

*Minutes*  
**SELECT BOARD and FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
Town Hall, 5 Academy Hill Road  
Monday, February 5, 2018 6 p.m.

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*Select Board members present:* Robert Baker, Bob Armstrong; John O'Rourke, Chair, Absent

*Others present:* Alan Singer, Chair, Finance Committee; Roy Cohen, members, Finance Committee; Lee Whitcomb, Assessors; Dan Fentin-Thomas, FCAT; Tom Hutcheson, Town Administrator; Lisa Turowsky, Assistant to the Town Administrator

Robert Baker called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m.

*Minutes*

- **On a motion from Robert Baker to approve the minutes of Monday, January 29, 2018, seconded by Bob Armstrong, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

*Warrants*

**On a motion from Robert Baker, seconded by Bob Armstrong, to approve the vendor warrant of \$37,274.07, the payroll warrant of \$102,039.49, the payroll deduction warrant of \$25,162.41, and the Student Activity Fund of \$3,739.67, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

*Meetings Attended by Select Board Members*

*None.*

*Citizens' concerns*

*None.*

*Old Business*

*Annual Town Meeting warrant*

*Review and discussion of draft*

There was little to report on the status of the warrant. In the Ambulance Department budget, the \$17,000 for the Lucas CPR robot will come from their stabilization fund. There is a new Article XIV to place \$20,000 into the stabilization fund from ambulance receipts.

*Set minimum dollar amount for considering items for capital planning*

Bob Armstrong stated that the Capital Improvements Planning Committee voted on this issue and has recommended that the minimum amount be \$5,000. Both Bob Armstrong and Robert Baker want the minimum to be \$5,000.

- **On a motion from Robert Baker, seconded by Bob Armstrong, to set the minimum dollar amount for considering items for capital planning at \$5,000, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

*Preparations for 32B process*

Tom Hutcheson noted that Town Counsel drafted the handout about the preparations for the 32B process. An Insurance Advisory Committee must be set up by Town Counsel, consisting of eight members (seven members from "organizations" plus the retiree representative, Linda Baker. Tom Hutcheson must clarify what the language about "organizations" means. Then a Public Employees Committee needs to be set up, followed by an initial meeting being convened either by the Select Board or the Public Employees Committee. Once this initial meeting happens and the process starts, there is a maximum of 30 days for all aspects of the agreement to be negotiated. Tom Hutcheson anticipates the earliest the process will start will be mid-March. Tom Hutcheson stressed there are multiple levels of bureaucracy to this process.

*Grant Town Administrator authority to sign state contract for MOD grant*

- **On a motion from Robert Baker, seconded by Bob Armstrong, to grant Tom Hutcheson authority to sign state contract for MOD grant, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

*New Business*

*Audits for Town and Conway Grammar School for FY 2018*

Given the substantial increase in the proposed cost of Town audits by Roselli Clark, the Select Board asked Tom Hutcheson to obtain two more quotes.

- **On a motion from Robert Baker, seconded by Bob Armstrong, to approve Tom Hutcheson seeking two more quotes for Town and Conway Grammar School audits, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

*JOINT MEETING WITH FINANCE COMMITTEE, 6:40 p.m.*

*Review FY 2019 Proposed Budget*

*Assessors; Town Administrator/Legal/IT*

Lee Whitcomb came in to report on the Assessors Town Meeting article and budget. Lee Whitcomb foresees a very busy year ahead with several extra projects to be conducted.

There is a new valuation system which the State has “forced” on towns. In the first year of the conversion, the State pays a large part of the costs. But the conversion will take a lot of time on the part of Assessors; Lee Whitcomb estimates that it will require at least 40 hours a week for the intensive training that will start in mid-August. The Assessors will be running two valuation programs for a while to be sure everything is running correctly in the new program. The Assessors are asking for a Town Meeting money article allowing for another \$6,000, in addition to the \$2,500 already in the budget, to cover the extra hours of work that are going to be required. These hours will be billed at this year’s hourly rate.

Other incidental items in Assessors budget: the cost of tax map maintenance will increase slightly. An increase is sought in stipends for the Assessors, which haven’t increased for the past eight to 10 years, up from \$4,200 to \$4,800 annually. Preparations for the 2020 census will begin; the Assessors will have to identify all residential dwelling units in Conway so census takers will know where to go. Lee Whitcomb says this should be done before FY2019.

