



**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
November 16, 2022**

Present: Bob Hamilton, Chairman, Marybeth Quill, Vice Chair, and Karl Pruter, Selectman, Lori Rautiola, Town Administrator, Laurie May, Finance Director

Bob opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Office. Bob asked Marybeth if she would like Karl Pruter to participate in the meeting by phone. Marybeth and Bob both agreed.

Any other items before the Board: No other items were mentioned.

Citizen's Forum: There was no public comment.

Consent Agenda: Approval of:

- ~~Minutes 11/02/22, 11/09/22 minutes~~
- Payroll & Accounts payable 11/17/22

Marybeth made a motion to approve the consent agenda without the 11/2/22 and 11/9/22 minutes. Karl seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

Old Business:

ARPA: Bob mentioned that bids for tasers are needed to move forward in making a purchase.

COLA: There was a discussion on the total increase in wages when considering the pay scale and Cost of Living Increase. It was noted the pay scale seemed to have some discrepancies. Karl made a motion to approve a 2.5% COLA increase for all employees combined with the wage scale increase for all eligible employees. Marybeth seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

New Business:

Town Report/voter's guide: Bob stated the estimate for the 2023 town report and voter's guide came in just under last year's budgeted amount. Karl made a motion to approve the preliminary estimate of \$5,057 for the town report and voter's guide and to allow Lori Rautiola to sign the document. Marybeth seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

Investment Policy: The Board reviewed Town's investment policy. Marybeth made a motion to accept the current policy as is. Karl seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

Town Clerk Budget Proposal: Town Clerk, Lauralei Knight presented the Budget. An increase in the Deputy Town Clerk hours was requested. A new line for contracted services was implemented within the budget for services provided to the Town Clerk. There is a small increase in office and cleaning supplies. Lauralei noted her report has office and computer supplies but the print out from BS&A states "cleaning supplies". Postage has gone down due to Lauralei's efforts to send notices via email. An increase in Staff Development and mileage to attend the annual Town Clerk Conference.

Lauralei stated the town is losing money in registrations by using the State's free program, MAP. She gave an example of how much money the town loses per transaction in revenue when using MAP versus ClerkWorks. Most Towns use ClerkWorks or Avitar. Rindge is currently using ClerkWorks for dog registrations. The MAP program is old, it constantly goes "down" due to internet, you cannot restart it yourself so residents end up waiting long periods of time until the State can restart it. Lauralei did a cost analysis and compared it with Avitar. She highly recommends the Town switch to ClerkWorks for registrations. There would be a onetime startup fee of \$8,120 for the software and each year after that \$2,200 in annual support. Phil Motta and Tom Coney's stated it would pay for itself in less than a year. Bob was in agreement. The total operating budget was \$17,598 plus the \$8,120 for the new software.

There was a brief discussion on tech support (software) being dumped into one line under technology. Tom and Lori suggested each department outside of the Town Office (Town Clerk, Fire, and Building) be given their own line for tech support. The Select Board and Budget Advisory Committee were all in agreement to build the \$8,120 into the budget.

Fire Department Budget Proposal: Chief Rick Donovan presented the Fire Budget. Rick explained the medical evaluations will now be conducted by a mobile unit instead of sending them to Monadnock Hospital. Rick conducted research and found large savings by having the mobile unit come out once a year, plus it's more efficient for the employees. The funds have not been spent to date but they are scheduled for January 2023. He would like to get them back on track for fall evaluations in October. There has been a rise in training costs. The training line has increased from \$8,000 to \$12,000 for the two new call members.

Rick stated the Fire calls for service has increased to a high of 90 calls per month. The budget is showing \$91,190 for the total operating budget. The Mutual Aid budget is showing a 2.5% increase. Rick stated the Board of Directors was meeting tonight and he should have a definite figure soon. Phil Motta questioned if anything else was needed for the Department. Rick stated the Department has been fortunate to receive grant funds which have given the Department a chance to catch up on some big-ticket items.

There was a discussion on SCBA gear and turnout gear. Laurie May noted there is \$40,000 in the Fire Reserve which is to be used for SCBA only.

Emergency Management: The budget is proposed to decrease from \$17,883 to \$13,683. Rick explained the reason for the increase last year was due to the trailers that were purchased last year.

Technology Budget: Lori went over the technology budget and explained some back up needs. There is a slight increase in computer software due to moving from Microsoft 2013 to Office 365. Laurie May had separated the software line to annual support and maintenance which is where the bulk of our software was shown in the budget. There was a brief discussion on what should category software should be under. The budget of \$68,236 is showing a slight increase over last year.

Informational Items/Communications/Updates: Bob gave an update on the Meetinghouse Committee meeting. The evaluation of the Meetinghouse is underway. The Committee met with Alison Meltzer who was hired to assess the building so that the Town can apply for an LCHIP grant. The assessment should be complete January 2023.

Selectmen's Announcements: Town Clerk's office will be closed on November 23. Bob thanked the Election candidates who have removed their signs in a timely manner. The remaining signs will be addressed if not removed soon. The Recreation Department's Senior Dinner will be held on Dec. 8th starting at 5:30 p.m. Please call the Rec Department to make reservations or to have a meal delivered.

Any other official business to come before the Board: There was no other business.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Rautiola
Town Administrator