

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES  
TOWN OF EPPING, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
October 3, 2016**



**ATTENDANCE**

Chairman Tom Gauthier; Selectmen Tom Dwyer, Mike Yergeau and Susan McGeough. Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge. Selectman Bob Jordan and Executive Secretary Joyce Blanchard were excused.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Gauthier called the public session to order at 6:00 PM at the Epping Town Hall.

**ENTER INTO NON-PUBLIC 91-A:3 II (c) reputation and (e) legal**

**Motion by Chairman Gauthier to enter into Non-Public Session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (c) reputation and (e) legal. Seconded by Selectman Dwyer. Motion carried 4-0. Roll call vote taken and carried unanimously.**

**Motion by Chairman Gauthier to exit Non-Public Session. Seconded by Selectman Dwyer. Motion carried 4-0.**

**PUBLIC SESSION**

Chairman Gauthier reconvened the Public Session at 7:00 PM at the Epping Town Hall.

**PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**

**SEAL NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

**Motion by Selectman Dwyer to seal the non-public minutes of October 3, 2016. Seconded by Selectman Yergeau. Motion carried 4-0.**

**MINUTES**

Minutes from September 25, 2016 was submitted for approval.

**Motion by Selectman Dwyer to accept the minutes of September 26, 2016. Seconded by Selectman Yergeau. Motion carried 4-0.**

## **BUSINESS**

### **ABATEMENT**

An abatement on a welfare lien filed in 1992 was presented to the Board in the amount of \$2,566.34. This was discussed in non-public prior to the meeting.

**Selectman Dwyer made a motion to abate the interest on a welfare lien in the amount of \$2,566.34. Seconded by Selectman Yergeau. Motion carried 4-0.**

### **BUDGET REVIEW**

The Board of Selectmen began the process of reviewing the proposed 2017 Budget. Finance Director Lisa Fogg joined the Board at the head table.

### **LIBRARY**

Library Trustee Michelle Wheeler and Trustee Chairman Charlie Goodspeed presented the budget to the Selectmen and highlighted some of the changes. The initial budget as proposed was increased by \$1,115 with most of the increase coming from salary lines and other associated costs. Ms. Wheeler expressed to the Board that the Trustees felt that money should be appropriated for Professional Services (legal) and thus added an additional \$5,000 to the bottom line making the total \$180,505. The Board discussed this number and agreed that money needed to be in that line item and Chairman Gauthier felt \$3000 would be enough.

**Selectman Gauthier made a motion to place an amount of \$3,000 in the Professional Services line. Seconded by Selectman Dwyer. Motion carried 4-0.**

There was additional discussion relative to surplus funds going into the non-lapsing account along with library fees, donations, etc. Administrator Dodge felt that any surplus funds should go to the general fund. Selectman Dwyer asked how much was in this account to which Ms. Wheeler replied \$8,500. This will be explored a bit more for clarity. Chairman Gauthier asked Administrator Dodge if the library's energy costs were going through a private source along with the Town. Administrator Dodge said that it was not and that the Library Trustees needed to vote to do that and if approved he would have it included going forward.

The Board did not take any action on this budget with exception of Professional Services and will wait until the Health Insurance numbers are guaranteed.

Library Trustee Charlie Goodspeed spoke briefly about some of the improvements needed at the library particularly to the structure. He explained that the library needs to be painted and that the windows needed to be repaired and/or replaced. Administrator Dodge said money for the library work is under Governmental Buildings in the budget.

Administrator Dodge expressed to the Library Trustees that in the past few months great improvements have been made to the library and it looks great.

## **PARKS AND RECREATION**

Director Nicole Bizzaro presented the budget to the Selectmen also present was Recreation Commissioner Sandy Goodspeed. This budget is up \$485 dollars driven by salary and other associated costs.

Ms. Bizzaro discussed with the Selectmen her need to have a full-time assistant. She gave the Board a handout outlining comparable towns to Epping based on demographics. The Selectmen were also given a spreadsheet from Lisa Fogg which showed a salary of \$31,200 and full-time benefits bringing the total to \$63,600 for a full year. Ms. Bizzaro told the Board that it was becoming increasingly difficult to do everything on her own. Nicole said that the search would not begin until after March meeting and by the time interviews were complete a hire would not be recommended until April or May. She wanted to split the costs of this position with money coming from the budget and the rest coming from the revolving fund as it was established. Lisa Fogg said that initially it would be difficult to track costs but it could be done.

Nicole told the Board that when she took the position of Director there was a \$7000 balance in the revolving fund which has since grown to just under \$100,000. This would be a 40-hour a week position and Nicole would like to make it a salaried position. The Board was not sure that could be done. Sandy Goodspeed spoke and said that the revolving fund is healthy due to the good work of Nicole.

