

**Select Board Meeting
Minutes
March 30, 2023**

Joint meeting with the Finance Committee, Chair Mr. Kobus, Select Board member Mr. Devault, Select Board member Mr. Kerrigan and Select Board member Ms. Dickhaut Select Board Member Ms. Perusse attended. Finance Committee members in attendance were Mr. Robert Latini, Mr. William McGrail, Mr. Michael Dziokonski, Ms. Erin Powell, Mr. Paul Cherubini, and Mr. Bernard Hastings. Attendees were Town Accountant Ms. Diane Magliozzi and Town Administrator Mr. Michael Ward and Assistant Town Administrator Angela Snell. Chair Mr. Kobus opened the meeting at 6:02PM.

Introduction of Newly Hired Assistant Assessor

Chair of the Board of Assessors Mr. David Baird was before the board to introduce Assistant Assessor Dymtro Zakolodyazhnyy. He wanted the board members to have a chance to meet him and the viewers to see him. Mr. Zakolodyazhnyy explained he started about one month ago, and things are going very smoothly. He has a great relationship with Mr. Baird and sees him as a mentor. The board welcomed Dymtro Zakolodyazhnyy and thanked him for attending the meeting.

Joint Meeting with Finance Committee: FY 2024 Budget Hearings

Bigelow Free Public Library

Director Marie Letarte was before the boards to review the budget request for FY24. She began the review explaining the census population for the town has increased to 15000 residents; this puts the library in a different category. The library will have to add an additional five service hours offering up to 50 hours. This will be impactful to the budget requiring additional hours to cover for the staff and possibly additional staff. She explained the budget is straightforward; the salaries will change once the COLA is approved. She explained the expenses are the consortium memberships, technology, and programs. One increase is in professional development from \$902.00 to \$2567.00 to support attending a conference. The board thanked Ms. Lartte.

Department of Public Works

Superintendent Mr. Chris McGown was before the boards to review the FY24 budget requests for the Public Works department. He explained there are 4 departments to review including three enterprise funds, Water & Sewer Enterprise, Landfill Enterprise and Rubbish Enterprise funds. He has prepared a level service with \$50,000 increase to wages, the contract is being finalized. Overtime numbers have been increased along with fuel costs and miscellaneous cost due to inflation. The Water Sewer Enterprise fund

has some increases in the expeditors for salaries and the cost of chemicals for the treatment plant. The revenue is about \$2.8 to \$3 million. Based on \$2.8 the retained earnings are approximately \$165,000, he went with this number in the budget, it is on the lower side. The debt/interest payments will be finalized with the Treasurer and Accountant. The debt is approximately \$750,000 to \$800,000 with about \$200,000 to \$260,000 coming off the debt for next year. He recommended holding off on raising rates at this time; he would leave rates as is. He reviewed the Rubbish Enterprise fund has increases for the wages and benefit costs. The last payment will be made on the compactor maintenance and the middle age truck. The revenue is about \$670,000; there is no need to raise rates. Next, the Landfill enterprise fund the wages are down, this is the last stretch of the capping project, and the Forman salary is remaining in the budget. The project should be completed by September with certification, the gas issues will continue to be monitored. Chair Mr. Kobus asked about the past warrant articles. He reviewed in FY18 there is a balance in the Worcester Street article. Mr. McGown explained this project is done and the balance will be closed out. Chair Mr. Kobus asked about the FY20/21 article for the water tank improvements, it has a balance of \$68,000. Mr. McGown explained there are plans to use this funding over the next six months. Chair Mr. Kobus asked if the remaining balance from the Worcester Street article could be used toward adding off street parking. Mr. McGown explained it was written to be used towards clean up. Administrator Ward explained this can be repurposed for use with adding wording. Chair Mr. Kobus explained another department is looking for a vehicle to tow a trailer is there a retired vehicle available from your department. Mr. McGown explained no a retired vehicle really could not be used for that. The board thanked Mr. McGown.

Facilities & Grounds

Director of Facilities Mr. Brian Farragher was before the board. He reviewed there will be an increase to salaries, he is not planning to add to the department it is fully staffed. There is a small increase in the material cost and fuel charges. He also has increases in expenses for the school department supplies for sanitizing materials and maintenance. The tree removal budget he has included an increase to \$50,000. Costs have increased to hiring companies for assistance and the need of additional equipment like a crane have increased to \$6000 or \$8000 per day. The equipment line item has an increase of \$60,000. He has included \$145,000 for a mobile generator warrant article, he currently is renting it but plans to purchase. For Warrant Articles, he has prepared a request for three new mowers for the school and a storage garage for the school property, and there is a need to repave the parking areas for the Elementary and High Schools, the drains need to be raised for improvement. The board thanked Mr. Farragher.

