

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Working Session
Town Hall Conference Room
Minutes of January 4, 2013

Acting Chairman Martha Morrison called the meeting to order at 8:30AM. Board members present in addition to Acting Chairman Morrison, were, Dick Gandt, Laura Powers and Ken Vogel. Eldon Goodhue was absent. Of the Selectmen's staff Town Administrator Virginia Wilder and Board Secretary Donna Rich was in attendance. Other persons present during all or part of the meeting were, Treasurer/Collector Barbara Michalowski, Police Chief Evan Haglund.

Acting Chairman Morrison stated the purpose of the meeting would be to review FY14 budgets with various departments for which the Board of Selectmen is responsible.

Treasurer/Collector: Treasurer/Collector Barbara Michalowski presented her FY14 budget being within the Finance Committee Guidelines, including salary and wage increases of 2%, and one-step increases where applicable. There was discussion regarding the \$4,975 increase in the Tax Title line item for a total of \$10,075. Selectman Gandt suggested that this increase be placed under the essential service budget tab, as has been the process with other departments. There was a discussion regarding the tax bills.

Retirement/Pension: Treasurer/Collector Barbara Michalowski explained that the budgeted amount reflects the assessment provided by the Essex Regional Retirement System (ERRS). There was a discussion regarding the Dispatchers and the potential impact.

Debt Service: Treasurer/Collector Barbara Michalowski explained the budget reflects changes made in the Town's debt service in 2011.

Budget Summary Report: Ms. Wilder distributed the BOS Summary of Budgets. Operating Budget is within Guideline with a minus 1.1%.

Selectman Powers made a motion to approve the submitted budgets for consideration to the Finance Committee for the following departments: Council on Aging, Conservation Commission, Health Department, Town Accountant, Unemployment, Cable & Web, Recycling, Soldiers & Sailors Graves, Historical Commission, School Street Building, Zoning Board of Appeals, Ambulance, Sealer of Weights and Measure, Animal Control, Animal Inspector, Tree Department, Insurance, Selectmen's Budget, Selectmen's Special, Treasurer/Collector, Retirement/Pension and Debt Service, seconded by Selectman Vogel; so voted: 4-0.

Selectman Gandt made a motion to approve the MSW (Municipal Solid Waste) Collection FY14 Budget with an addition of \$3,000 for municipal waste line item to include English Commons trash removal, seconded by Selectman Powers; so voted 4-0.

Police Department: Chief Haglund was present to explain items within the budget the Board was concerned with and those that are not within guideline. Selectman Vogel distributed a chart displaying the cost the RECC represents. There was discussion that certain items identified should be moved into the essential unfunded tab. Selectman Vogel would recalculate and distribute the changes for discussion and review at the Monday, January 14th meeting.

Buttercup Cottage: Selectman Gandt brought the Board up to date regarding the property on Boston Street, known as the Buttercup Cottage. The property is owned by EBSCO President Tim Collins whom has expressed a willingness to transfer the ownership of the property to the Town. Selectman Gandt reviewed the pros and cons of the Town obtaining ownership of the

property. Selectman Gandt offered three (3) alternatives: 1-accept as is, 2-accept without buildings, 3-accept land, buildings taken away and an environmental analysis done, for the purpose of Open Space to the Town. Town Administrator Wilder shared with the Board information received from Kopelman and Paige regarding options available in the taking or accepting of land. There was discussion relative to environmental testing, title search, upkeep (grass cutting), the actual taking of the property and ideas of what could be done with the property. Selectman Powers expressed reluctance in asking taxpayers to fund activities such as building demolition and environmental remediation at a property that appears to have little or no functional value to the community. In addition, Selectman Powers reminded the Board that the Building Assessment study will be presented to the Board soon and will likely include suggestions for funding requirements for properties with much higher priority and operational importance than the Buttercup property. Selectman Gandt polled the members of the Board as to their preference and the majority of the members indicated they would be interested in accepting the property without the buildings. Selectman Gandt will inform Tim Collins that the Board is interested in moving forward.

At 11:37 AM, Selectmen Vogel made a motion to adjourn and Selectman Powers seconded the motion; so voted: 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Rich, Secretary
Selectmen's Office

Approved as amended at the February 4, 2013 Board of Selectmen's meeting.

Per the Open Meeting Law, the documents that were either distributed to the BOS before the meeting in a packet, or at the meeting were:

1. Agenda
2. FY14 Budgets that were discussed
3. Selectmen's Budget Summary document

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| <p>Pursuant to the 'Open Meeting Law,' G.L. 39, § 23B, the approval of these minutes by the Board constitutes a certification of the date, time and place of the meeting, the members present and absent, and the actions taken at the meeting. Any other description of statements made by any person, or the summary of the discussion of any matter, is included for the purpose of context only, and no certification, express or implied, is made by the Board as to the completeness or accuracy of such statements.</p> |
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