

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

March 9, 2015

Meeting held at Town Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Robert Merry, Vice Chairman Joseph Perry, Clerk Robert Snow (Town Administrator Deborah Eagan, Assistant Town Administrator Amy Lydon) David Petersen - ABSENT

PUBLIC ATTENDEES: Lawrence White - Finance Committee; Stephen Comley Sr.- We the People; Pamela Jacobson - Library; Janet Peabody - Library; George T. Gallant - Library; Patrick Snow - Highway; Karen Summit - Treasurer/Collector

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Robert Merry called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. He said the meeting is being audio and video recorded digitally.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Stephen Comley Sr. led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

None.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

A moment of silence was observed for Town Clerk Susan Hazen's mother, Patricia Beaulieu, and Barbara McGeorge who passed away.

7:05 Appointment - Town Clerk Susan Hazen to discuss FY 16 budget.

Chairman Merry disclosed that he is an Election Warden and receives wages included in the Election Budget. He said the Election budget can be held out and reviewed next week.

Joseph Perry made a motion to approve the Town Clerk Budget, Board of Registrars budget, and Constable budget, Bob Snow second, all in favor - aye (3-0). Dave Petersen - ABSENT

7:05 – 7:15 p.m. CITIZEN QUERY

Citizen's Query opened at 7:05 p.m. Steve Comley Sr. said he is the founder of We the People, a whistleblower organization and this has been his passion for twenty-seven years. He said the former Executive Director of the NRC informed him that Seabrook residents paralyzed by a nuclear event at the Seabrook Power Plant should be left behind and given potassium iodide to drink. He said the disturbing thought that a certain part of the population is viewed as expendable is why he started his investigation. He said in the past 80% of Rowley residents signed a petition to investigate the NRC, and President Reagan ignored this. He said he wants to have a national petition on the upcoming Town Meeting warrant in May, he distributed materials to the Board and asked to be on next week's agenda.

He said he saw Vice President Biden in New Hampshire on February 25, 2015, and he had a student with him who had prepared a letter on his concerns regarding the lack of evacuation procedures at Seabrook. He said Biden was to be at a roundtable discussion regarding saving money, and the student wanted to go, but couldn't because the meeting was closed to the public. He said the student went to the security at the event and asked them to get his letter to Biden, but the letter was destroyed by the Secret Service. He said this is not a great way to encourage youth involvement in the government. He discussed the content of the DVDs that he distributed to the Board.

At 7:17 p.m. Chairman Merry asked Comley to conclude his presentation. Comley said he went to Seabrook on March 17, 2014 and there was no security guard at the booth, and he sent a letter of complaint to the NRC. He said he is a resident at 45 Mansion Drive and asked that he be put on the next agenda.

Citizen's query closed.

7:15 Appointment - Library Director Pam Jacobson to discuss FY 16 budget

Chairman Merry read Pam Jacobson's letter into the record. Jacobson said the MVLC assessment has gone up. She said we are a victim of our own success and when Library usage increases, the amount of materials required to purchase increases and the budget has to be increased the next year to cover the increased materials cost. Janet Peabody said as a Trustee, she is always happy to see that circulation has increased. Jacobson said circulation has increased by 12% over the past twelve years.

Bob Snow made a motion to approve the Library Budget, Joseph Perry second, all in favor - aye (3-0). Dave Petersen - ABSENT

7:30 Appointment - Treasurer/Collector Karen Summit to discuss tax foreclosure auction and FY 16 budgets

Summit said regarding the IS budget, there are many projects this year and more than 10 new systems being added, along with some printers.

Joseph Perry made a motion to approve the IS Budget, Bob Snow second, all in favor - aye (3-0). Dave Petersen - ABSENT

Summit said a few properties have been acquired through tax title takings and need to be disposed of via an auction. She said she reviewed the properties with Principal Assessor Sean McFadden and Chairman Merry, and the Board has information including the field cards and maps. She reviewed the list of properties with the Board, and said one property is a good fit for custody by the Conservation Commission since it abuts other Conservation land, and four properties have been identified as potentially usable by the Town in the future. She said she would like permission to send out the information on the remaining properties to the other Town Departments, and report their feedback to the Board in a couple of weeks. Eagan said the auction will be held after Town Meeting to give everyone time to review the information. Summit said they also need to procure an auctioneer, and it will be good to get this land back on the tax role.

