

MINUTES OF SPECIAL SELECTMEN'S MEETING
Hope Board of Selectmen
Tuesday, June 12, 2020
5:00 PM
Hope Town Office/Zoom

Board Members Present:

- Brian Powers Jr., Sarah Ann Smith, Wendy Pelletier, Thom Ingraham, and Bruce Haffner

Others Present:

- Samantha Mank, Alexenia Payor, Dick Crabtree, Bill Pearse Jr., and Amy Powers

Call to Order:

- The meeting was called to order at 5:05 PM by Brian.

Public Comment:

- None

New Business:

- Final Vote on the FY 2020-2021 Municipal Budget:
 - Administration Cost Center (\$272,316):
 - Town Administration: Sarah made a motion the approve the Town Administration line for \$160,717. It was seconded by Thom. Brian stated that he will only be voting in the affirmative for two pay increases in this budget, the first is for Beth Gindel, the Town's Sexton, for all of the work that she has done for the cemeteries. Brian went on to say the he applauds Beth for that. The second is Clarence Keller, the Fire Chief. Brian recalled that an agreement was made with him last year in which he would receive one half of his salary raise last year and the other half this year which would get his salary up to \$5,000. Brian wanted everyone to know that there was nothing personal about his decision he is just concerned with the future economy and everyone should be happy that they even have jobs let alone get a raise.

Sarah said that she still thinks the Town Administrator should still have a salary increase to bring it up to a fair wage for the position and making our Town Administrator wait because of the current economy.

Thom stated that he did some research and knows that the Town Administrator would still be under paid by at least another fifty cents an hour with this budget, but we just can't do that much now.

Brian brought this topic to a vote.

Motion passed 4-1 (Brian)

- General Administration: Bruce made a motion to approve the General Administration line for \$59,139. It was seconded by Sarah.
Motion passed 5-0
 - Municipal Building: Thom made a motion to approve the Municipal Building line for \$13,550. It was seconded by Bruce.
Motion passed 5-0
 - Professional Services: Sarah made a motion to approve Professional Services line for \$38,160. It was seconded by Thom.
Motion passed 5-0
 - General Assistance: Bruce made a motion to approve the General Assistance line for \$750. It was seconded by Sarah.
Motion passed 5-0
 - Public Safety Cost Center (\$148,822):
 - Animal Control: Thom made a motion to approve the Animal Control Line for \$7,338. It was seconded by Sarah.
Motion failed 0-5
 - Brian said that he is not in favor of giving anybody a 7% wage increase right now. Sarah made a new motion to approve the Animal Control line for \$7,188 and to modify the Animal Control Officer's stipend to \$4,350 which equates to a 3.5% salary increase rather than the 11% that was originally requested. It was seconded by Wendy.
Motion passed 4-1 (Brian)
 - Fire Department: Bruce made a motion to approve the Fire Department line for \$102,975. It was seconded by Thom.
- Brian recalled that the Selectmen made an agreement last year to bring the Fire Chief's stipend up to \$5,000 over two years which is an increase from \$3,570 in 2019. Clarence put in a request for his stipend to increase this year by \$750, raising his stipend to \$5,070. Brian said that he would only approve an increase to \$5,000.
- Bruce went on to say that he thinks Clarence is overworked and under paid and doesn't think it's worth losing Clarence over \$70.
- Sarah inquired on how to be able to give employees merit raises or bonuses or a meritorious step increase which would be considered the gift that keeps on giving which is separate from a one-time bonus.
- Wendy stated that she wanted to stick with the \$5,000 agreement that was made and that there would be other years for more increases.
- Thom mentioned an article in the Maine Town and City magazine talking about what a great job Clarence is doing with the Hope Fire Department.

Thom said he believed that alone was worth the additional \$70. Brian brought the matter to a vote.

Motion passed 4-1 (Wendy)

- Ambulance: Thom made a motion to approve the Ambulance line for \$38,659. It was seconded by Sarah.

Motion passed 5-0

○ Public Works Cost Center (\$626,440):

- Recreation: There was discussion regarding the trees that need to be removed in True Park. The Selectmen added a line in the Recreation budget to include tree removal for \$3,000.

Wendy said that she thought the Town should only cut the trees that needed to be cut right now. Sarah suggested that we cut all of the trees that were going to be problematic in order to save on the cost of the moving and renting of the equipment multiple times. Thom made a motion to approve the Recreation line for \$12,600. It was seconded by Sarah.

