



Town of Hopkinton, NH

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SELECTMEN PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2011 APPROVED NOVEMBER 7, 2011

Chairman Jim O'Brien called a regularly scheduled business meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 5:34 PM on Tuesday, November 1, 2011.

Present:

Jim O'Brien, Chairman
Tom Congoran, Selectman
George Langwasser, Selectman
Bryan Pellerin, Selectman (arriving at 5:35 pm)
Denis Goddard, Selectman
Neal Cass, Town Administrator
Robin Buchanan, Administrative Assessing Assistant

Public present: Janet Krzyzaniak, Merle Dustin, Ken Wilkens

I. ADMINISTRATIVE

Selectmen Congoran made motion to approve the Consent Agenda (attached). Selectmen Langwasser seconded the motion. Selectmen Langwasser noted under Building Permits it should be Kirk not Richard. The change will be made.

Vote: O'Brien, Langwasser, Congoran,
Pellerin and Goddard voting in favor
of the motion; no votes against; motion
passes 5-0.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Board reviewed the minutes of the Public Meeting of October 24, 2011. Selectman Goddard made a motion, seconded by Selectman Langwasser to approve the minutes of the Public Meeting.

Vote: O'Brien, Langwasser, Congoran,
Pellerin and Goddard voting in favor
of the motion; no votes against; motion
passes 5-0.

The Board reviewed the minutes of the Non Public Meeting of October 24, 2011. Selectman Langwasser made a motion, seconded by Selectman Goddard to approve the minutes of the Public Meeting.

Vote: O'Brien, Langwasser, Congoran,
Pellerin and Goddard voting in favor
of the motion; no votes against; motion

passes 5-0.

III. PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS

Chairman O'Brien stated that the Board had identified areas within the budget and maybe making significant changes and have asked those Department Heads to come in. The Board will vote on the budget on November 7, 2011.

Marilyn Bresaw-Human Services was in to meet with the Board. The vendor line budget was discussed. Mrs. Bresaw stated she originally asked for \$70,000, but then scaled it back to \$60,000 stating we have a reserve and could draw from that. The budget for 2010 was \$50,000 and actual to date is at \$53,000.00.

Chairman O'Brien stated there seems to be two pieces to the job, one being the Welfare piece and the other being senior services. The Board is looking at full time vs. part time. Chairmen O'Brien went on to state that several towns larger than Hopkinton only have a part-time welfare officer. He asked Mrs. Bresaw about her case load per month according to the Quarterly Reports that she has submitted. Mrs. Bresaw stated her case load is larger in the winter time as the need seems to be greater then. She further stated she practices case management in order to help clients access other resources before expending taxpayer's money. Case management helps keep costs down. She feels that it is difficult to separate the two aspects of the job as some of the seniors are also welfare clients. She also states she continues to keep in touch with clients after assistance is given in order to help ensure they stick to their budget and to offer resources. She further noted because of her experience and knowledge she is able to secure other resources. She noted the less time you have to spend on a case; the more money will be spent.

Selectmen Pellerin inquired how the position became full time. Mrs. Bresaw stated it was a vote at town meeting. The voters wanted the service. It was originally 20 hours, changed to 32 hours and then to full time. Mrs. Bresaw stated she saw an increase in clients as the county and state and federal government began making cuts. She further stated we are different from other communities as we have no transportation or other services that larger towns and cities can offer. Selectmen Langwasser asked how other towns do it with a part time person, in some cases it is the administrative assistant that does the welfare. Mrs. Bresaw noted that the job is not being done correctly and she is surprised more towns have not been sued.

Chairmen O'Brien stated we are not getting rid of the Welfare Department; however the Board is looking at cutting the position from full time to part time. Chairmen O'Brien further stated no decision has been made. Mrs. Bresaw stated the voters decided to make it full time, it should go back to the voters to see if the voters want it to be part time.

Next to appear was Fire Chief Rick Schaefer. Selectmen O'Brien explained to Chief Fire Schaefer the purpose for meeting again. Fire Chief Schaefer explained the need to hire a full time ambulance person. He further stated the commitment to the job is huge making it hard to find part time help. Also the sleeping conditions are not the best. He stated he is not trying to expand, he is just maintaining. He explained to the Board if they do not answer a call, it takes 12 minutes before another town is called. Emergencies can't be scheduled.

Selectmen Goddard inquired why the Ambulance overtime budget was over. Fire Chief Schaefer stated in order to cover shifts he has been using full time help because part time help is not available. He further stated that he tries to fill it with part time help first.