Bob Snow made a motion to allow Karen Summit to send notice regarding the properties to Town departments, Joseph Perry second, all in favor - aye (3-0). Dave Petersen - ABSENT

NEW BUSINESS

1. Letter of resignations from Jack Cook from Cemetery Board and Selectmen

Chairman Merry read the resignation letters.

Bob Snow made a motion to accept Cook's resignations with regrets, Joseph Perry second, all in favor - aye (3-0). Dave Petersen - ABSENT

Snow said a letter should be sent to Cook thanking him for his service to the Town.

2. Sign contract with USI Consulting Group for GASB 45 services

Chairman Merry said, "We still have to hold off on this. It is not ready for the Selectmen to sign."

3. Discuss Street Layout Hearing for Hawkesworth Village

Chairman Merry read the following:

The Town's attorney has been working on the street acceptance review and it looks like this will be ready for a layout hearing on March 30th. I recommend that the Selectmen set the time for 7:15 p.m. because we have the Central Street Informational Hearing at 7:30 p.m.

Joseph Perry made a motion to set the street Layout Hearing for Hawkesworth Village on March 30, 2015 at 7:15 p.m., Bob Snow second, all in favor - aye (3-0). Dave Petersen - ABSENT

4. Review Selectmen's Annual Town Report draft

Joseph Perry said the report of the 375th Anniversary Committee would be submitted by Thursday.

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Letter from Rick Green, Chairman, Mass. Fiscal Alliance

Chairman Merry read the letter.

7:45 Appointment - Highway Surveyor Patrick Snow to discuss snow and ice deficit spending

Highway Surveyor Patrick Snow said so far \$373,456.19 has been spent on snow and ice removal. Eagan said Patrick Snow prepared a spreadsheet showing a break-down of the expenditures and said the original appropriation was \$100,000. Patrick Snow reviewed the spreadsheet and said there has been a large amount of snow. Bob Snow asked what the difference is between the amounts of salt and sand used this year versus last year. Patrick Snow said he doesn't have that data with him, but thinks less salt has been used since the storms have been so frequent. Patrick Snow presented a draft Snow Removal Agreement and said having this in place will help the employees, contractors and residents. He said this contract will be sent out in September of 2015 and needs to be returned by November 2015. He said new contractors are always welcome. He reviewed the rest of the contract, including the call in procedures, and documentation sections. He said the main roads are the first to be plowed, and this year they have started a storm log which has helped with FEMA reimbursements. He said the snowfall in the period of time between January 26, 2015 and February 22, 2015 has shattered all snowfall records and the State is trying to get federal aid.

Perry thanked Patrick Snow for widening Bennett Hill Road. Patrick Snow apologized for the late night snow removal by the Department and said it was necessary for the safety of the operators because there is little traffic at that time. He said all three snow farms in Town have been used this year. Perry said Rowley did a great job with snow removal compared to other communities. Bob Snow read the mission statement on the Snow Removal Agreement. Patrick Snow said he has a great group of employees and contractors. Eagan said the Board of Selectmen needs to approve the deficit spending in accordance with the statute.

Joseph Perry made a motion to approve the deficit spending in the Snow & Ice Removal account of \$273,456.22, Bob Snow second, all in favor - aye (3-0). Dave Petersen - ABSENT

The Board signed the FY15 Snow and Ice Deficit Approval Form.

8:00 p.m. Appointment - Fire Chief James Broderick to discuss proposed FY 16 Fire Department and REMA budgets

Chief Broderick said expenses have been level funded and wages increased by 2.5%. He reviewed the expense budget with the Board, and explained that the Call Firefighter wages have increased due to the wage increases. He said REMA has been level funded and the stipend is \$4,000. He said there is a capital request for a new laptop since the operating system that the old one runs on is no longer supported and they cannot go online with it. He said they also have a capital request for sign boards for REMA, since this is a quick and easy way to get a message out. He said they would like two boards, they cost \$15,000 each, and the departments can share them, they will be stored at the Highway Department. He said the fire alarm system is from the 1950s and it is obsolete. He said there are 35 boxes and six town owned buildings on the system. He reviewed the cost to replace the system (\$136,180 in total), he said this year there have been many problems with the system and he proposed a three year phase in. He said they need radio repeaters to improve poor reception in several areas of Town at a cost of \$34,000. He said five new call firefighters have started, but they have other jobs and sometimes only one call firefighter shows up at a call. He said there are three full-time firefighters and all three are thinking about retirement. He said there are 24 call firefighters, most are over 40 years old, and they need younger people. He proposed hiring additional full time staff so that they can have two shifts at the station, which would alleviate the need for the Fire Chief to be on the truck as often as he is. He said he will come up with a plan for FY17. Perry said some planning will be needed for continuity. Snow said the historical knowledge is needed and this needs to be addressed.