**Selectman Dwyer made a motion to include a full-time Assistant Recreation Director in the budget for a period of 8 months with the position being funded 50% from the budget and the other 50% from the revolving fund. Seconded by Selectman S. McGeough. Motion carried 4-0.**

## **RECREATION BUS**

The Board discussed with Nicole the repair and/or replacement of the blue Recreation bus. Administrator Dodge said that sealed bids were not yet solicited in that Dave Reinhold thought he might be able to fix it. Ms. Bizzaro brought out the fact that the bus is old and has over 1700,000 miles and that it really needs to be replaced.

Expandable Trust Fund – Nicole wanted to be sure money was set aside to put into the newly established expandable trust fund. The Board assured her that it will be addressed when warrant articles are reviewed.

## **WATSON ACADEMY**

Nicole Bizzaro also presented the Watson Academy budget which showed a reduction of \$30,165 due to the repairs which were completed this year and not recurring next year. The Board questioned the cost for fuel and felt that it could be reduced by \$1,000.

**Selectman Dwyer made a motion to reduce the fuel line by \$1,000. Seconded by Selectman S. McGeough. Motion carried 4-0.**

Nicole spoke about the roof on Watson, the Bell Tower, and the need to replace some of the steam pipes in the building. She stated that the \$25,000 in the budget may not be enough to do some of these repairs and suggested that a new Watson Academy Improvement Fund be established like the Town Hall has. This was discussed at length and resulted in this motion.

**Selectman Dwyer motioned to remove the \$25,000 from the Repairs & Maintenance line and move it to a warrant article to establish a Watson Academy Improvement Fund. Seconded by Selectman S. McGeough. Discussion: Administrator Dodge stated that it was not the intent to remove all of that money and establish a fund. If the warrant article failed there would be no money to make any repairs.**

**Selectman Dwyer withdrew his motion and Selectman S. McGeough withdrew her second.**

Discussion continued and this motion was offered.

**Selectman Gauthier motioned to reduce the Repair/Maintenance line in the Watson budget by \$10,000 and to put forth a warrant article to establish a Watson Academy Improvement Fund with an appropriation of \$10,000. Seconded by Selectman S. McGeough. Motion carried 4-0.**

#### **LCHIP/Stewardship Agreement**

Nicole discussed with the Board the recent review of the LCHIP grant and Stewardship agreement. Changes have not yet been incorporated or discussed but pending.

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN** – \$250 decrease – No comments or questions.

**TOWN ADMINISTRATION** - \$5,125 decrease due to reduction in staffing a part-time Clerk – No comments or questions.

**TOWN MEETING** - \$500 decrease – No comments or questions.

**BOARDS & COMMISSIONS** – No change – No comments or questions.

**TOWN CLERK** – To be reviewed at a later date.

**ELECTION & REGISTRATION** – To be reviewed at a later date.

**TAX COLLECTION** – To be reviewed at a later date.

**ACCOUNTING & AUDITING** - \$3,875 increase due to salary and benefits approved as of April 1, 2016.

Town Administrator Dodge informed the Board that the contract with the Auditor expires this year and wanted to know if the Board would like to bid this out for the year 2017. Board consensus was that the Town put this out for bid.

**TREASURY** – No change – No comments or questions.

**IT DEPARTMENT** - \$1,150 increase due to the need to cycle out three workstations. Town Administrator Dodge also said that in the 2018 budget there will be the need to have a new server installed. Chairman Gauthier asked if money could be appropriated in the 2017 budget for that purpose. In his opinion and that of Lisa Fogg it would be inappropriate.

**PLANNING** – To be reviewed at a later date.

**ZONING** – To be reviewed at a later date.

**GENERAL GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS** - \$5,200 decrease due to one-time expenses incurred in 2016. There is money in the Repairs/Maintenance line to paint the library and repair/replace windows.

**SAFETY FACILITY** – To be reviewed at a later date. Chairman Gauthier commented to look at the Fuel line.

**HIGHWAY BUILDING** – To be reviewed at a later date.

**VALUATION OF PROPERTY** – No change as of now, Town Administrator Dodge advised the Board that our contract with MRI expires on December 31, 2016. Scott Marsh (MRI) has presented a contract to the Town to provide the same services with an option to add on the service of a quarterly evaluation. There were questions regarding the updating of the data, etc. The contract calls for general services at \$21,000 with an option to add the quarterly evaluation at a cost of \$24,000 per year. There were many questions posed regarding MRI's services so Mr. Dodge recommended that Scott Marsh come in and talk to the Board about the proposal. The Board agreed with that idea.