Motion passed 5-0

- Streetlights: The Selectmen wanted to know if CMP would reduce the bill since sometimes the lights don't work and we still get charged for them. It was noted that most of the cost is for the rental of the actual pole and not the electricity. Thom made a motion to approve the Streetlights line for \$1,705. It was seconded by Bruce.

Motion passed 5-0

- Roads: There was a lot of discussion surrounding the Roads budget and the work that the Road Commissioner said he was cutting in order to accommodate the winter maintenance. It was very hard to figure out the exact dollar amount for the work because there were some math discrepancies. However, the Selectmen was able to agree that the total budget for Roads was \$545,120, but how this number was obtained remains in question. The Selectmen consulted with Bill Pearse who came up with a total of \$555,120. Dick Crabtree was able to contact John Monroe, the Road Commissioner, who confirmed that the bottom-line total for the Roads budget was \$545,120. Bruce asked to call the vote. Wendy made a motion to approve the Roads line for \$545,120. It was seconded by Sarah.

Motion passed 5-0

- Sanitation: Thom made a motion to approve the Sanitation line for \$59,143. It was seconded by Sarah.

Motion passed 5-0

- Cemeteries: Brian said that he was in favor of a one-time payment of \$1,000 for the 331 hours of work done by Beth that brought most of the

cemetery records up to date. However, he is not in favor of an ongoing annual stipend of \$1,000, it was stated that the Sexton's stipend should not exceed the Selectmen's stipend.

Sarah agreed that the Sexton should not make more than the Selectmen on an annual basis, so perhaps the Selectmen could change the stipend amount.

Bruce made a motion to approve the Cemetery line for \$9,977. There was no second for the motion.

Motion failed

Thom made a motion for the one-time \$1000 payment plus a \$750 annual stipend which reduces the stipend line from \$2,000 to \$1,750. It was seconded by Bruce.

Brian said that he was willing to increase the stipend to \$1,534 which is a 1.6% increase which mirrors the cola for this year. It would be a \$534 annual stipend plus the \$1,000 one-time payment for the out of the ordinary amount of work she has done. The vote was called.

Motion failed 2-3 (*Brian, Wendy, & Sarah*)

Sarah made a motion to approve the line for a one-time \$1,000 stipend plus a \$600 annual stipend bringing this year's Cemetery budget total to \$9,577. It was seconded by Wendy.

Motion passed 3-2 (*Thom & Bruce*)

- Reserve Accounts (\$60,200):
 - Sarah discussed making changes to the Fire Truck Replacement line to \$10,000 and reduce the Revaluation Reserve to \$0.00 making a new total of \$55,200. Thom asked about having the Fire Truck Repair and Maintenance Reserve account as suggested by the auditor, Bill Brewer earlier in the fiscal year. Thom suggested \$5,000 be removed from the Fire Truck Replacement Reserve account and placed into a new Fire Truck Repair and Maintenance account, that way if there were any problems through the year that were under \$5,000 we would not have to have a Special Town Meeting. This new Repair and Maintenance Reserve account would only be used for unanticipated major repairs that are in excess of \$10,000 and this account is not to exceed a balance of \$30,000. It would also require additional approval by the Board of Selectmen in order to expend any of the funds. Thom made a motion to approve the Reserve line for \$60,200. It was seconded by Bruce.

Motion passed 5-0

- County Tax (\$288,262):
 - Thom made a motion to approve the County Tax line for \$288,262. It was seconded by Sarah.
Motion passed 5-0
- Hope Elementary School (\$1,902,334):
 - Sarah made a motion to approve the Hope Elementary School Budget for \$1,902,334. It was seconded by Wendy.
Motion passed 5-0
- Five Town CSD (\$868,151):
 - Bruce made a motion to approve the Five Town CSD and Adult Ed. budget for \$868,151. It was seconded by Thom.
Motion passed 5-0
- Revenues (\$670,225):
 - Brian said he was inclined to increase the amount coming out of the undesignated fund balance to \$175,000 and to increase the Revenue Sharing to \$100,000. The other Selectmen agreed. Wendy made a motion to approve the Revenues budget for \$670,225. It was seconded by Thom.
Motion passed 4-1 (Bruce)

Adjournment:

- Bruce made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 PM. It was seconded by Wendy.
Motion passed 5-0