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SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES January 7, 2020

The Meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm by Chairman Pitt. Present were Selectman Paight, Selectman Nelson, Ellen Smith, Town Administrator, members of the Advisory Budget Committee Jeffrey Miller, Beverly Harris and Glenn Parker, Library Director Kristin Readell and Chairman of the Library Trustees, Carl Shepardson.

TA Smith made some opening remarks about the 2020 budget. There was a change in the health insurance which included the addition of a Health Reimbursement Account, resulting in an approximate \$20,000 savings. In addition, while going through the budgeting process we need to keep in mind that Marlborough is looking at a number of infrastructure projects and capital asset replacements in the coming years that will need to take top priority and careful planning. The Selectmen established a goal of bringing the overall tax rate under \$30.00.

Library Budget:

The Library Trustees would like the Director to be a fulltime position and are recommending an increase in hours from 31 to 37.5 per week, and, according to the Library's budget proposal, would allow "time to pursue high value activities such as grants that benefit the community and low cost/high value programs that meet the needs of the community and the people who serve it". Chairman Pitt asked that the wage and benefit side of the budget be put on hold and to start with the operating line items.

There was a discussion about income from Trust Funds specifically designated for books and that this money has not been transferred into the General Fund over the last couple of years to offset the expenditures. The Library Trustees will discuss this process at their Saturday meeting.

A couple of other line items were adjusted after discussion.

Conversation turned back to the Library Director's position. Library Trustee Chairman Shepardson stated that the Trustees feel strongly about making the position fulltime and wish they could afford it. He feels that the Director is overworked as is. When asked how many hours per week the Library was open, the Director responded 29. Mr. Miller asked if there was any data showing what hours are the busiest, answer no. Asking if reducing the hours open to the public would free up time for staff, answer perhaps. This will need to be considered further but seems to indicate that revising the hours open to the public may allow the Director additional uninterrupted work time, alleviating the problem. Mr. Miller asked if grants would offset the increases in wages and benefits, answer no.

Director Readel and Chairman Sheparson left the meeting at 5:40 pm and Chief Lyons joined.

Police Department Budget:

Chairman Pitt asked the Chief for a budget summary. The Chief described the current staffing level and that the part time officer position established last year remains unfilled due to a lack of qualified candidates. Selectman Paight recommended that since there are no viable candidates at this time, perhaps the \$12,000 total funding for the position in the budget could be eliminated and unanticipated unrestricted state aid carried forward from 2019 or the aid to be received in 2020 could be utilized if need be. The group agreed to this.

No other significant discussion on this budget. Chief Lyons left the meeting at 6:15 pm.

Insurance Budget:

TA Smith presented the following:

\$8,000 eliminated from Unassigned Health Insurance due the passing of a Warrant Article at the 2019 Town Meeting expanding the use of the Insurance Expendable Trust Fund to include changes in health insurance premiums.

Addition of Health Reimbursement Account line item due to the change in health insurance plans.

Property & Liability and Worker's Compensation insurance is through PRIMEX. 2019 Worker's Compensation expenditure and budget was abnormally low due to a credit for a premium holiday.

Regional Associations:

Dues to SWRPC and NHMA

Legal:

Increase in Prosecutor due to a fee increase agreed to in 2019.

Street Lights:

Significant reduction due to the changeover to LED's.

Welfare:

Increase in Director's contact and small decrease in assistance items to help offset increase.

The Advisory Budget Committee Members left the meeting at 6:45 pm.

Chairman Pitt moved and Selectman Paight seconded a motion to appoint Lizabeth McLaughlin to the Supervisors of the Checklist until Town Meeting, contingent upon

receiving the written resignation from Grant Butler, who will be moving out of Town and therefore, no longer able to serve, vote to approve was unanimous.

TA Smith received a revised proposal from Dubois and King for the engineering on the Roxbury Road landslide site. The revision includes a reduction in price associated with a different driller as well as having Dubois and King help determine what if any short-term limits or traffic restrictions should be put in place. Selectman Nelson moved and Selectman Paight seconded a motion to enter into a contract with Dubois and King for the first phase engineering work associated with the slope stabilization project on Roxbury Road contingent on Chairman Pitt's review of the proposal and it being satisfactory, vote to approve was unanimous.

Selectman Paight moved and Chairman Pitt seconded a motion to approve the January 6, 2020 Accounts Payable Registers in the amounts of \$10,906.26 and \$8,858.73, the January 9, 2020 Payroll Check Register in the amount of \$1,738.53 and the Direct Deposit Register in the amount of \$8,528.79, vote to approve was unanimous.

The Board reviewed the December sewer readings and agreed to continue working on revisions of the Employee Policy Handbook. The Board will meet after Town Meeting to finalize the revisions as a group.

Selectman Paight moved and Selectman Nelson seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 pm, vote to approve was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Smith
Town Administrator