**LEGAL EXPENSE** - \$4,000 reduction but with a new litigation received recently that number may have to be adjusted up.

**PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION** – No change. No comments or questions.

**CEMETERIES** – Cemetery Trustee Jerry Langdon will review with the Board at their regular meeting on Tuesday October 11, 2016.

**INSURANCE & BONDS** - \$6,000 reduction due to changes in property liability and worker's compensation.

**HEALTH** – No change. No comments or questions.

**GENERAL ASSISTANCE** - \$5,000 reduction. Town Administrator Dodge said that Phyllis McDonough manages this budget very well and though appropriations remained the same over the past few years expenses remain relatively low. Mr. Dodge met with Ms. McDonough and both agreed that the budget could be reduced down this year.

**PATRIOTIC PURPOSES** – No change. Chairman Gauthier asked why the budget was overspent by \$282.49 and thought it was due to the banners purchased. Lisa Fogg said that the banners were purchased out of Birthday monies, she would explore and get back to the Board.

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION** – No change. No comments or questions.

**PRINCIPAL ON LONG TERM DEBT** - \$45,700 reduction due in part to the Hoar Dam being paid off.

**INTEREST ON LONG TERM DEBT** -- \$9,685 reduction related to the Hoar Dam being paid off.

October 11, 2016 is a regular meeting and since the Town Administrator won't be available on October 17, 2016 he asked that the larger budgets be reviewed when he can be here thus the next budget review date will be November 7, 2016. October 24, 2016 is a regular meeting and there will be no meeting on October 31, 2016. ***(Note: After the meeting it was noted that November 7, 2016 is a regular meeting night not an off night and since postponing to the 14<sup>th</sup> of November is too close to the Budget Committee meeting the next budget review will be on October 17, 2016.)***

## **CORRESPONDENCE & REPORTS**

### **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge had a few items to address with the Board.

## **WARRANT FOR GENERAL ELECTION**

The "Warrant for General Election" was presented to the Board. The warrant needs to be signed by the Board pursuant to RSA 658:1 and states the time, date, and place of voting for the general election to be held November 8, 2016.

**Selectman Dwyer made a motion to sign the General Election Warrant. Seconded by Selectman Yergeau. Motion carried. 4-0.**

## **CHRISTMAS PARTY – ADJUST TOWN HALL HOURS**

Town Administrator Dodge asked the Board to consider allowing the employees to close Town Hall at noon time on the day of the employee Christmas party in December. In past years the Town Hall closed at noon and reopened at 2:00 p.m. The party will be on a Friday when the Selectmen Office closes at 12:00 p.m. The early closing will only affect the Town Clerk who closes at 2:30 p.m. and Planning Department which closes at 2:00 p.m. Administrator Dodge said that he will insure that there is sufficient prior notice announcing the early closure. Chairman Gauthier wanted to make sure this closure would not interfere with the tax collection deadline. The date will be after the tax deadline.

**Selectman Dwyer motioned that the Town Hall close at 12:00 p.m. noon on a Friday in December yet to be determined. Seconded by Selectman Yergeau. Motion carried 4-0.**

## **HEALTH INSURANCE**

Town Administrator Dodge advised the Board that the current health insurance will no longer be offered to the Town employees. He along with Lisa Fogg and Police Union President Russ Hero met with Health Trust last week. There is one plan being offered which is similar to the current plan and the Town has the option to offer an alternative plan which is less costly to the Town but includes higher deductible for the employees. The question to the Board is do you want to offer one plan or include a second option.

**Selectman Gauthier motioned that the Town offer its employees two options for health insurance. Seconded by Selectman Yergeau. Motion carried 4-0.**

## **GASOLINE PRICES**

Town Administrator Dodge advised the Board that he is looking into a new gas program as the State is currently charging \$2.67 per gallon. The new program is called WEX and it is familiar to some of the Board members.

## **INDIVIDUAL SELECTMEN'S REPORTS**

### **Selectman S. McGeough**

No comments.

**Selectmen M. Yergeau**

No comments.

**Selectman T. Dwyer**

No comments.

**Chairman T. Gauthier**

Reminded everyone that the Board meeting next week will be on Tuesday October 11, 2016 due to the Columbus Day holiday.

**Motion by Selectman S. McGeough to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Selectman Dwyer. Motion carried 4-0.**

Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gregory C. Dodge  
Town Administrator

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Thomas Gauthier, Selectman Chairman

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Susan McGeough, Selectman

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Thomas Dwyer, Selectman

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Michael Yergeau, Selectman

Date \_\_\_\_\_