

TOWN OF WENHAM

Board of Selectmen
Meeting of Saturday, November 22, 2014
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 NOVEMBER 22, 2014 at 9 AM in the Selectmen Chambers.

WELCOME AND OVERVIEW OF THE AGENDA

With a quorum present, Chairman Wilhelm called the meeting to order at 9 AM

Selectmen Present: Jack Wilhelm, Chair; Catherine Harrison, Vice Chair; Ken Whittaker, Clerk

Also Present: Mark Andrews, Town Administrator; Angel Wills, Finance Director; Catherine Tinsley, Minutes Secretary
FinCom present, not participating Michael Lucy, Michael Therrien, Rick Quinn

Public Information

Agenda

Draft preliminary budget book

The purpose of the meeting was for the Department Heads to review their department Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 budget proposals with the BOS. The proposed budgets for FY16 were level service with a two percent cost of living adjustment for non-union employees.

Ms. Wills gave an overall brief summary saying:

- “Refunding” is an option in FY16 for the Town’s eligible (callable) bonds, at an estimated savings of \$265,000
- A draft five –year capital plan is included in the FY16 proposed budget
- Free Cash & the Education Stabilization Fund are proposed to stabilize the tax impact/rate

Highway - Present: Bill Tyack, Public Works Director; Mark Gates, Buildings/Grounds

Mr. Tyack reviewed the proposed budget for the Highway Budget is 5% total increase for:

- Rising cost of utilities
- Additional maintenance for aging fleet and diagnostic software
- Funds to fill the fuel tanks
- Capital request to replace two vehicles with plows
- Sidewalk maintenance

There was a side discussion regarding the Town’s underground fuel tanks, the liability, cost of maintenance, cost of inspections, and the process / cost to replace the underground tank.

The Selectmen requested:

1. Memo regarding aging underground tanks vs. new above ground tanks, including cost, benefits
2. List of current vehicles/equipment including age, cost replacement, condition, and projected savings if replaced (savings from repairs, maintenance labor)

Building/Grounds

Mr. Tyack reported that the shared building/grounds services with the schools did not work out. One part time position was eliminated & a full time position created. This budget includes funds to update town hall security. There was a discussion for the Town Hall/ Police Station Building funds be used and it was agreed the Building Committee be asked to contribute to this expense.

The Selectmen requested:

1. A detailed Memo regarding the locks/system on town hall and the proposed updates and to copy the Finance Committee on this report.

APPROVED 1.20.15

Iron Rail

The budget for the Iron Rail also encompasses the Boy Scout Barn, although no additional funding was requested for the barn. There is an increase in the budget for utilities/heat, bathroom updates to be handicap accessible, and to repair the cupola. The Iron Rail Commission is aware of the FY16 budget.

The BOS requested;

- IRC- Presentation to BOS
- 1. IRC memo regarding proposed FY 16 budget
- 2. Possible increase revenue

Tree Warden

Mr. Tyack presented the Tree warden's budget. There is an increase in the hazardous tree removal funds and an increase in the tree-planting budget to pay for five to six trees in FY16.

Cemetery

The Parks/Cemetery Budget was reviewed by the Cemetery Commission.

Mr. Tyack reported that the Main Street cemetery needs work and suggested a designating a person to the cemetery for a few hours a week. A discussion followed regarding the best process to pay for additional responsibilities and if the Cemetery Funds have money to pay for a portion of this work.

The BOS requested the Cemetery Commission provide:

1. Memo regarding proposed FY 16 budget
2. List of Cemetery funds/ balances
3. Additional cemetery grounds support - (possible Cemetery Commission contribution for this expense)

Parks

The salaries for the Pleasant Pond Beach summer gatekeepers have been moved to the Police Department budget. There was a brief discussion about Mr. Andrew's recommendation that the Pleasant Pond Beach be part of the Joint Recreation program.