Fire Chief Schaefer stated the Town of Bow's Fire Department has a much larger budget than the Town of Hopkinton. He further stated he is very proud of the Hopkinton Fire Department and noted it is only one of four towns in NH to be licensed for RSI (medically induced coma).

Next to appear was Steve Clough. Chairmen O'Brien explained to Mr. Clough the purpose for meeting again. Mr. Clough stated most of the residential traffic at the Transfer Station is on Saturday. He further stated during the week Dockman comes in as well as septic sewage, D&C, etc. He also stated the majority of work done at the Transfer Station is done during closed hours. Every program that generates revenue is labor intensive to process the material to be sent out. Mr. Clough informed the Board closing one day a week will not help it will just increase the volume with less time to process it. He noted it would also increase traffic on Saturdays, which is very congested, but workable now. He also stated the Transfer Station is constructed around revenue.

Selectmen Pellerin inquired about ways to make recycling more efficient. Mr. Clough stated new equipment, however, it is a huge investment, but would save money long term. It would allow more processing.

IV. PUBLIC FORUM

Merle Dustin stated she is waiting to hear about striping Dustin Road. She further noted it is too late to work on the gazebo lawn and she is still unhappy about moving Human Services to the Town Hall. She also had some questions going to the landfill without a sticker. Chairmen O'Brien informed Ms. Dustin if she brought the trash to the Transfer Station the employees would help her with everything.

Janet Krzyzaniak inquired if she could get a copy of the budget book before the Budget Committee meets on November 16, 2011. Mr. Cass will get her a copy.

Ken Wilkens stated the calendar showed the Board of Selectmen meeting starting at 7:00 pm. He also inquired as to the list of signs that he gave to Mr. Cass. Mr. Cass stated the Highway Department has the list and will remove the signs as time permits. It is not a top priority at this time.

V. OLD BUSINESS

Budget Review-Selectmen Goddard began the discussion of budget review stating he was not comfortable with not funding Chief Schaefer's request for a full time person. A short discussion ensued.

Selectmen Goddard suggested cuts in the following areas:

- Recreation-travel and meals-\$3000 reduced to \$2,000.
- Planning- Professional Services has not spend over \$5,550. Mr. Cass explained the line is for contracting for the Master Plan which needs to be updated. It has not been done in ten years and the Planning Board hopes to complete at least 2 chapters. Selectmen Congoran inquired if the town had a legal obligation to do a master plan. Mr. Cass stated the Zoning Ordinances are based on the Master Plan. Selectmen Pellerin stated if we do not do a Master Plan, it could snowball and create an issue later. No changes made.
- Planning-Code Enforcement-Selectmen Goddard suggested cutting the hours. It was noted this is a revenue generating position. The fees cover the costs. \$10,824 reduced to \$9,000.
- Library-Selectmen Langwasser informed Selectmen Goddard the Board cannot change the Library's request.
- Highway-Selectmen Goddard suggested cutting a position in the Highway Department or changing an employee from full time to part time. Mr. Cass stated the ramifications of that would be that less would be able to be done; many projects would have to be hired out. Mr. Cass also pointed there are several areas in which the Highway Department has saved the town money because the work is kept in house. The community well, the addition to the Highway barn were done by in house labor. No changes made.
- Equipment leasing-\$55,000 reduced to \$50,000

- Sand-\$8,000 reduced to \$6,000
- Signs & striping-\$10,000 reduced to \$6,000
- Shim & paving-Mr. Cass stated the full cost of Spring Street has not been invoiced. And he requested any money left in this line in 2010 budget be encumbered. \$325,000 reduced to \$300,000
- Tree taken down-\$8,000 reduced to \$4,000
- Highway General Supplies-\$8,000 reduced to \$6,000
- Highway Overtime-\$50,156 reduced to 45,000
- Seasonal personnel-\$10,266 reduced to \$8,000
- Police-Selectmen Goddard suggested reducing the police force by one full time officer. Selectmen Langwasser stated if we are short staffed it will end up costing us more in other areas. During training, vacations we would be unable to cover shifts, causing State Police to cover which will cost more money. He further stated you cannot quantify the deterrent of a patrol car. It is a benefit to the citizens. Mr. Cass stated that compared to other town's our size, we have a small police force- no change made.
- Police Uniforms/Cleaning-\$5,000 reduced to \$4,000
- Police Advertising-\$500 reduced to \$200
- Police Dues/Subscriptions-\$500 reduced to \$200
- Selectmen's salary-Selectmen Goddard suggested lowering the salary for the board. Selectmen Pellerin was in favor of some sort of decrease, however, Selectmen O'Brien, Langwasser and Congoran did not agree. Selectmen Langwasser added the Board continues to cut its budget year after year, while the school continues to increase year after year.
- Ambulance Uniforms-\$9,300 reduced to \$4500. Selectmen Congoran stated we have pecked away at the budget for the last 4 to 5 years, the Town needs to be prepared to lose some services at some point in the future.