Broderick said the ladder truck should be here in mid June, and it is the first of its type to be built for a municipality.

Joseph Perry made a motion to approve the Fire Department and REMA budgets, Bob Snow second, the vote was not completed. Joseph Perry then withdrew his motion, Bob Snow second.

The Board agreed to wait until the following week when Dave Petersen is present to approve these budgets.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Discuss: FY 16 Triton Tentative Budget; February 25, 2015 Public Hearing; and Selectmen's letter to School Committee on Tentative Budget and Town's FY 16 budget

Chairman Merry read the following:

Triton's proposed FY 16 assessment increase is \$540,449, well above the amount we requested of \$215,000. This represents a 6.49 percent increase over last year. The School Committee is meeting on Wednesday to vote on the budget.

Selectman Perry will give an update on the District Communications Committee and School Committee meeting he attended last week.

If the other two Towns don't push back on the school budget, then we will be faced with this huge increase. We know that the School Committee can vote to make changes to retiree health insurance that will bring immediate cost savings to the District. The school has retirees that are not eligible for medicare who are on the PPO and HMO plans. With the Schools, and the Town's funding these costs, we have to ask why they are not considering saving money that can be used in the district, especially because this is not subject to collective bargaining? Our Treasurer has prepared the breakdown of the costs and has provided it to the school.

We will have to wait and see what the outcome of the final decision is with the budget before we can make any decisions.

Perry said he attended the meeting and thanked Deborah Choate for adding the District Communications meeting before the School Committee meeting. He said Newbury's assessment is only increasing 1%. He said he presented the School Committee with the letter and Robin Williams acknowledged Rowley's \$215,000 offer. He said they will vote this Wednesday for a final number. He said he is not too optimistic and they will have to cut teachers to meet Rowley's figure. He said Rowley cannot afford the proposed increase and student enrollments have been continually decreasing. Snow said the price of education has been steadily increasing. Perry said the State legislation has level funded Chapter 70 over the past ten years and this is killing the schools budget and puts the burden of the school budget onto the cities and towns. Snow said the school already uses 60% of the Town's budget, and there is nothing in the Triton agreement to prevent it from going to 65% or 70% of the budget. Merry said the proposed \$215,000 is half of the Town's new growth and increased tax levy. Perry said Triton's proposed budget would use all of the Town's new growth and increased tax levy, plus an additional \$100,000. Eagan said there is no provision in the agreement that the budget has to conform with proposition 2^{1/2}. She said two of the towns would have to vote the budget down at Town Meeting and without that we will have to figure out how to fund this at the expense of the municipal side. Snow said there is no

balance here and this will be devastating to the Town. Merry said in reality, this could bankrupt the Town.

FY 16 BUDGETS

- **Selectmen**

Chairman Merry said the audit expense has increased. Eagan said it is difficult to plan for the upcoming stormwater compliancy since there is limited information on the requirements. Perry said estimates are between \$60,000 and \$1,000,000. Eagan said we don't know what work needs to be done such as engineering, and this is an unfunded mandate. She said the MVPC collaborative is helpful. She said another unknown is the Pine Grove School building expenses.

The Board agreed to hold off on approving this budget until next week.

- **Town Counsel**

Eagan said this budget is level funded.

Joseph Perry made a motion to approve the Town Counsel budget, Bob Snow second, all in favor - aye (3-0). Dave Petersen - ABSENT

- **Personnel Board**

Eagan said this budget is level funded.

Bob Snow made a motion to approve the Personnel Board budget, Joseph Perry second, all in favor - aye (3-0). Dave Petersen - ABSENT

- **Planning Board**

Eagan said this budget has been re-submitted since there was a math error in the salary on the budget that was voted last week.

Joseph Perry made a motion to approve the Planning Board budget, Bob Snow second, all in favor - aye (3-0). Dave Petersen - ABSENT

- **Zoning Board of Appeals**

Bob Snow made a motion to approve the Zoning Board of Appeals budget, Joseph Perry second, all in favor - aye (3-0). Dave Petersen - ABSENT

- **Town Hall & Annex**

These budgets were not ready for approval.

- **Animal Control & Animal Inspector**

Bob Snow made a motion to approve the Animal Control and Animal Inspector budgets, Joseph Perry second, all in favor - aye (3-0). Dave Petersen - ABSENT

- **Street Lights**

This budget was not ready for approval.