The BOS requested information related to the transfer responsibility of Pleasant Pond lifeguard training to Public safety/ or possibly under Joint Recreation program

Fire - Present: Fire Chief Robert Blanchard and Deputy Chief Stephen Kavanagh

Chief Blanchard talked about the increase in the FY16 budget for fuel and call wages. The Selectmen asked him to elaborate on the increase in call wages, and he reported that the department is experiencing an increase in medical calls. The department has already responded to 20% more calls at this time compared to previous years. This includes increased responses to Gordon College. All calls to Gordon College are tracked separately, and although there is no PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) program, Gordon College is billed for the calls.

Regarding the potential development projects in Town, Chief Blanchard noted these would increase the calls. He referenced Enon Village, The Maples, and the Boulders saying the calls to these senior housing developments averages one call, per unit annually.

Chief Blanchard reported that the billing to insurance companies for reimbursements for auto accident related charges has decreased due to the process by the insurance companies

Chief Blanchard reviewed the equipment on the Fire Department's Capital budget, including the upcoming need to replace the department's oldest apparatus, a 1988 pumper truck. The estimated cost is \$405,000 due to the requirement it be custom built to fit in the fire station. There was a discussion to consider for the future, that a standard size fire truck be kept at Iron Rail. Chief Blanchard noted there is "midlife" maintenance done to the apparatus after about 10-12 years and asked for the BOS to consider if this should be done.

The BOS requested:

1. Stats for the year including a trend analysis of calls - fire/medical/Gordon
2. Cost of garage at Iron Rail for standard fire truck (future consideration with build out of East Wenham)
3. Memo re cost/ benefit of "mid-life" overhaul of fire truck 10 yrs old
4. New pumper timeline/cost

Police – Present: Police Chief Thomas Perkins

Chief Perkins said that there were few changes to the FY 16 Police Department Budget.

APPROVED 1.20.15

One important item for consideration is a new, updated fingerprinting unit. He went into detail explaining the benefits of upgrading to the digital unit. The cost of \$30,000 was not included in the budget at this time.

Also in the budget is additional funding for a transition of the Administrative Assistant, who is retiring.

Regarding the Pleasant Pond gatekeepers being trained as lifeguards, he strongly recommended it but noted concern that a trained lifeguard cannot serve as a gatekeeper.

Mr. Andrews stated that the money from Gordon College is in the Town's gift account and requested that the gift account be used to pay for the new police vehicle.

The BOS requested:

- Presentation Digital fingerprinting equipment
 1. Memo re transition plan for Admin Asst
 2. Stats related to Pleasant Pond – Total number of beach stickers sold. Hamilton residents? Wenham residents? Revenue from sticker sales? Cost association in operating the beach?

Hamilton Wenham Library – Present: Library Director Jan Dempsey

Ms. Dempsey noted that the Town of Hamilton is still in the process of having a salary study done. Because this information may have an affect on the budget, the budget is based on a 2% COLA on what the staff is currently being paid, which does not include the increase authorized by Wenham Town Meeting. She observed there is an increase in the budget for support staff at 2.5 hours a week. Ms. Dempsey stressed that some computers need to be replaced; this is important for the residents who do not have a computer, possibly seeking work, and students doing research.

The BOS requested:

1. Wage classification study – Hamilton

Permitting/ Land Use – Present: Town Planner, Emilie Cademartori.

Ms. Cademartori reviewed that this budget includes, Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning Board, and the Conservation Commission.

Ms. Cademartori gave an overview of the budget that includes salaries and expenses, such as legal ads, posting, training organization, software license for mapping etc.

There was a discussion if the legal budget for the Conservation Commission should be included or go through Town Counsel. Ms. Cademartori was asked to talk to the Commissioners and report to the BOS.

The BOS requested:

1. Memo outlining recommended legal process for Conservation Commission
2. Add to bylaws – to allow the town to collect legal fees related to applications

Assessors – Present: Steve Gasperoni, Assessor

Mr. Gasperoni explained that the office is staffed during Town Hall hours by either himself or the Secretary, who have both reduced their time to part time hours.

