

SELECT BOARD  
Tuesday, January 22, 2019 6:00 p.m.  
JOINT MEETING with the FINANCE COMMITTEE -- 6:30 p.m.  
Town Hall, 5 Academy Hill Road

*Select Board present:* John O'Rourke, chair; Bob Armstrong; Phil Kantor, absent

*Others present:* Virginia Knowlton, Carl Nelke, Board of Health; Jan Warner, Treasurer/Collector; Lee Whitcomb, Russell French, Board of Assessors; Alan Singer, Tom Donovan, Finance Committee; Joe Strzegowski, Planning Board; Dan Fentin-Thomas, FCAT; Tom Hutcheson, Town Administrator; Lisa Turowsky, Assistant to the Town Administrator

John O'Rourke called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

*Minutes*

- **On a motion from John O'Rourke to approve the minutes of January 14, 2019, seconded by Bob Armstrong, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

*Warrants*

- **On a motion from O'Rourke to approve the vendor warrant for \$120,202.70, the payroll warrant for \$105,477.87, and the payroll deduction warrant for \$26,499.04, seconded by Bob Armstrong, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

*Meetings Attended by Select Board Members*

Armstrong went to the Capital Improvements Planning Committee meeting where members reviewed capital requests; the committee will be meeting with everyone who asked for money this week. Armstrong also attended the FCAT annual meeting and was elected president again. All at FCAT are worried about what's going to happen with the federal (FCC) budget. Armstrong also attended the MMA annual meeting. O'Rourke went to the MMA annual meeting and found it to be very informative this year.

*Public Comments*                      *None.*

*Old Business*

FRCOG – Direct Local Technical Assistance priorities

Hutcheson has received submissions from the Planning Board and for his office; O'Rourke has some other submissions, but he doesn't have them with him. Hutcheson reminded the Select Board that the priorities need to be submitted by the end of the week. He offered to compile and weight the Select Board's submissions if they get them to him over the next couple of days. O'Rourke says many priorities can be identified; they get 6-10 choices.

*New Business*

*Agreement with Tighe and Bond to review the Nexamp proposal for a solar installation*

Nexamp is going to pay for Tighe & Bond's work; Town needs only to technically review the proposal for an engineering peer review of the project. All costs associated with meetings are paid by Nexamp. The Planning Board has reviewed the plans.

- **On a motion from O'Rourke to sign the authorization for a request for qualifications for engineering peer review for 2394 Main Poland Nexamp-Conway project, seconded by Armstrong, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

*Items Not Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting*                      *None.*

*Town Administrator update*

**Committees**

Julie Petty and the Conway Youth Sports team are close to a final draft of a manual for Conway Youth Sports, containing all the policies and procedures they have developed (basing many of them on Deerfield and adapting them to Conway). This is under preliminary review by Parks and Rec. and should be completed soon. With this,

CYS will be fully converted to a functioning program that is part of the Town of Conway, in very good financial shape, and compliant with MA state law. Importantly, CYS can now reasonably be run by volunteers. Unfortunately, Julie's term as Administrator and Soccer Director will end in June, but she is leaving it in excellent shape, with not only the policies and procedures, but the web interface and financial payments and reporting all in top shape. Currently, CYS is looking for a Baseball Director, a Soccer Director, and an Administrator.

The Garage Committee met and is considering a number of options. These include asking for the cold-storage barn to be built first, perhaps with money already available in the Garage Stabilization Fund. If the Town does a substantial amount of the work, we can save some labor costs, though we would incur the costs of two bidding processes and contractor mobilizations. Andrea Woods of the FRCOG checked with the Attorney General, who said that with two bidding processes, this would not constitute bid splitting, also as the types of structures to be built are different. They will be meeting again in two weeks instead of next month, as these new options need to be explored thoroughly.

The Personnel Committee met and discussed proposing a by-law revision and succession planning document. They will also reach out to the School Committee again about personnel matters, proposing a meeting on a Tuesday or Thursday in late March.

The Capital Improvements Planning Committee is meeting tomorrow night with the chair of the Board of Health, the Fire Chief, and the Highway Superintendent.

### **Departments**

I am progressing on the regional HR grant. It may be that the Frontier Regional School District has not availed itself of the Community Compact program, which would make it technically ineligible to be part of the study, though I'd still plan to ask for its inclusion. Even a study on just the four towns would be worthwhile, as Frontier could still join in a regional municipal agreement, with the necessary work extrapolated from the study.

The Fire Department responded to a wood-stove fire last night at about 3 a.m. Many thanks to our volunteers who braved the cold and wind to put out the fire!