- **Memorial Day/Vets Day**

Joseph Perry made a motion to approve the Memorial Day/Vets Day budget, Bob Snow second, all in favor - aye (3-0). Dave Petersen - ABSENT

- **Bradstreet & Girl Scout land Property Expense**

This budget was not ready for approval.

- **Unemployment, Blanket Insurance, Retirement**

These budgets were not ready for approval.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Central Street Proposed Reconstruction Public Hearing with Highway Surveyor Patrick Snow and Norman Brown of Bayside Engineering is scheduled for March 30, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.
- The Board of Selectmen is reminding residents that if they have the opportunity and the ability to clear hydrants near their homes
- The Town has the following vacancies:
 - a) **Fence Viewer**– three positions;
 - b) **Wood, Lumber & Bark Inspector**; and
 - c) **Zoning Board of Appeals Associate** – two open seats
 - d) **Historical Commission-Historic District Commission** - two seats
 - e) **Parks and Recreation Committee** - two seats
 - f) **Open Space Committee** is seeking membersFor more information on these positions, please contact the Selectmen's Office at 948-2372
- Rowley Food Pantry is in need of donations. The Food Pantry is open Tuesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and Thursdays from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- Town Meeting is scheduled for May 4, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. at the Pine Grove School
- Rowley Recycles - Sat. April 4 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Textiles/Books/CDs

There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Merry called for a motion to adjourn. Bob Snow so moved, Joseph Perry second, all in favor – aye (3-0). Dave Petersen - ABSENT

Open meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Lydon
Assistant Town Administrator

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Meeting memo regarding: 7:05 Appointment - Town Clerk Susan Hazen to discuss FY 16 budget.
2. Town Clerk FY 16 budget
3. Board of Registrars FY 16 budget
4. Elections FY 16 budget
5. Constable FY 16 budget
6. Materials and DVDs submitted at the meeting from Stephen Comley, Sr.
7. Meeting memo regarding: 7:15 Appointment - Library Director Pam Jacobson to discuss FY 16 budget.
8. Letter dated February 26, 2015 from Pam Jacobson
9. Library FY 16 budget
10. Meeting memo regarding: 7:30 Appointment - Treasurer/Collector Karen Summit to discuss tax foreclosure auction and FY16 budgets
11. Memo from Karen Summit to Board of Selectmen dated March 3, 2015 regarding additional property for auction, with property card
12. Memo from Elaine to Board of Selectmen dated February 27, 2015 regarding properties for acquired through tax title as prepared by Summit
13. Memo from Karen Summit to Board of Selectmen dated February 26, 2015 regarding potential auction of tax title possessions, with property card and map for each
14. Letter of resignation from Jack Cook as Cemetery Commissioner
15. Letter of resignation from Jack Cook as Selectman
16. Meeting memo regarding: New Business #2: Sign contract with USI Consulting Group for GASB 45 services
17. Meeting memo regarding: New Business #3: Discuss Street Layout Hearing for Hawkesworth Village
18. Draft Report of the Board of Selectmen for annual Town Report
19. Letter from Rick Green, Chairman, Mass. Fiscal Alliance
20. Meeting memo regarding: 7:45 Appointment - Highway Surveyor Patrick Snow to discuss snow and ice deficit spending
21. FY 15 Snow & Ice Deficit approval form
22. Excerpt from MGL Chapter 44 Section 31 D
23. Town of Rowley Highway Department Snow Removal Agreement
24. Highway Department Draft Snow and Ice Operational Plan
25. FY 15 Snow & Ice Expenditure Report
26. Completed and signed FY 15 Snow & Ice Deficit approval form
27. Meeting memo regarding: 8:00 p.m. Appointment_- Fire Chief James Broderick to discuss proposed FY 16 Fire Department and REMA budgets
28. Letter from Fire Chief Broderick dated March 5, 2015 and enclosed Fire Department and REMA budgets
29. Meeting memo regarding: Old Business #1: Discuss: FY 16 Triton Tentative Budget; February 25, 2015 Public Hearing; and Selectmen's letter to School Committee on Tentative Budget and Town's FY 16 budget

30. Triton Regional School District Revenue/Assessment Summary
31. Triton Regional School District Town Assessment Calculation
32. Triton Regional School District Cut Scenarios
33. Selectmen budget
34. Town Counsel budget
35. Personnel Board budget
36. Planning Board budget
37. Zoning Board of Appeals budget
38. Animal Control Officer budget
39. Animal Inspector budget
40. Memorial Day & Veterans Day budget