

Minutes
SELECT BOARD
Tuesday, February 19, 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; Phil Kantor

Others present: Dan Fentin, FCAT; Tom Hutcheson, Town Administrator

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

Minutes

- **On a motion from O'Rourke to approve the minutes of February 11, 2019, seconded by Kantor, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Warrants

- **On a motion from O'Rourke to approve the vendor warrant of \$92,063.95, the payroll warrant of \$107,322.42, and the payroll deduction warrant of \$26,763.78, seconded by Kantor, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Meetings Attended by Select Board Members

Kantor attended Conway Grammar School and Frontier Regional School District budget meetings and had a call with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education about the foundation budget.

O'Rourke met with the Massachusetts Municipal Association Board of Directors, where he was appointed to the Personnel and Labor Relations Policy Committee; the Local Government Advisory Commission, with the Lieutenant Governor; and the Board of the Massachusetts Selectman's Association.

Public Comments

None

Old Business

Discussion: proposed marijuana establishment

Host Community Agreement with Philip and Leah Bowden

Hutcheson reported that he had not yet heard back from Town Counsel, but will nudge him to review the documents. Kantor noted that Section 1.b. seemed to refer to the local tax, which would be 3%, as voted by Town Meeting; that the Treasurer should approve the schedule of payments; that two business days was not a long enough time for the Select Board to execute anything, as a meeting needs a minimum of a 8-hour notice (Hutcheson suggested three or five business days); that the title "Tax Collector" should be "Treasurer/Collector"; and that any security breaches should be reported immediately.

Escrow policy for two businesses

Kantor noted that there are actually two proposals, one for each business, so the Town should receive two escrow payments; O'Rourke agreed. Hutcheson will review the policy for clarity on this point.

Vote on Chapter 61B right of first refusal for John Harris' land

O'Rourke noted that the Select Board had already covered the substance of this item.

- **On a motion from O'Rourke to sign the document waiving the right of first refusal, seconded by Kantor, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

New Business

Review Capital Improvements Planning Committee web statement

The Select Board reviewed the statement and suggested that Hutcheson look at it and perhaps propose some amendments.

6:30 JOINT MEETING with the FINANCE COMMITTEE

FY 2020 budget and warrant review

Draft budget

Special money articles (not including capital improvements articles)

Hutcheson notified the Finance Committee that there was no budget news, there was not a need to meet. Kantor mentioned that Conway is going to feel the effects of its rate of growth, which the state has identified at 4.65%. That plus new enrollments will drive up the school budgets. He also noted that the next budget meetings will be February 28 at the Conway Grammar School, 5:15 for Frontier (meeting for the first time in Conway), and 6:00 p.m. for the Grammar School.

Items Not Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting

Hutcheson reported that the Treasurer/Collector had requested that day a temporary assistant to assist with her work, as the software conversion requires two systems to be run simultaneously, in some ways doubling the work. She also proposed a candidate, and noted that there was room in her budget for the position.

- **On a motion from O'Rourke to appoint Michelle Duguay as a temporary administrative assistant for thirteen weeks, starting immediately, at a rate of \$20,00 per hour, seconded by Kantor, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Town Administrator update

Board and committees

Bob Armstrong has requested that an item be placed on the next agenda, the item mentioned in an e-mail from Superintendent Buoniconti about advocating for SD.2292. The MA Rural Schools Coalition, formed in March of 2016, has been advocating for educational funding equity since its inception; this year, Senator Adam Hinds has proposed a continuation of Rural School Aid at a funding level of \$9 million. Critically, based on the advocacy of the Rural Schools Coalition, Senator Hinds has proposed the addition of a rurality factor into the Chapter 70 formula, which would be a more permanent solution for all of us.

Departments

I submitted the Community Compact application for a Best Practice in human resources management, requesting \$4,500 for a study to determine what a shared HR position for Frontier and its four towns could look like. The other three towns all signed on, as well as Frontier. I had intended to apply for the grant as an "Efficiency and Regionalization" grant, but after speaking with Sean Cronin, who is in charge of the program, and on his advice, I applied under the "Best Practices" program instead, which has a larger pot of money.

I understand unofficially that the Best Practice grant proposal we applied for so the FRCOG can do its accounting training program has been accepted, though we await formal notification.

John Moore and Lisa Gustavsen, of 40 Whately Glen Road, have scheduled a Friday, March 1 community outreach meeting for a marijuana establishment for a farmer cooperative. The meeting will start at 7:00.

I understand that the FRCOG will only be able to fund one or two priorities under the DLTAs this year. I'll check in with them to see about changing the form to make it clear that lower priorities are just for

assessing need, or however they use the broader number of requests. Bob Armstrong had requested work on a pollinator corridor; they're going to apply to a separate grant program for work on that and plan to circulate a draft letter of support this April.

Our grant proposal to FEMA for Delabarre Avenue work has been submitted by MEMA, who had some last-minute questions that were dealt with by our consultant at GZA, Nate Russell, an Ashfield resident who sees the slope off Delabarre Avenue every day on his way to work. We'll see whether it has been re-worked sufficiently to make it clear that it is a vulnerable spot in town.

After consulting with our Administrative Assessor, I am optimistic the budget I present will be well below the levy limit, but we still have virtually no revenue figures, as the utilities are not required to get their new growth figures in till March 1. They have been available earlier before, as have the school budgets, and I have been able to complete my budget by the end of February, but I cannot make any guarantees this year.

Select Board Comments

Kantor noted that he has been chosen to chair the hiring committee for the new Frontier Regional School District business manager.

Mail

None

Announcements

There will be a workshop on the new law covering short-term rentals at the Franklin Regional Council of Governments on Thursday, March 7, from 6-8 PM at the Olver Transit Center in Greenfield.

The Center for EcoTechnology will hold a meeting on "Solar "Access" from 6-7 p.m. on Wednesday, February 20, at the Town Hall.

Next Meeting

Monday, February 25th, 2019, at the Town Office, 32 Main Street, at 6:00 p.m.

- **At 6:33 p.m., on a motion from O'Rourke to adjourn, seconded by Kantor, the vote was unanimous in favor.**