



**BOARD OF SELECTMEN/BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE
JOINT SESSION
MEETING MINUTES**

Present: Roberta Oeser, Chair, Bob Hamilton and Karl Pruter, Selectmen, Sara Gravell, Town Administrator, Laurie May, Finance Director, Lori Rautiola, Executive Secretary, Members of the Community

CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting was called to order at the Meeting House with the Pledge of Allegiance on November 4, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Selectmen's Announcements: Roberta announced the letters from the Towns assessing firm, KRT have gone out. Residents can contact KRT directly with any questions they have regarding their property assessments. Roberta and Bob thanked all the Election workers and commended them on a job well done. Rindge had 3,996 voters and Bob thanked the voters for coming out and once again commended the Poll Workers on a job well done.

Citizen's Forum: Holly Koski questioned what the percentage of voters was that voted and Roberta responded it is hard to gather a percentage due to the fact the checklist needs to be purged. Karla McCloud stated the checklist is due to be purged this year but there was 4,909 on the checklist to start and there was 400 new voters' registrations.

Consent Agenda - Approval of:

- Payroll 10/29/2020, 11/05/2020
- Accounts Payable 10/29/2020, 11/05/2020

Roberta noted the 10/21/2020 minutes had not been reviewed yet. Bob made a motion to approve the consent agenda with the removal of the 10/21/2020 minutes. Karl seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

Old Business:

Code Enforcement complaints: Roberta announced there has been no luck filling the vacancy of Code Enforcement Officer/Assessing Clerk. She recommended the Board separate the position

into two part-time positions. Bob agreed, suggesting they compile job descriptions for the positions. Karl agreed that would be step to move forward.

Roberta reported the solar array on Thomas Road was within the setback of the road and needs to go before the Zoning Board for a variance.

Tax Deeded Properties: Roberta noted the mobile home on Sunset Drive had gone to deed but wanted to discuss it further before it was sent to the registry. She noted the town now owns it and could make them vacate, but if it went to the registry the town could end up being responsible for the rent. Roberta and Sara will put together a letter for the property owner about their options.

Road names: a) Dale Farm Road- Roberta reported E-911 suggested that Knight Road sounded close to Nault Road but if the suffix could be changed it would be ok. There was discussion on changing the suffix. It was decided the new road name should be Knight Lane. Karl made a motion to rename the class VI part of Dale Farm Rd to Knight Lane. Bob seconded the motion and it passed 3-0. b) Navian Development- Roberta mentioned Building Inspector, Rick Donavon requested a driveway name for the housing unit off Sonja Dr. due to having three or more residences there. The first choice name is Leisure Lane. Karl made a motion to name the driveway Leisure Lane. Bob seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

Rekeying Town Buildings: There was discussion on having the Town Office, the Meeting House, the Rec Center and the Library rekeyed. Sara noted it will cost \$1,900 and some change to have the buildings rekeyed and about \$200-\$300 for the new keys. The Board agreed to move forward with having the buildings rekeyed.

New Business:

Use of Unanticipated Funds: Roberta suggested not to use any of the unanticipated funds from FEMA/GOFFER until it is known the budgets are overspent and was hopeful the funds could be used to off-set next year's tax rate or budget. The FEMA funds would need to be used first because they cannot be used longer than what the purpose of the funds was for. Karl mentioned using the money for the items that Department heads had requested if there was unanticipated funds left over. He noted possibly using the money for a new server this year instead of next year. Karl asked if the money for servers and other IT items should be budgeted for next year or would the unanticipated funds be used to cover items like a new server. Roberta stated it would be a good idea to keep it in the budget and the Board can use any unanticipated funds next year to offset the budget. Roberta noted Rick and Laurie have done a great job staying on top of all the grant money available to the Town.

Employee Contract Approvals: Roberta stated the Board had previously met with the Town Administrator, Sara Gravell and the Finance Director, Laurie May to discuss their contracts. Bob made a motion to approve the two contracts. Karl seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

Health Insurance Renewals: The contract for health insurance is due. Roberta noted health insurance has increased significantly with a rate of 8.4%. Roberta stated due to Covid the search

for a less expensive health insurance got pushed to the back burner but this item will be revisited soon. Bob mentioned all health insurance rates are rising. Bob made a motion to allow Sara to sign the health insurance renewal on behalf of the Board. Karl seconded the motion and it passed 3-0. Dan Whitney questioned if the renewal was a six or twelve month policy and if the Board could opt out if they found a better coverage. Roberta noted that is a good question and Sara would look into it.

Title for the Old Rec Van – The old rec van was given to the Fire Department to use for training purposes and now needs to be removed from the property. Casey can have it removed soon and would be asking the title to be signed over in order to release the vehicle. Bob made a motion for the Chair, Roberta Oeser to sign the title to dispose of the 2001 van. Karl seconded the motion and it passed 3-0.

Joint Session with Budget Advisory Committee

Budget Committee Members Present: Sharon Rasku, Phil Motta, David Graham, Cheryl McCabe Charron, Dan Whitney, and Tom Coney

Roberta stated Laurie May has worked very hard on the budgets. She also noted the procedure will be the same as last year's, which was in order to save time, the Department heads will not go line by line adding, the BAC has had time to review each budget and may ask questions when needed.

Department of Public Works: Director, Mike Cloutier stated the Street Light Budget was reduced from \$7,000 to \$6,400 with the street light conversion to LED. Mike continued with the Cemetery and Parks and Playgrounds Budget which will remain the same as last year.