There was a great deal of discussion about a Community Compact IT grant that the Assessors will be applying for. Communities may apply for up to \$200,000 from this program; the Assessors have a list of enhancements to the current GIS capabilities that they will be asking for funding for, with a total of about \$46,000 to \$61,000, depending on some variables still to be finalized. The funds can cover installation of new programs but may not cover the cost of training or first-year operating expenses. Lee Whitcomb pointed out that ongoing annual fees to run the new GIS system will be \$6,400, which now are slated to come out of the operating budget. Lee Whitcomb also noted that there are many other departments will benefit from adding capacity to the GIS system, including Highway, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Open Space Committee, and Historical Commission. Roy Cohen brought up the question of whether the grant can be used for improvements in IT such as increasing bandwidth in Town buildings; improving scanning capacity in the existing network; and solving issues with access to the web portal that may arise when GIS improvements are on board. Lee Whitcomb and Roy Cohen will meet to talk about whether related but more general IT requests may be included in the grant application that Assessors Office is going to submit on February 15<sup>th</sup>.

Tom Hutcheson reported on Town Administrator, Legal, and IT budgets. There are substantial increases based upon actual (historical) expenses in mileage and increased professional development lines for Town Administrator and Assistant. Tom Hutcheson needs an updated procurement law training, consisting of three, three-day videoconferences. The actual cost of the Town Report last year was \$4,220 so the budget item for FY2019 is \$5,000.

In terms of the IT budget, it was determined that there should be an increase to reflect need to adjust bandwidth which, according to Roy Cohen, is not adequate. Also, the telephone line has been switched to this budget, raising it.

*General*

Council on Aging will be level funded. Veterans Service will see a slight increase.

*Items Not Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting*

*None.*

*Town Administrator update*

**Town Meeting and Budget**

The next FRSD school committee is next Tuesday, the 13<sup>th</sup> at 6 in the library. The next Conway Grammar School meeting is Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, at 6 at the Conway Grammar School.

I got a phone call from a representative from the UCC, who said that due to the Town not allowing the first insurance check to be used by the Church (we were recovering part of our lien), and because the Town did not subsequently

forgive any of the lien money to the Church, they intend to introduce an article ensuring that the Town post the reimbursed money to the CPC account. I assured him that such a posting was going to happen, and he said that if it happened by the time the warrant closed, he would not submit the petition, but that if it did not, he would submit the petition.

### **Committees**

The Personnel Committee met Wednesday evening after a long hiatus. There are a variety of amendments to the employee handbook that are being considered, many of which are based on changes in laws or regulations. In addition, they gave initial consideration to paying out vacation time, which was in the old version of personnel policies, and for which we had an inquiry; the proposal for a Planning Board/ConCom/ZBA/other clerk (requested by both Planning Board and ConCom); overtime pay questions; job descriptions; developing a compensation plan; and developing a stipend policy; and considering leave policies.

The Energy Committee will be reporting on the Town Hall insulation project next week and may ask for a decision from the Select Board regarding declaring it finished.

### **Departments**

We have received an offer, solicited by the Town Treasurer, for audit services for FY 2018; these would be included in the FY 2019 budget. As I mentioned before, the company was previously using a reduced rate for the Town, which we were lucky to get. The current quote is for \$16,500 for FY 2016, and \$15,000 each for 2020 and 2022, if we choose to retain them. The agreement they prepared for us to sign does not include a clause regarding the availability of funding; I am planning to ask them for a revised agreement stating it is subject to Town Meeting funding.

The Conway Grammar School is planning its 5k run for May 20. Paulette Levchuk, for the Conway Grammar Moves and Grooves Committee, has asked if it would be alright to have some music during the event, either recorded or live, from 9 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. I told her I didn't think it would be a problem, and that they could use the Town Hall for access to an outlet. I'd be happy to put this on your agenda if you think it needs your deliberation.

### **Other**

The Massachusetts Municipal Association will be holding its spring Legislative Breakfast meetings in March. The closest locations are Pittsfield (3/2), Gardner 3/9), and Palmer (3/16).

*Concerns of the Selectmen*

*None.*

*Mail*

Governor Baker notified Towns of Race Amity Day on June 10th.

*Announcements*

*None.*

*Next Meeting* Scheduled for Monday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at the Town Hall, 5 Academy Hill Road, 6:00 p.m. Joint Mtg. with Finance Committee, 6:30 p.m. (Capital Improvements Planning Committee and Board of Health budget)

**At 7:28 p.m., on a motion from Robert Baker to adjourn, seconded by Bob Armstrong, the vote was unanimous in favor.**