Treasurer –Collector

Town Treasurer/Collector Mr. John Kittredge was before the board for review and discussion of the FY24 departmental budget. He began discussion announcing his plans to retire in June of 2024. He wanted to provide ample notice because he understands this will be a difficult role to file. He hopes to work with the new person before he leaves. He reviewed the Debt, Principle and interest, the short-term borrowing explaining rates have increased from 3.5% to 5%, on \$2.8 million this is an increase of \$113,000. On the Health Insurance, there is a big increase from the Minuteman Group. He also reviewed the Medicare tax has an increase of \$80,000. The department is made up of four staff and they have their mission and goals they work with each year. He is proud of the accomplishments and recent improvements to the department. There is an online payment system, which has streamlined the department. Ms. Powell asked if in the past has there been a hire that overlaps the current position. Administrator Ward explained this has not been done in the past, but we should do it, this is a specialized position. The board thanked Mr. Kittredge.

Chair Mr. Kobus stated one observation regarding the budget submissions; he hoped a uniform template could be used to track expenses for each department. Every department looks different. He would like to see them all the same it would make the process easier. Mr. Devault agreed.

Mr. McGrail asked if any consideration has been given to the purchase of the St John's rectory property, has the town expressed an interest to pursue. Chair Mr. Kobus explained over the last few years there have been verbal communications regarding the sale of the property. Administrator Ward explained he has stated there is an open line of communication and it is the long-range plan for the property to be sold but nothing is immediate. Ms. Dickhaut asked if the letter the board approved expressing interest in the first right of refusal for the property were to be sold had gone out. Administrator Ward stated yes. He reviewed the town would have to go through the RFP process looking for land and ask for submissions for proposals. The boards agreed to meet again on April 5th to complete the departmental budget proposals.

Board and Commission Appointments

Chair Mr. Kobus explained recently Mr. Ingano wrote a letter to the Editor regarding the St. John's Rectory and the appointment to the Historical Commission. He reviewed this year the board appointed Ms. Debra Goodsell to the Historical Commission, this process of appointing committee and boards had recently been completed. It included a letter to current members who were interested in continuing to serve and their responses along

with advertisement for vacancies. The board discussed ways to button up the appointment process. Ms. Perusse asked for a spreadsheet to be able to monitor the process. Mr. Devault agreed it should also include the terms for positions and highlight those that have expired.

Old & new Business

High Street Sidewalk Discussion

Mr. Devault explained he would like to move forward with hiring an independent consultant to review the High Street sidewalks. Administrator Ward stated he drafted an RFP it is 60 pages completed. Next steps are to include it in the central registry and should have proposals over the next three weeks. He asked for the board to review and offer feedback.

Town Administrator Goals

Chair Mr. Kobus explained the board would like to have an open dialogue regarding the Administrators Goals and check in on the status. Mr. Devault agreed he would like an update prior to the end of year to get an update on the ABC's of the goals. He would like to be updated frequently on where they are.

Community Announcements

Fundraiser for Real Youth Clinton Mentor Program on March 16, 2023

Chair Mr. Kobus stated this event was held and was very successful; he thanked all who participated in making it a success. This is a great organization and he is happy the community supports it. He referenced the Boosters team was stacked with great basketball ballers who defeated the Town Haulers.

Clinton Conservation Greenway Trust Cleanup Day April 22, 2023

Mr. Kerrigan noted there would be an upcoming clean-up day hosted by the Clinton Conservation Greenway Trust on April 22, 2023, watch for more information on the town website.

Chair Mr. Kobus announced the board would enter Executive Session and not return to open meeting.

Roll Call Vote was vote made at 7:48PM to enter into Executive Session for Collective Bargaining update. Roll Call Vote: Select Board member Mr. Devault "aye", Select Board member Mr. Kerrigan "aye", Select Board Member Ms. Perusse" aye", Select Board Member Ms. Dickhaut "aye", Chair Mr. Kobus "aye".

Executive Session Article 3 Collective Bargaining Update 7:48PM 8:15PM

Mr. Kerrigan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:15PM. Ms. Devault seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Meeting Adjourned,

Joyce A. Corbosiero
Executive Assistant Town Administrator/Select Board