



**Board of Selectmen
Minutes
Tuesday, November 15, 2016 at 7:00pm
Town Hall Meeting Room**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by Chair, Ken Swanton in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Selectmen Ron Ricci, Stu Sklar, Lucy Wallace and Alice von Loesecke were in attendance as well as Town Administrator Tim Bragan and Executive Assistant Julie Doucet.

Tax classification hearing

Swanton read legal notice aloud. Assessor Rebecca Boucher gave presentation. On a Wallace/Sklar motion, the board voted unanimously to approve a single tax classification.

Minutes

On a Wallace/Ricci motion, the board voted unanimously to approve minutes of 11/1, as presented.

Fire Department & Ambulance Service management & operations analysis

Sarah Concannon from the UMASS Collins Center for Public Management came to present results of their analysis. Their report includes department strengths, recommendations and sustainability of the volunteer model and options for the future. To improve fire prevention suggestions were made to reduce workload and improve technology. She also described how pre-incident planning could improve response times. The report offered some strategies to handling inspections more effectively allowing the Chief to dedicate more time toward fire prevention efforts. Concannon reviewed data on the ambulance service response times. She offered strategies to encourage a direct to scene approach outlining the pros and cons. She spoke about crew member concerns regarding determining when they have constituted a full crew. She commented on the importance of clarifying the service's position within town government.

Concannon said the Fire Department model can be viable in the short and mid-term however the following factors need to be considered:

- Recruitment of new members and department strategy
- Retention of existing members and department strategy
- Call volume and growth trends
- Current department performance measured by response times
- Volume of other work
- Overall management

Concannon outlined the significant challenges facing the Ambulance Service. She said the current model is sustainable with a full time EMS Coordinator/EMT.

The report included alternative scenarios:

- combined Fire/EMS Department
- outsourcing BLS Ambulance

She noted efforts to improve communication and misconceptions are instrumental to making progress in both departments. Concannon recommended obtaining cost estimates to outsource the service before any decisions are made.

Department budget reviews

Council on Aging

COA Director Debbie Thompson began by introducing Charlotte Winchell for appointment as the new Outreach Coordinator. On a Ricci/Wallace motion, the board voted unanimously to nominate Charlotte for the position.

Thompson presented a level funded budget with only an increase of \$2,000 to have the carpets professionally cleaned. On a Wallace/Ricci motion, the board voted unanimously to recommend and if funds available endorse \$2,000 for cleaning.

Cable budget

Board members discussed the committee's intent to move all staff into contract labor positions. Bragan provided more clarity. On a Sklar/Wallace motion, the board voted unanimously to approve cable budget.

Fire Department

Chief Rick Sicard is submitting his personnel budget with a step increase for his position and the contractual 2% cost of living for the call fire fighters. His biggest request is for a full time Firefighter/EMT. This position will have a main focus on fire prevention, inspections and could also reduce call times. Von Loesecke asked if full time is necessary. She wondered if a per diem or part time position could work considering details of the report earlier in the evening. The board members expressed support of adding a position but were uncertain if the position belongs within the Ambulance or Fire Department. Ricci said they need to decide the best use for this person. Ricci made a motion seconded by Sklar to approve the chief's budget including recommending a Firefighter/EMT position with details on use of the individual to be worked out.

Bragan said a well thought out plan is necessary which includes investigating the financial component to totally changing the current model. Wallace suggested creating the position and continuing to work on the best way to integrate it. Sklar said it is obvious there are needs in both departments. Ricci withdrew his motion once Wallace made a more appropriate one.

On a Wallace/Ricci motion, the board voted unanimously to approve fire budget with request for Firefighter/EMT subject to grading by the Personnel Board.

Department of Public Works

Bragan said the budget developed by Rich Nota has limited increases. He suggested the board consider including funding for an additional staff person as recommended in the audit report done last year. On a Wallace/von Loesecke motion, the board voted unanimously to approve base budget plus two additional items for a tree crew and part-time administrative position.

Old library accessibility committee

Mark Mikitarian and Wendy Cote-Magan were present and recommended the board move forward with option three to restore the building's original historic entrance to the front of the building as well as removal of the existing entrance on the side of the building. They gave reasons why this solution is the best choice. This option would allow everyone to enter the building on the main floor and respects the

historical integrity of building allowing for reconnection to town common. Mikitarian said this option also addresses goals in the master plan to enhance the community feel in the town center. They are requesting a reserve fund transfer in the amount of \$9,500 for schematic drawings and cost estimate for this option, a list of code compliance requirements that would be triggered and, cost estimates and architect's assessment of code compliance requirements that could be waived through application to the AAB. The board members asked some questions and decided to hold off on a vote until the December 6th meeting. Wallace explained the process for seeking bids. Von Loesecke suggested the sub-committee seek quotes from architects to accompany their reserve fund request to the Finance Committee. Bragan said the Finance Committee will meet next on December 7th. Wallace said grant funds for providing accessibility may also be available.

Public communication

Deb Thomson, COA Director, asked the board members to participate in the COA survey and invited them to the turkey dinner being held on November 17th at St. Theresa's Church.

Request for Proposals for the old library

A draft document was prepared by Assistant Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro which included details that required specific decisions by the board.

Some decisions made were:

- two rooms on the basement floor will be designated for town use (Sears Room & Library Director's old office)
- First floor and mezzanine will be areas available for lease
- Three year lease term
- Rental fee: \$450 a month for the 1st year, \$600 for the 2nd year and \$800 for the 3rd
- Security deposit will be \$1,800 (4 months' rent)
- Preferred use is for a non-profit. Bragan indicated that a non-profit includes municipal use such as CASE.

They discussed and made decisions on the programs to be offered in conformance with the deed, demographics of population to be served and financial capacity/viability.

The board members agreed no more additions will be made to the document. Bragan will redraft a final version.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:22pm.

Documents referenced:

Tax Classification Hearing packet – dated 11.15.2016

Fire & Ambulance operations analysis – dated Nov 2016

Budget reviews – fiscal FY18

Old Library report w/options – dated 11.10.2016

Lease eval criteria – dated 11.15.2016