

BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
TOWN OF CONWAY, MA  
DRAFT MINUTES  
December 21, 2009

**Meeting Open: 7:00PM**

**Present:** Maureen Chase, Jack Lockhead, Chuck Trombley, Tom Spiro

**Finance Committee:** John Pitzzi, Terry Walker, Roy Cohen, James Cabrel

**Others Present:**

**Appointments**

*Budget Hearings*

**7:00 Board of Assessors,** Lee Whitcomb, Malcolm Corse

Lee noted that there was no increase for the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) budget, and would stay at \$175.00. The Assessors budget request was for level funding. They are in a revaluation year. There were no phones costs due to the new central service paid out of the Town Office budget. Lee did shift some money into tax map maintenance, and will make provisions for software purchases and office supplies. Roy asked if this year's salary line item was going to remain on target and Lee noted that they would. Jack noted that there had not been a decision made regarding salary increases. Sidebar: discussion on health insurance cost increases.

Lee noted that the cost of the revaluation was funded by two previous warrant articles totaling \$11,000.00. She also noted that the hydro electric plant was a source of revenue totaling \$9,000.00, and the revaluation would be supplemented by another \$10,260.41 that must be raised at Town Meeting. She said that her final request may be closer to \$9,500.00. She then explained the overlay process.

Lee spoke about increased sight visits as an opportunity to improve accuracy of assessments. She reported on the recap concerning new growth. James asked about the value of broadband access. Lee said there was no information yet on how to quantify this aspect but that she would ask the DOR about this. Lee stated that cable access affected the values when selling a property.

**7:30 Ambulance Department –** Randall Williams

Randall explained that Liz worked with him to develop this budget. Staff salaries were based on the average number of calls made throughout the year. These numbers fluctuated each year but averaged about the same overall. Randy stated that with the new billing company in place there was no need for a clerk. He stated that the clerk's salary would cover the new assistant's salary. The cost of training would also fluctuate based on state mandates. There were 14 active and 3 non active EMTs. Randy suggested that the Selectboard's new training policy instituted earlier this year should be re-examined concerning reimbursement for ambulance crew members who were not active. Randall reported on the new billing service including performance and payments made. There was an explanation regarding the cost of the AmbuPro software. There were questions about insurance reimbursements and donations regarding the revolving account, as well as injury rates and budget details. Randy was thanked for doing a good job in his first year and saving time and money in the process.

**8:00 Parks, Recreation & Trails Committee –** Deb McGranaghan, Craig Warner,

No one from the committee was in attendance.

**8:55 Interview for Highway Department job –** Tim Fisk, Bob Baker

Maureen asked him why he wanted to work for the Town. He said that he wanted job security, and felt that he wanted to be outside and busy. He had experience of working for a trucking firm in the past, and was an EMT paramedic, but explained that he would never go back to being a paramedic due to burn out. He had his CDL license but did not have a hoister's license nor a DOT medical card. Chuck noted that this was a job requirement. Jack asked about his experience with hydraulic equipment. Tim said he did not have experience with larger equipment nor had he plowed with a big truck. He did have experience with a chainsaw. He noted that he was unemployed for the past year, but during that time he had done some odd jobs for himself and his neighbors. He did not have repair or maintenance experience on trucks.

Chuck explained that even though the job posting had been for a Superintendent Assistant, the Board had agreed that it might be better to hire someone as a regular staff member at this time. Tim was asked if he would accept this possibility, and he said that he would. Chuck noted that Bob may not retire as soon as was originally thought and that there may be more time to train for a new Superintendent. Jack

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and Chuck questioned who was responsible for making decisions concerning interviews or hiring for the department. Bob claimed that he was only present as an advisor. Maureen stated the procedures stated the Selectboard was responsible for making the final decision. Jack then asked Bob about the expertise needed to learn how to plow snow. Bob said he thought that training in Conway would not be as involved as in other places due to the lower travel speeds. Chuck noted that he had mentioned that some of the roads in Conway had not been plowed well during the last storm, and continued about specific plowing techniques required based on various weather and road conditions. Bob said that some of the recent storms had been complicated based on the possibility of ice forming. Chuck asked Bob to make sure his staff was well trained to plow. Jack suggested that a contractor could be hired to allow Bob to ride with staff to help improve their skills. Chuck noted that even though some staff members did not originally meet all job requirements, that this fact was mitigated because they lived in town. Tim stated that he was not afraid of working long shifts.

