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WEARE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
March 10, 2014

PRESENT: TOM CLOW, CHAIRMAN; RICHARD W. BUTT, VICE CHAIRMAN; JAMES LEARY, SELECTMAN; KEITH R. LACASSE, SELECTMAN

RECORDING SECRETARY: Cherry Palmisano

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR: Naomi Bolton

GUESTS: Barry Arnold, Tina Connor, Frank Campana, Tim Redmond, Bob Richards, John VanLoendersloot

7:00 p.m. Chairman Clow called the meeting to order.

The Selectmen held a public coffee hour prior to the meeting.

CALL-IN PROGRAM

Chairman Clow noted that the purpose of this special meeting is to entertain any questions from the public pertaining to the Warrant.

Chairman Clow announced that a few days before the Deliberative Session the Board was notified that Vice Chairman Butt would not be seeking re-election. The members of the Board thanked Mr. Butt for his six years of service and presented him with a plaque.

Is the request for an ambulance a replacement or an additional ambulance to what the town currently has?

Chief Richards explained that the request is to replace the 2004 ambulance, which is the older of the two ambulances. It was purchased new in 2004 and at that time it was the addition of the second ambulance. The ambulance was purchased through a three year lease. The second unit was phased in due to the fact that they were receiving several back to back calls requiring a second vehicle. They have been working with the same vendor as in the past since August to get a nice package, within the money they are seeking. The ambulance will have a 4wd chassis and will be exactly like the other ambulance. Chief Richards said that they are trying to keep the ambulances identical, but did change a few things to make it more user friendly for the people operating the ambulance. Once they receive the chassis at the factory in approximately 16 weeks, it will be 130 days before they receive the ambulance. The Finance Committee did not recommend the warrant article and Chief Richards does not know why because they never contacted him. There is a trade-in package being offered on the 2004 ambulance. The ambulance will have the same chassis and same size box, there will be no additional costs other than putting in fuel because everything will be transferred over.

Chairman Clow said that there was a serious error in the Goffstown News concerning one of the articles on the warrant. There are two contracts, one for the highway workers union and one for the police union. Chairman Clow said that they negotiated a new insurance plan with both of these unions and the insurance plan would have a significant savings. In looking at the article for the highway depart a savings was indicated for 2015 and the 2016 figures are in parenthesis, the new insurance plan reflects a significant savings, and the parentheses mean that much less if the contract passes. The 2015 contract savings is \$11,334 to the town and the third year there is a \$33,642 savings due to the offset of a different insurance plan for all employees, which is significant because it was just the opposite in the newspaper. Chairman Clow said that it is a savings, rather than additional cost. There are decreasing costs each year and the same insurance plan over the course of the contract equals \$58k savings in

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the police department. In both cases, if the contracts pass there will be a significant savings in insurance. Presently out of pocket is \$500 for an individual plan and \$1500 for a family plan, which would change to \$1000 out of pocket per individual and \$3k for family. There are also changes in copays for prescriptions as well, name brands will have a higher copay. The plan offsets the raises in both contracts and non union employees as well. Vice Chairman Butt said that there is also a savings in the 3rd year on premium costs; currently there is a 5% premium share and the employees will be paying 10%, which is part of the savings rolled in. This keeps the costs down in the police department and is an across the board savings for the Highway Department.

Tim Redmond, Public Works Director, said that he has grateful that Chairman Clow clarified the information in the Goffstown News. He knows that they are asking for a lot and they will not get everything they want, but he hopes to get some support from the community to keep the services at the level they are. Their plan for road reconstruction is to finish the top coat paving and shoulder gravel on Flanders Memorial Road and East Street starting at the WMS driveway all the way down to the Peaslee Hill intersection. Mr. Redmond said that they are trying to fix as many connectors roads that everyone uses as possible and if there are extras funds they will shim and overlay the roads they can. In the 5th year they will work on Mt. Dearborn road, which is almost fallen apart. East Road does have a big challenge because the replacement of the culvert prior to Buzzell Hill was not part of any plan and will need to be considered for replacement in the next few years with a concrete structure. Vice Chairman Butt commented that typically the wording of a warrant article starts by raising and appropriating and is followed by the bonding amount. Article 12 for the Peaslee Road Bridge states that they are raising and appropriating \$1,475,818, which is the total project amount, but they are actually only raising \$86,372.

Mr. Redmond explained that the article for the upgrade of the fuel station at the public works facility is an important article because in order to keep the town's fueling station open they have to meet DES requirements prior to December 2014. The fuel station services the police and fire departments, building inspector, JSRHS, highway department, and transfer station and it would be a significant inconvenience if they had to utilize an outside vendor or go to Hillsboro to the State Shed. To meet DES requirements for the underground storage tanks and fueling facility, the piping from the tanks to the dispensers needs to be upgraded.

