengthy discussion followed regarding the tree warden's budget oversight and responsibilities.

#### ASSESSORS– Tom Tanous, Assessor

Mr. Tanous spoke to the Assessor's budget, noting Assessor Steve Gasperoni is retiring the end of February.

- Increase for updated software
- Property assessment value requirements must be completed; it is the Board of Assessor's recommendation that this be contracted out, citing the importance that the entire town be done at the same time for the best comparison value.
- The Assessors were asked to provide the details and specific data criteria along with a scope of work to compare bids. Ms. Wills suggested the Assessors look at the state bid list.

#### WATER DEPARTMENT - Water Commissioner Ernest Ashley, Chair

- A reduction in the water departments' budget of \$6900 as a result of lower costs of chemicals.
- Water rates were last raised in 2009 but there is sufficient use of water to maintain the budget. Excessive use of water is mostly due to irrigation during summer months.
- New water saving incentives are currently under review.
- The Water Department's five-year capital plan includes a new vehicle and a new generator.

POLICE - Chief Perkins

- Increase in the salary line as a result of three junior officers completing their fourth year (final step)
- Also impacting the budget is the union contract increases, stipend for completing the education program, and two pending retirements.
- The police fleet vehicles are on a maintenance program with extended warranties for front line cars.
- One front line cruiser is in the budget to be replaced.

There was a discussion regarding the Pleasant Pond Beach budget. It was noted that this budget is shared (proportionality) with Hamilton. It was noted that about 7 percent of the beaches operating costs are covered by sticker sales.

TOWN CLERK - Dianne Bucco

- \$4,000 of the budget is for the Phase 2 of the Codification project
- There is an increase in the budget due to this being an election year
- This budget includes office coverage

COUNCIL ON AGING - Jim Reynolds, Director

- Formula grant money was used to reduce the budget and make other purchases for the center i.e. bocce court
- The Town received the title for the COA van. The van has 94,000 miles. The grant process to replace it using state funding will be started. This is a two-year process.
- New Outreach Coordinator salary is included in the budget
- Suggested the downstairs of the COA building be cleaned and utilized.
- Asked for a parking plan to include designated parking for COA

LIBRARY - Jan Dempsey, Director

- Budget meets state requirements for state expenses and appropriation
- Increase in salary line item due to step increases and minimum wage increase
- Increase in expenses for library books and technology cost
- Friends of library was recognized for their contributions
- No capital requests
- Downstairs carpet replacement put off to FY18
- E-books added at a cost of \$80 each

The meeting adjourned at 12:06 pm

Respectfully submitted by

Catherine Tinsley  
3.1.16