Tim left and Bob was asked about how he felt about the position offered and about all current applicants. Bob said that he did not necessarily need another employee at present, and could appoint someone to be in charge from his current staff if he wasn't able to be in Town. Chuck asked about Dale Sherman's references. Bob replied that generally people had felt that he was a good worker, but noted that one person had said that he could be "bossy". Bob reiterated that he preferred someone who lived close to town if not in town. The discussion turned to salary rates and what was available for the remainder of the year, as well as job training and evaluation. Chuck noted that it would take at least several months for Tim to get the required licenses, and felt he didn't qualified for the position. Maureen did not think he had enough experience with plowing snow, and Jack felt that subcontracting a plowing contractor might be wise for a time. There was no decision made on hiring anyone for the department. Chuck added that there was no one from the current applicant pool he felt was worth choosing and that the status quo should be maintained. The Board voted to take no action on hiring someone and for Bob to continue to use the current alternate to supplement to department's plowing needs.

**9:00 Interview for Highway Department job – Thomas Erickson, Bob Baker**  
Mr. Erickson did not attend.

**meeting items**

- Approval of meeting minutes as amended for 12/14/09. Chuck and Jack had specific revisions regarding each of their comments. These changes were given to Tom and added as updates. The minutes of 12/7/09 were not reviewed as Maureen had not had a chance to review them.
- The Board discussed the grant application from the Mass School Building Authority. Tom explained that he had discussed the requirements needed from the Town with regard to the Statement of Interest with the Building Authority. Jack spoke to legal council and found that the erection of a building in town would be the sole responsibility of the Town. He also noted that he had spoken to Bob Dean of the FRCOG who said that including the needed school repairs might be included as part of the cost the ESCO project. Jack noted that the energy contract would also be one way to equivocate some of the state mandates. There was some discussion about using Dole Brothers as a potential local contractor. Jack also spoke to Roland Butzke who agreed that if Siemens was involved in repair work, he would be able to adhere to a reasonable timetable to complete repairs. There was also the possibility of going out to bid to find another energy service contractor. Jack noted that he had given Joe McGranaghan some names of potential consultants who could review the proposal. The Board voted to sign a letter to Dr. Nash with regard to their approval of the SOI.
- Chuck spoke about how Bob and he had met with Mr. Baranowski about signing the Bardwells Ferry Road construction release form, and had reported that they had indeed gotten him to sign the form. Chuck also noted that Bob would take care of some of the drainage and access issues within the department and would thus save money on the entire project in doing so. Bob agreed to make contact with the Tannys to get their approval and sign the agreement.
- Jack gave an update on the Blaszak matter. He said that he had talked to Mr. Blaszak directly who has said he was selling his house and had in fact already moved out. The Board noted their concern that the house was losing value and that any lien was becoming less valuable.

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- Tom explained how M.G.L. Chapter 32B mandates that all elected persons and their dependents be offered health coverage at a minimum of 50 percent. All other persons working for the Town who are not employed for at least 20 hours can also get coverage but must pay 100 percent of the premium.
- The Board did not approve an application for Conway Conserves for porch and roof repair as there was no dollar amount or repayment terms included in the application.
- The Board decided to send comments regarding the draft master plan to Tom so that he can forward them to the committee.
- The Board determined that Bob Baker will be the WMECO point person as fire chief.
- The Board approved Maureen to sign a letter to the Housing and Rehabilitation Authority notifying the public of a survey regarding the Community Development Block Grant.
- The Board approved Maureen to sign the Council on Aging contract for their annual state grant.

**Mail and Other Items**

- other mail items as per agenda

**10:55 PM** Motion to adjourn by Maureen, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jack, all in favor.