*Select Board Comments*                      *None.*

*Mail*    *None.*

### **6:30 JOINT MEETING with the FINANCE COMMITTEE**

*FY 2020 budget review: Town Administrator*

*Treasurer/Collector*

*Board of Assessors*

*Board of Health*

*Other Town Meeting and budget business*

### **Town Administrator**

Hutcheson distributed notes about his budget. He mentioned that he also supplies IT and legal budgets, but IT is absolutely level-funded; legal budget is being decreased from \$12,000 to \$11,000. The Town Administrator's budget includes everything that the TA's Assistant does but doesn't include the assistant to boards & committees; that's in the separate committee budgets for this year. It may change next year depending on how things go with Alexis, the assistant to boards & committees. Hutcheson's contract provides for a \$3,000 increase for FY 2020. Hutcheson proposes to bring the TA's Assistant up to \$20 from \$18/hour; he notes that he lost his last assistant to FRCOG which was offering \$22/hour. Donovan asked how many more hours the TA's Assistant would work; Hutcheson proposes raising the hours for this position from 19.5 to 20 hours/week. TA's Assistant is asking for pro-rated vacation and sick time benefits though may not involve extra cost at this time. The position would change to Assistant II with Assistant I remaining at 19.5/unbenefited hours. Other costs: mileage/postage are both going up, Hutcheson is going to more meetings. Conway is well-represented. Cost for dues/conferences has been decreased, as Hutcheson will have taken his procurement classes this FY. \$5,000 is

included for a new copier; the current copier is not working too well anymore. The office needs something slightly more heavy-duty. This would include the first year's maintenance agreement. Town Report is up based on last year's expense. Slight increase in office supply expenses. The Finance Committee questions had no questions.

#### *Treasurer/Collector*

Warner presented her budgets for Treasurer/Collector and Employee benefits: very small increase this year, salary line item is level, mileage is the same, postage is up slightly; office supplies are level; software support is up a little; close to level funding. Increase of \$1,200 total. The Finance Committee had no questions.

Employee benefits: this item has gone up slightly due to things not within our control; unemployment insurance is close to last year's number; Hutcheson will supply the total expended for FY 2016. The big increase from FY 2017 to FY 2018 was due to health insurance costs. Warner won't know until the end of January what the increase is going to be; she has based an estimate on a 3% increase for now.

HCGIT (group insurance) is considering increasing some co-pays; there will be negotiations. The current plan has no deductibles which is very unusual. The history of the HCGIT experience was discussed; no plan changes were offered last year. There are not too many increases in life insurance enrollees. For Medicare payments; estimate of what annual payroll is going to be. We included MTA mitigation for health care plan changes (cost savings have to be shared with employees), though we don't know yet whether the HCGIT will move forward with plan changes this year. For the debt service schedule, the fire truck note, short-term interest, bank fees all had minor or no increases.

#### *Board of Assessors*

Board of Assessors: Whitcomb distributed slightly revised budget with some changes from what she previously provided: the cost of assessors' software support is much less because the conversion is not ready to be implemented yet. Hutcheson had suggested that Whitcomb bring someone in to train to eventually replace her as the administrative assessor; Whitcomb said she's not sure how to implement this. She noted that there's no way of making a person stay after they're trained. Hutcheson said the more people who know things, the better, even if person doesn't stay. There is currently no back-up for some of most important staff positions. At the Assessor's office they need someone capable of doing higher-level work; the Assessor's clerk doesn't want more responsibility or more hours. If the position is funded Whitcomb will look for a new person who will train for 6 hours a week, every other week, starting at \$15. Whitcomb has added to her own time/salary to do the training. Everything else is basically level-funded. The Finance Committee had questions about how Whitcomb's time would be spent. The GIS system is a great investment; BOH will add a layer to show location of wells, septic systems, etc. Community Compact IT grant might be used to fund input of data.

#### *Board of Health*

Board of Health: slight increase of \$127 based on some new information from FSWMD Hutcheson got today. The budget is essentially level-funded. O'Rourke asked how we're doing on recycling. Now people are having to pay for trash stickers which cuts down on trash being brought in from outside the Town. Stickers have to be bought every year. BOH gets no information on vehicles being sold. How are other towns doing with recycling? Rowe and Conway are the only ones still doing free trash. More recycling is ending up in the trash. Discussion of how things can change to improve recycling rates. Other towns in Franklin County are charging a lot more than Conway. It might be worth doing a town mailing in the tax bills. The Finance Committee questions had no questions.

#### *Other Town Meeting and budget business*

Other Town budget business: Hutcheson handed out a new spreadsheet, in which he changed the assumption to a 5% rise in school costs and a 5% rise in FRCOG programs; also an annual audit expense of \$12,000 was added. Hutcheson opined that the best that we can hope for is a 4% rise but a lot depends on what the schools come up with as they get closer to submitting their budgets.

*Announcements*            *None.*

#### *Next Meeting*

Monday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2019, at the Town Hall, 5 Academy Hill Road, at 6:00 p.m.

- **At 7:40 p.m., on a motion from O'Rourke to adjourn, seconded by Armstrong, the vote was unanimous in favor.**