The Board of Assessors is completing a Request for Proposals according to the procurement laws for a complete inventory of all the properties in town. This is usually done every 10 years, but has not been done in Wenham since 1990. The estimated cost is \$60,000 and can be done over a number of years.

The BOS/ FinCom requested:

- A presentation on the Reevaluation Report to BOS

Town Clerk – Present: Dianne Bucco, Town Clerk

Ms. Bucco said the Town Clerk's FY 16 budget included a 10-hour a week assistant for window coverage during the Town Clerk's absences such as lunch or training. The BOS questioned if this window coverage could be provided through the Senior Work Off program; this will be announced at the BOS meeting.

Council Of Aging (COA) – Present: Jim Reynolds, COA Director

Mr. Reynolds talked about the FY16 budget for the COA.

He reviewed that van rides have increased by 48% and he anticipates an increase in transportation requests. He said that a plan needed to be discussed on how to best handle the increase in requests. He noted the Town would own the van in March 2015, and purchasing another van or contracting for transportation services is a couple of options. He talked briefly about the programming of the COA and the ongoing efforts to increase services for seniors.

The BOS/ FinCom requested:

APPROVED 1.20.15

1. Memo regarding contacted services not offered by Van service
2. Memo of what services are provided through COA
3. COA Director market salary information

Water Department - Present: Water Superintendent Erik Mansfield, and Ernest Ashley, Chair of the Water Commissioners

Mr. Mansfield gave a general over view of the Water Department's FY 16 budget. Mr. Mansfield reported that water rates have not been increased since 2009.

He went on to explain that fund would be needed in FY15 to replace a well pump. There will be a request to transfer money from the Water Reserve Account to complete the project before the summer season.

Chairman Wilhelm asked that the Water Superintendent be on a meeting agenda to talk about water usage in town and the upcoming water permitting process.

The BOS requested:

1. Superintendent to talk about water usage in town, the town's upcoming water permit, affect potential projects have on the town's water permit, etc.
2. Projects bonded for water available for refunding.

Finance Director – Present: Angel Wills, Finance Director

Ms. Wills explained that the Finance Department budget, including a Capital Request of \$87,000 for new Accounting Treasury Management software. The Town currently has VADAR software that Ms. Wills stated is slow and difficult to use. The BOS requested an update on the existing system to be presented at a future BOS meeting, including the features of new software, differences from VADAR, and how efficiencies would be increased.

Ms. Wills briefly reviewed that the Town has \$1.4 million bonded for past projects. Consideration of the FY16 proposed Capital needs to be discussed and financing options considered. The FinCom will discuss refunding at their December 17, 2014 meeting.

Ms. Wills is recommending reconstructing the positions in the Finance Department to include a full time Treasurer/Collector and a part-time Finance Department Assistant and a part time Assistant Treasurer/Collector.

The BOS requested:

- Presentation on new accounting software including, cost, benefits, efficiencies, comparison to other popular software used by municipalities, and how it is different to VADAR
- Discussion on the Capital list for FY 16
 1. Presentation on Refunding (callable bonds) Town's Debt including cost savings and analysis

Finance Department restructuring details

Town Administrator / Town Hall – Present Mark Andrews, Town Administrator

The Town Administrator's budget included the recommendation to increase legal counsel \$31,000.

During the transition of the Town Administrator, Mr. Andrews recommended the Administrator Assistant's hours be increased up to 40 hours per week, and this be considered temporary to be at the discretion of the new Town Administrator.

Mr. Andrews reminded the Board that next year is a collective bargaining year for union contracts.

The BOS requested:

- Town Counsel to give calendar year end legal report- updates, cost, recommendations

Ms. Harrison moved to adjourn at 1:12 PM and it was unanimous to do so.

Respectfully submitted by

Catherine Tinsley
11.25.14