

Minutes
SELECT BOARD
Monday, April 8, 2019 6:00 p.m.
Town Office, 5 Academy Hill Road

Select Board present: Phil Kantor; Bob Armstrong; John O'Rourke, Chair

Others present: Dan Fentin-Thomas, FCAT; Lisa Turowsky, Assistant to Town Administrator; 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 April 1, 2019, seconded by Armstrong, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Meetings Attended by Select Board Members

Kantor attended Open Space Committee tour of South Meadow; they have lots of plans for it. He also attended union negotiating/strategy meetings, all postponed for at least a month due to personal reasons.

Armstrong attended Open Space Committee tour of South Meadow as well. The reduction of invasives is going well. He attended an MMA legislative breakfast in Springfield at Forest Park, where there were lots of mayors and legislators, and a site visit for ConCom.

O'Rourke went to an MMA personnel and labor relations policy committee meeting.

Public Comments

None

Old Business

Town Meeting and budget business

FY 2020 budget review: revisions

Hutcheson distributed a revised spreadsheet incorporating a 2.5% general pay raise in the budgets; total operating budget is a little over \$6 million, a 3.08% rise.

Article language: Hutcheson included the new total amount requested from the garage stabilization fund at the top. The estimated tax rate is down from this year. Hutcheson is clarifying with Lee Whitcomb the process for generating the final tax rate. Hutcheson provided a new chart including the estimated excess levy capacity, which is very healthy. Unspent free cash is \$88,000, more than we have had for several years; this will roll over to FY 2021 if it remains unspent.

Other Town Meeting and budget business

Hutcheson created a "cover letter" for the warrant so residents will be apprised of some of the more important items. This will be mailed out with the warrant. It gives an overview, including the estimated tax rate; notes the availability of the preliminary Town budget; lists changes to that budget; and describes reasons for why warrant articles are stated broadly going into Town Meeting, with the motions being more specific than the articles.

Article 10 now reads "to replace the mini-excavator."

Article 3 reflects Darius Modestow's instructions to remove the number that was in the warrant regarding payments for Conway; this article now includes the **possibility** of raising money. Hutcheson said that even if language is included in the article it doesn't have to be included in the accompanying motion. The current language in the article is quite different from the language that Deerfield is using; Hutcheson took the language that FRSD voted and put it into the article. Kantor said it's vital that the four towns vote on the same warrant language, though he recognized Deerfield is including borrowing language that Conway is not. He would prefer to table signing the warrant until the school lawyer looks at the article. The Select Board compared Hutcheson's and Deerfield's language. Hutcheson says it's the motion that matters as long as it's within the scope of the article. Hutcheson is concerned that the warrant article may be too narrow. It is possible residents might not get the warrant two weeks before town meeting if signing the warrant tonight is tabled to Monday. The Select Board decided that a meeting on 4/11 at 9:00 a.m. would work if necessary.

Sign warrant

Tabled

New Business

None

Items Not Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting

None

Town Administrator update

Committees and Boards

It looks as though the Open Space Committee will be handling a gift of money which is intended for a memorial bench from the Hatches.

Departments

We may need to shift some money for mowing as FY 2019 draws to a close. I had wrongly identified the trust fund used for the cemeteries; that is the C.S. Boyden Fund. The Mark Boice Germain Fund was the one previously slated for covering the ball field, which is a more expensive proposition than maintaining the cemeteries. The Highway Superintendent thinks next year will be manageable, as we will have a substantial amount of funds from no longer leasing the sheep barn.

The Insurance Advisory Committee, the group of union and retiree representatives looking over the proposed health care plan changes, will be meeting Thursday at the Conway Grammar School at 3 p.m. in the library. I will present the proposed HCGIT plan and discuss some other regional plans, as well as an alternative possibility from MIIA. The sticking point with MIIA is that in the third year, and all subsequent years, the premium would include a weighted combination of 26.1% of Town experience and 73.9% pool (group) experience. This means that a single expensive claim could substantially drive up Conway's premium.

Warrant changes:

Article 3: now reflects the language of the FRSD Committee, as requested by the Superintendent.

Article 10: "\$45,000 to replace a mini-excavator".

I am also working on the motions for the articles; we should be able to go over those next week.

Other

There will be a bicycle ride through northern Conway, from Saban Road to East Guinea Road via Rt. 116 and North Poland Road, this Saturday. The Police Chief has been notified.

Select Board Comments

None

Kantor said the Select Board can drive down education costs by staying flexible with health insurance. He reported receiving negative feedback from someone regarding the Select Board's support of the Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership, that the Board should not have voted on it but should have taken it to Town Meeting. Armstrong said some people are upset they're not going to get their say in Town Meeting.

Mail

Letter from resident concerning a meeting a couple of weeks ago; letter from Jason Silverman re: cannabis cultivation. Letter from the president of Greenfield Savings Bank; they want to donate an elm tree. O'Rourke said it was appropriate to add it to the three elms at Pumpkin Hollow that were planted before the 250th anniversary celebration. There was a letter from FRCOG concerning traffic counts; Hutcheson is waiting to hear from Chief Ouimette and Ron Sweet about desirability of getting study done. Armstrong cites recent changes in traffic pattern on Elm Street.

Announcements

None

- **At 6: 50 p.m., on a motion from O'Rourke to adjourn, seconded by Armstrong, the vote was unanimous in favor.**

Next Meeting The next regular meeting is Tuesday, April 16, 2019, at the *Town Office, 32 Main Street* at 6:00 p.m.