



**SELECTBOARD
TOWN OF WESTHAMPTON
TOWN HALL
1 SOUTH ROAD
WESTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01027**

January 11, 2016

The meeting convened at 7:00PM.

Present were Jim Huston, and Phil Dowling. Also present were Cheryl Provost, David Blakesley, Chris Norris, and Steve Holt.

Warrants were signed for: Payroll: \$64,437.96
 Vendor: \$24,336.36

Accepted minutes from December 21, 2015.

- David Blakesley, Highway Superintendent reported:
 - finished mowing roadways
 - in FY15 he accidentally paid for a project out of Chapter 90 funds. It was his intention to pay it from the Highway Materials Account. He would like to correct it by transferring funds into the Chapter 90 account. Because it's from last year the transfer will require town meeting approval. Cheryl created an article for the town meeting to be scheduled at this meeting.
 - working on three budgets; Highway, Transfer Station, and Board of Health. The Board of Health budget is not complicated since Valerie does much of the work through the Foothills Health District. She has been collecting a substantial amount of fees from inspections and David supports continuing with the district in FY17.
 - requested that the crew receives their contracted pay increases and that he is with every other town employees increases.
 - requested the pay rate increase for the transfer station attendant increase the same as the highway crew, currently \$.60/hour.
 - requested a step raise for the Highway Superintendent, as Transfer Station Supervisor. This was discussed last year but didn't go through. David suggested the amount of at least \$1,500.00.
 - he believes he can level fund his budgets for FY17.
- Town Hall use: A request came from Joe Vishaway to use the Town Hall for basketball practice. He is a coach for the middle school recreation team. During the playing season there is no space available for practice. Mr. Vishaway coaches Dave and Audrey Antosz's son and through them learned of the Town Hall use. All the kids on his team are in the Hampshire Region, and some are residents of Westhampton. Cheryl reported that this falls outside of the normal requests authorized by her so is seeking approval from the board. Discussed liability and Cheryl believes it would be covered under the town's liability umbrella insurance. She also believes that the recreation league carries liability insurance. **Voted to allow Joe Vishaway to use the Town Hall, scheduled through Cheryl Provost, Administrative Assistant, upon confirmation of liability coverage.**

- Chris Norris, Fire Chief reported:
 - his FY17 budget is completed and ready to submit to Finance Committee. The Fire Expense Account and the Emergency Management Services Account have been separated in past budgets. With the resignation of Bob Miller from the Emergency Management Director position, Chris is now in charge of the Emergency Management Services Account. Chris joined the accounts for his FY17 proposal under the Fire Expense Account. His request is level funded.
 - this year's budget is in good standing.
 - Engine 2 had pump repairs. Chris plans to upgrade the lights to extend the life of use.
 - the department was awarded a match grant from the Department of Conservation and Recreation. The Association is matching up to \$2,000.00. Funds will be used to purchase forestry hose, forestry protective gear, and foam.
 - year-end reports were sent to the state to maintain status of eligibility of grants.
 - working on annual reports.
 - burning permits will be issued from January 15 through May 1. Burning is allowed only on Saturdays and Sundays, except for agricultural. Permits are available online but applicants must phone in when they plan to burn.
 - he emailed hazard mitigation planning dates to appropriate departments. The last plan was done in 2009. MEMA contracted Pioneer Valley Planning Commission to complete plans. Chris has been in contact with them to begin working on Westhampton's. This is required by FEMA to qualify for mitigation funds
 - Chris and Phil had missed phone calls between them regarding the tanker IFB. Chris made changes to the specs and posted the IFB in the Gazette and on the Goods and Services Bulletin. He and Cheryl received revisions from Town Counsel on Friday, January 8 to be attached as addendums. Six vendors had received the IFB package and Chris sent all of them the addendums. The bid opening is Thursday, January 21 at noon at the Safety Complex. Phil asked Chris if he's reaching out to the vendors to encourage them to bid. Chris replied that all the vendors that received a bid package have all the information they need and he believes there is no need to reach out to them. Chris reported that he made changes to the rear axle. He did not change to a heavier suspension as it may cause damage to the tank by riding stiffer. David Blakesley, Highway Superintendent reported the tires are not what he recommended. Chris replied he thought they were but he can do a change order if needed.
 - the department hierarchy structure is being revised. The goal is to improve communications and to share more of the responsibilities. One change is the appointment of officers. Currently they're appointed by the Chief. Under the new structure there will be three qualifying steps producing a score. The applicant obtaining the highest score will receive the position. The three steps will be a process exam, tactical fire, and an interview. Chris would like to include a member of the Police Department and Selectboard in the interviews. Chris has allowed a ninety day window to study for the exam, to be held in April. Appointments will be completed by the end of May.
 - as of January 1, 2016, every member must attend twenty hours of training per year to maintain membership. There are no requirements as to what training courses to complete. The department will pay for the training. Chris has scheduled a trailer maze for February and a live fire mobile prop in April.
 - CPR-AED certification is required for all first responders by state law. A class is scheduled for Tuesday, January 19, with a make-up class on Tuesday, January 26. Any member who can attend needs to coordinate a time on their own to obtain this to avoid dismissal from the department.
 - Chris was appointed to the National Fire Protection Association 1500 club. The seat is held

under the title of Westhampton Fire Department and is a life-time appointment. Thirty-two members across the world determine the standards. Requirements are to attend a conference up to two times a year. Most other tasks can be completed from home.

