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SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES
BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING
February 15, 2021

Ms. Pitt stated, as Chairman of the Marlborough Board of Selectmen, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 Pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during the meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law.

Roll call attendance:

Chairman Pitt	Yes – Present on Zoom	No one else in the room
Selectman Paight	Yes – Present on Zoom	No one else in the room
Selectman Nelson	Yes – Present on Zoom	No one else in the room

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm. Also present in the Zoom public hearing was Ellen Smith, Town Administrator and members of the public.

Chairman Pitt then opened the public hearing at 7:01 pm and stated that in accordance with RSA 32:5-I notice of this public hearing was advertised in the Keene Sentinel on 2/8/21, notice was posted at the Town Office and Post Office, and a mailer was delivered via US Postal Service to every door direct mail. Chairman Pitt thanked the Budget Advisory Committee, consisting of Bev Harris, Jeff Miller and Glenn Parker. Chairman Pitt stated that anyone with a question during the presentation should submit them via the chat function or via email at esmith@marlboroughnh.org.

Chairman Pitt noted several increases that were present in the budget: Health Insurance increase was 6.4%, NH Retirement increase effective 7/1 for Town employees is 26%, NH Retirement increase effective for 7/1 for Police employees is 19%. There is also a line item in the executive budget which contains funding for a 3% wage increase for employees. Ms. Smith shared her screen showing the proposed budget and warrant articles. Chairman Pitt then went down the list of department budgets noting those with significant changes.

Executive: Reinstated part-time position of 20 hours/week. Also, based on budget advisory committee recommendation, 8% of the Town Administrator's salary and benefits (\$7788) was transferred to the water department to reflect the administrative work done for that department since the Water Operator position was reduced from full-time.

Property Assessment: Chairman Pitt explained that the Town of Marlborough has always used the NH DRA utility valuations. Recent legislation allows towns to conduct their own utility valuation so the Selectmen decided to contract with George Sansoucy, a utility valuation professional, and enter into a 5 year contract. The Selectmen expect a significant increase in utility values.

General Government Buildings: An increase here includes a new police department server as well as other increases.

Fire Dept: Chairman Pitt explained that an analysis of officer duties and salaries has shown an increase in salaries was necessary.

RTC: There was an increase with the solid waste hauler and landfill testing.

Health Officer: Increase for PPP equipment.

Library: Town Administrator Smith went through the changes to the library budget. In payroll, sub days expense was reduced since staff usually cover for each other. Some hours were reduced due to covid and the budget reflects actual hours that are expected to be worked in 2021. Hours will be looked at again for 2022. Staff development was reduced to align with actual use. Due to the potential of broadband coming to town in 2021, an increase to the internet expense was postponed since all town buildings will have free service with the new agreement with Consolidated Communications. Facility maintenance was increased for electric and oil. Bob Sweet had questions about the salary line decrease. Ms. Smith explained the reduction to sub days. Kristin Readell, Library Director, also explained why the expense was not necessary because staff covered for each other. Mr. Sweet had questions also about staff development which was explained. Mr. Sweet questioned the public relations decrease. It was explained that several items, including 48in48, were moved to the internet line in order to keep similar items in one account. Mr. Sweet also asked about an invoice from last year for the library that might need to be added to the 2021 budget. Ms. Smith explained that the invoice in question was paid from 2020 funds.

Police: Chairman Pitt explained the history of funding a part-time police position and being unable to find such an individual. Two years ago the funding was removed from the budget with the understanding that, if an individual was found, the position could be funded from the state aid carried over from the previous year. We now have a new chief and have filled the second officer position and are looking to fill the third officer position soon. The Selectmen feel comfortable removing the part-time

funding under the same understanding that, if needed, the position can be funded from the state aid monies. Also, the health insurance for third officer was reduced from family plan to a two person plan, a savings of \$3600. David Lauren asked a question about the salary line. Ms. Smith explained how the salaries have changed for 2021.

Chairman Pitt stated that the town budget is flat due to a great effort from the department heads and the budget advisory committee. The sewer budget is flat at \$213,207 and the water budget is flat at \$228,352.

Chairman Pitt then went through the proposed warrant articles.

1. Fire Equipment Capital Reserve \$10,000—same as last year
 2. Police Cruiser Capital Reserve \$15,000—same as last year
 3. Highway Equipment Capital Reserve \$20,000—same as last year
 4. Town Reassessment Capital Reserve \$24,000—increase from last year because 2021 is a reval year
 5. Road Maintenance Capital Reserve \$10,000—a reduction from last year because we now have the \$5.00 registration surcharge to offset road maintenance
 6. Monadnock Family Services \$2579
 7. Community Kitchen \$2500
 8. Home Health Care \$5000
 9. Southwestern Community Services \$1624
- Chairman Pitt noted that the organizations listed here have been funded for many years due to their assistance to Marlborough residents.
10. Petition warrant article. Chairman Pitt noted there was one petition warrant article regarding redistricting and there was no money involved
 11. Broadband Project warrant article—Chairman Pitt explained briefly the broadband project which will bring broadband service to all residents with no tax money involved. This article requests that the Town apply to the NH Bond Bank for \$965,500 which is the Town's contribution to the overall project of \$1,702,200. Consolidated Communications will contribute \$736,700 to the project. Consolidated will also pay the interest and principal payments of the bond per the contract pending town meeting approval.
 12. Frost Free Library Addition--\$1,000,000 estimate for construction costs of addition. This will be offset by private funds raised by the 150 Committee. No tax money involved.

Chairman Pitt noted that the \$77,000 stormwater planning grant from 2020 was forgiven except for \$2000.

Chairman Pitt proceeded to go through the revenues noting a reduction in the estimated Non Property Tax Revenues due to a slowdown of vehicle registrations. She explained the war credits and overlay amounts.

David Lauren asked another question about the reductions in the police salary line. Ms. Smith explained the use of the State Police wage scale as a guide. Selectman Paight added that the third officer is only for a partial year.

Glenn Parker asked a question about the broadband bond and what happens if Consolidated Communications defaults? Chairman Pitt explained that there will be greater detail into this subject on Wednesday at 7:00 pm (2/17/21) via a Zoom public hearing but the Town has negotiated a contract where Consolidated pays the interest and principal for the life of the bond. If Consolidated sells, the new company takes over the bond payments. She noted an important part of the contract was that the Town owns the infrastructure. If Consolidated failed, Marlborough can attract other providers. She noted that Consolidated Communications representatives will be present on 2/17 to discuss the construction, technology and pricing in greater detail. The broadband advisory committee will be there as well. Chairman Pitt said this was a great opportunity and that many surrounding towns are also entering into contracts with Consolidated.

Chairman Pitt asked if there were any questions. Seeing none, the public hearing was closed at 7:50 pm.

Selectman Paight moved to adjourn at 8:04 pm. Seconded by Selectman Nelson. Roll Call Vote Chairman Pitt - Yes, Selectman Paight – Yes, Selectman Nelson - Yes, motion passed.

Submitted by,

Gina Paight