A discussion ensued with regards to the difference between and HMO and POS insurance. The Board opted to continued to offer both HMO and POS, with the understanding that if the employee wanted a POS plan, they would have to pay the difference for the cost of the POS plan. The town would continue to cover its percentage of the insurance for the HMO plan. The savings would be appropriately \$35,000 (for 6 months). Employees would see no change in coverage unless they went out of network.

Mr. Cass supplied the Board with a list of changes to the budget the Board discussed last week.

- Cemetery Trustees Professional Services-the bid came in less than the requested amount-\$36,354 reduced to \$21,354
- Ambulance Full Time-Chairmen O'Brien suggested putting more money into the part-time wages and to advertise the position. Selectmen Goddard stated the market will bear a full time position. Selectmen Pellerin agreed with Selectmen O'Brien. Selectmen Langwasser was concerned about the position, noting job burnout is high. He also stated the need to speak with Webster and Warner. Mr. Cass will work out the numbers.
- Human Services-Chairmen O'Brien stated he believes the welfare director position is part time but thinks 15 hours is not enough. He understands the position now involves a lot of social services however he is not sure the town should be investing in social services as a priority. Selectmen Pellerin agreed stating the Senior Center, the Senior Recreation Council and the Recreation Director can also have input. He believes 15 hours is not enough and would like it increased to 20 hours. Selectmen Congoran agreed with 20 hours. Selectmen Langwasser agreed with 20 hours noting the church should be the organization involved with the Food Pantry and not the town. Chairmen O'Brien reminded those present that the Food Pantry is not a town operation. Chairmen O'Brien further noted the line needs to be draw between welfare services and senior services.

Selectmen Congoran made a motion to reduce the position of Human Services to 20 hours per week for the 2012 budget. Selectmen Langwasser seconded the motion.

VOTE: O'Brien, Langwasser, Congoran, Pellerin and Goddard voting in favor of the motion, no votes against, motion passes 5-0.

Welfare Director reduced to \$42,577 reduced to \$21,532. Change will also affect insurance line.

Warrant Articles-

- Replacement of Fire Vehicles-\$115,000 reduced to \$105,000
- Highway Replacement Vehicles-\$145,000 reduced to \$125,000
- Sludge Removal-\$9,000 reduced to 0.
- Highway Storage Addition-\$17,000 reduced to 0.
- Cemetery Maintenance CRF-\$5,000 reduced to 0.

Mr. Cass stated the Board should be prepared to vote on the budget at the next meeting, November 7, 2011. At that time the Board will also vote on the Fire Station Engineering Study warrant article.

- Welfare Vendors-\$70,000 reduced to \$60,000
- Transfer Station part-time wages-\$86,606 reduced to \$80,000.

Mr. Cass will update all changes for next week. The budget spent for 2011 will reflect through October. He further stated he will speak with all department heads before the next meeting.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Selectmen Congoran informed the Board that the fund raising for Contoocook Carry is going well.

Mr. Cass informed the Board the new tax rate has been set. The Town weathered the October Northeaster well, and roads were in good shape.

Mr. Cass informed the Board that we currently have 12 applicants for the position of Superintendent of Public Works. The application period will close on Friday.

Mr. Cass also stated that Greg Roberts, Building and Grounds, reported the new snow blower threw a rod on Monday. It is under warranty and will be rebuilt. He further explained that was why the sidewalks were not cleared after the storm.

Mr. Cass brought the Board's attention to a letter from NH Department of Environmental Services with regards to Gary Rondo's concerns.

The Board decided to postpone the scheduled non public session.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, motion by Selectman Congoran, seconded by Selectman Pellerin to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 pm.

VOTE: O'Brien, Langwasser, Congoran,
Pellerin, Goddard voting in favor of the
motion; no votes against; motion passes
5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Buchanan

Administrative Assessing Assistant

These minutes are not official until approved by the Board of Selectmen at their meeting.