-Chris was appointed to the International Fire Chief's Association, New England Division. The seat is held under the title of Westhampton Fire Chief and is a three year appointment, with eligibility for re-appointment.

- Voted 3-0 to approve the Food Processing License application from James Fortini, for processing sorbet at 34 North Road.
- Voted 2-0 to waive their first refusal option to purchase agricultural land located on Lyman Road, owned by Bryan Balicki.
- Voted 2-0 to waive their first refusal option to purchase agricultural land located off the West side of North Road, owned by Leo and Anita Aloisi.
- FY17 budget: reviewed the Selectboard budget presented by Cheryl. It was noted that the Finance Committee requested departments to level fund. Phil stated he's prepared to return his Selectboard salary, if it's helpful. However, he does not expect other members to do the same. Discussed the salaries of appointed officials and noted it's a small portion of the budget. Phil plans to meet with the Finance Committee to discuss salaries, but at this time recommends submitting a level budget. Discussed the highway crew contracted increases and a step raise for the superintendent. **Voted 2-0 to submit a step increase of \$750.00 for the Highway Superintendent, a 2 ½ % increase for the crew and transfer station attendant to cover their contracted \$.60 hourly raise and a level budget for all other salaries.** Reviewed the Selectboard expense account with an increase of \$100.00 to cover increases in travel, dues, and training. Cheryl reported that most training she attends is sponsored through MIIA at no cost. This portion of the budget is close this year and Cheryl recommends the increase. Reviewed the Town Offices expense account with an increase of \$1450.00 to cover the cost of the new website support and increased electric charges. Reviewed the IT Support budget. Cheryl reported there are long term decisions required to know how to present this budget. Five computers were replaced this year and upgrades were made in the Annex and Town Hall. The number of support hours needed may decrease but improvements in back-up and long term planning will require funding. Cheryl will compile a comparison of options. At this time the salary budget is level, with knowledge that a request for increase will require a presentation to the Finance Committee. The Group Insurance assessment is not in yet and Patty Cotton, Treasurer, is expecting an increase up to 4%. The line item budget proposed currently reflects a 1% increase.

Voted 2-0 to approve to submit the following FY17 budget request:

Selectboard Salary-\$4100.00

Appointed Officials-\$147,810.00

Inspectors Compensation-\$3600.00

Building Inspector/Commissioner Salary-\$12,118.00

Selectboard Expense-\$4700.00

Counsel Fees-\$20,000.00

Information Technology-\$7,600.00

Town Offices-\$27,692.00

Memorial Day-\$200.00

Hampshire County Retirement-\$174,669.00
Group Insurance-\$348,500.00; OPEB-\$5,000.00
Insurance & Bonds-\$82,550.00
Medicare & Social Security-\$28,375.00
Reserve Fund-\$10,000.00
Highway Salaries-\$213,769.95
Unemployment-\$19,400.00
Sub-Total -\$1,110,158.95
Town Hall paint-\$30,000.00
Tanker Truck payment-\$18,400.00 (may not be included in FY17 budget)
Grand Total-\$1,158,558.95

- Ginny Curtis submitted a complaint of actions by the Zoning Board of Appeals regarding the property at 245 Main Road. Complaint on file. The Selectboard will review it and discuss it at their next meeting. She also submitted a copy of an emergency plan update from Town Meeting in 2012, noting the warming center during power outages. This was discussed at the Emergency Management meeting held at the Safety Complex Thursday, December 17. Procedures remain the same. Ginny suggested a welcome package on the new website for new residents. Discussed what it may include. Phil and Cheryl are on the Website Committee and will pass along the suggestion. Cheryl noted that a good place for such an item would be useful under the “Our Town” page. Ginny asked if the legal place to post agendas will change to the new website, rather than the current method out front in the mail box. Phil replied that agendas and minutes will be posted on the website, but there are no plans to change the current legal postings.
- Voted to schedule a Special Town Meeting to be held on Monday, February 22 at 7:30 p.m. Two articles were reviewed. One will address the Chapter 90 and Highway budget transfer, reported by David Blakesley. The other will be to seek funding to pay for a legal settlement. Voted to approve the following articles and submit them to the Finance Committee for review on Tuesday, January 19. Counsel is reviewing Article 1.

ARTICLE 1: To see if the Town will vote to transfer a sum of money from available funds, or otherwise provide, a sum of money in order to pay the town’s share of an out of court settlement, or take any action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 2: To see if the town will vote to transfer a sum of money from the FY16 Highway Materials Account to the Chapter 90 Account, or take any action relative thereto.

- Administrative Assistant, Cheryl Provost reported:
 - website; the committee has been meeting regularly, the department pages are due by the end of January, Cheryl has been submitting content. The Selectboard page survey form needs to be submitted, agreed to submit it together at the next meeting on January 25.
 - she is due for her review and it will be on the agenda for January 25.
- Signed the Food Processing License application from James Fortini.
- Signed the Waiver of First Refusal Option from Bryan Balicki.
- Signed the Waiver of First Refusal Option from Leo and Anita Aloisi.

- The Selectboard voted by roll call, 2-0 to enter into Executive Session at 8:15PM as the Chair declared that discussion in a public meeting may have detrimental effect on the towns' litigating position. The public meeting will reconvene at the end of the Executive Session.
- Closed the Executive Session and resumed Public Session at 8:20PM.

Adjourned meeting at 8:58p.m.

Approve:

James Huston, Clerk

Philip Dowling