Solid Waste Budget-This will be the last year of the five year contract with Monadnock Disposal so this line will remain the same. Bob asked when the contract is up for renewal and Mike responded in March. There was discussion on the cost going up for the next contract. Mike stated the contract quote has remained the same for the last two 5 year contracts. Cheryl and Dan mentioned it is unlikely the Town will be able to get such a low cost for the disposal services after the 5 year contract is up. Mike noted the town owning a compactor has saved them significant money. Mike noted he would work with them once again to try and keep the cost at a minimum.

Town Buildings: Heating oil came in at \$1.98 through Reds of Jaffrey. The Propane budget will be \$1.28 through Allen & Mathewson, which is lower than last year. The Contracts Budget has increased due to raising contract prices on the contract for the elevators, water deliveries, and other contracts, plus a total of four new generators installed this summer that will need to be serviced annually has caused it to increase.

Highway Operating: Overtime and Snow and Ice Budgets will remain the same as last year. The price for sand remained the same as last year. There may be some new roads coming forth for the Town to accept, but the budget for Roads will remain the same as last year. Mike noted the General Service of Equipment Budget was overspent. In 2020 the Department had two major

repairs. One of those repairs was to the F-150 one ton's transmission and the second was the Department's oldest 6 wheel truck which needed an extreme amount of work. This line will be up from \$11,000 to \$13,000. Health and Retirement is up as well. Bob asked Laurie to explain the retirement increase for 2021. Laurie stated the employee contribution rates have increased from 11.17% to 14.6% which will take effect in July, 2021. Laurie mentioned this was the first increase in two years from New Hampshire Retirement System (NHRS).

Mike noted the Town has 9 miles of dirt roads, as well as 56 miles which are paved. He would like to have a separate budget line for Gravel Roads and keep the line for Road Paving and Materials. This will allow the Department to see how much is being spent on dirt roads alone. Mike added the Department has had a significant amount of complaints regarding the dirt roads and would like to allot a certain amount of gravel to maintain them. It was noted the Town has taken on roughly 5,100 feet of paved road to maintain within the last year or two. Dan Whitney commented the Department has taken a good approach to the growing number of roads and maintaining of them. He added this breakdown explains and it is transparent.

Highway Paving: The Department is requesting a \$50,000 increase to the paving line. It was noted the Highway Block Grant from the State has decreased. Mike stated he was slowing catching up on the paved portions of the roads, and he was hopeful to start the preventative stages repairing cracks etc. One of the main reasons this line was overspent was due to the two major culvert failures, one on Mountain Road and the other on Ingalls Road, both were unanticipated. Mike noted RFP's for the Wellington Bridge Project will be put out soon and the Departments work will start in that area next summer.

Library: Director, Donna Stratiff stated the Operating Budget would remain flat. She continued stating the book budget had slightly increased due to the State increasing the amounts for electronic resources and databases. She continued stating she moved some things around within the budget in order to keep the budget flat. Payroll increased slightly, possibly due to retirement or insurance. Payroll came in under budget this year, however that was due to the Covid. Donna noted each year the Library uses about \$4,000 from the anticipated income from the fax and copier etc. and applies it to their expenses. This year, even being shut down from Covid she estimates it will come in around \$3,600. Dan asked Donna for feedback on the Youth Librarian position that was added last year. Donna responded they had been doing wonderful with programs and numbers were up quite a bit with the youth programs until Covid hit. When the Library finally reopened the virtual and online programs were the only way to go due to the limited amount of people allowed in the building. Donna is hopeful the programs will pick back up and is very glad to have Jennifer McGotsky on board as the new Youth Librarian.

Recreation Budget: Director, Dan Bemis stated the Rec Budget will remain flat with a few minor increases to items such as the annual printer contract, telephone services and dues and subscriptions. Dan stated much of the Rec. Departments funds are spent within the last half of the year so some money will still be spent from now through December. Much of the funds will not be used due to Covid. Dan noted some new expenses will apply for to-go containers for the Senior Dinner, etc. but the budget will still remain the same as last year. Dan noted the Department will be working with Gregg at Toah Nipi once again. Roberta mentioned she was pleasantly surprised by the amount of funds in the revolving account since the after school programs were down due to Covid.

Tax Collector: Roberta stated the only change is an increase to the Deputy Tax Collector position's hours and that was due to the Board taking hours from this position last year and moving them to the Town Clerk's Deputy. Carol Donovan was not present however, Sara reported the Department has few slight increases to the supplies line for things such as envelopes and paper. Roberta noted the budget was straight forward.

Informational Items:

Sara mentioned the Rindge Rotary Club donated masks to our First Responders. She thanked them for their donations.

Sara also stated the Consolidated Communications (CCI) was making significant progress with the fiber for all Rindge residents.

Roberta asked if Sara had heard back from Attorney Kinyon regarding the Sportsman's Drive complaint and Sara responded she had not. Sara will follow up with Attorney Kinyon on this issue.

Roberta mentioned KRT owes the Town money. The company suggested to roll a credit balance over to the next cycle. Roberta stated she disagreed and would like to put the assessing contract out to bid. She added as part of the contract KRT was to send everyone's assessment cards out to them and they did not. Dan questioned if the Town was going to move forward with KRT not holding up their end of the bargain. He added if the contract states they will be fined \$100 a day from expected completion, the town could use those funds towards the cost of the next contract with whomever that may be with.

Bob reminded residents the State is in a moderate drought at this time and reported anyone with low income can get assistance if needed. Welfare Director, Mary Drew can give them more information if needed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Rautiola