Article 11 is seeking \$20,400 to be used for raises for non-union town and library personnel and part of the Fire Department. Chairman Clow said that a group such as the highway employees can petition to be a union, there must be 10 members to establish a union and once the union is established they can still maintain their union status if the number goes down. The town negotiates a contract with the union stating working conditions, benefits, wages, and balances rights of management with the rights of the employees. Tim Redmond, supervisors, and leadership in the police department are non-union town employees as well as any full time employee working at the library and town office. When the figure was calculated, the Finance Administrator had a list of all employees and what they make. Mr. Redmond noted that the workers at the Transfer Station are members of the Highway Department Union. There are 11 full time employees, plus the volunteer fire department and library and 8 part time employees that would be affected by Article 11.

Chairman Clow said that there are a number of items on the ballot which deal with recommendations from the CIP. Vice Chairman Butt was the Board's representative on the CIP Committee and Jack Dearborn chaired the CIP Committee. Chairman Clow asked how the information first comes to the committee and goes on the warrant. Mr. Dearborn said that towns are covered by State RSAs and communities are required to have a CIP Committee. Their intent is to collect requests for large purchases over \$10k-\$15k. The committee plans six years out and their intent is to review the requests and make sure that the items being requested are truly capital in nature. Mr. Dearborn said that the process has gone very well over the last 4-5 years. They usually start the process in June by asking all department heads to update their six year plan focusing on current year, creating a spreadsheet, and ask the department heads to come before them to present their request. The CIP makes recommendations to go to the Planning Board and Selectmen with input from the Finance Committee and

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finishes in October. Vice Chairman Butt said that the CIP Committee does have a spreadsheet identifying items going out 6 to 7 years with the intent to keep the tax rate level.

Town Administrator Bolton noted that she was contacted by an individual seeking clarification on an article in the Union Leader. The article indicated Weare was looking for two additional police officers, but at the same time not going to provide 24 hour coverage. Chairman Clow explained that they temporarily don't have 24 hour coverage. Chairman Clow said that there hasn't been any change of philosophy regarding 24 hour coverage, but they are very short-handed currently with three officers at the academy and one in field training, and officers on limited duty to the incident in August. The Police Chief decided that from 3:00 am to 7:00 am there would just be on-call service and they would rely on the State Police and on-call officers within the town until the force is returned to where it is supposed to be. If they decide to go with anything less, there would need to be a discussion with the Selectmen and the Police Chief. Selectman Lacasse noted that the intent is 24 hour coverage and not to do anything different.

Vice Chairman Butt said there is a big difference between the non-union and union raises. The union raise is negotiated and all members of the union get the same increase, but the distribution of the lump sum of money for the non-union raises is based on performance. When it comes to the part time employees he suspects that the on-call firefighter's distribution of money is 3% and assumes the same for part time employees at the library. Within the non-union there is a difference between part time and full time employees. The volunteer fire fighters are included in the non-union group, but they are not volunteer, they are compensated. They volunteer to be part of the Fire Department and have to undergo and maintain their training and are paid for the hours that they put in. They are not full time employees, but on-call in the event of an emergency or training. Chief Richards said that they are compensated for every hour that they work and there is a certain amount of training they get paid for and a certain amount they don't.

Chairman Clow said that the safety complex is now paid for and whatever money that was going towards the bond will make up a substantial amount for the bond for the highway garage. When that article passes there won't be a payment due until 2015. The town paid \$60-\$70k annually on the safety complex bond and the interest rate for the \$967k highway bond will be than the safety complex bond was. Jan Snyder noted that the estimated rate is 2% and the town would pay approximately \$92k annually. The outstanding debt for the Ferrante property will be paid up in June 2016 and \$72k will be due. The \$200k bridge bond will be paid in 2015. Ms. Snyder said that the principal and interest payments for the highway bond would start in 2015 and there would be no payment made in 2014 at all. Chairman Clow said that the potential bond and the two others would only overlap in 2015 and in 2016 there would be the Ferrante bond and the highway garage bond, unless there is another future need.

Selectman Leary said that Article 21 is seeking \$50k to expand parking at Bolton Field, which can become a safety issue when there is parking on both sides of the road and it becomes a one lane road. PARC is looking to expand the parking area in the upper section to create 150 additional parking spaces, which would provide adequate parking for the complex. In taking some of the fill for the parking spaces, they will create a drainage system so the water has a place to go. Currently the lower soccer field is not a regulation size soccer field and they will use some of the fill to fill that area to create a regulation size field. PARC was unable to host any soccer tournaments due to there not being enough side line area for protection. This gravel will expand the field to get enough for an actual full size field, allowing tournaments to be held at Bolton Field, which will help benefit the town. The expansion was part of the Capital Improvement Plan. Vice Chairman Butt said that there is more to it than requesting \$50k for parking. He said that the land started as a gravel pit and was donated to the town by Chris Bolton and then there was a request for \$300k on the warrant to allow the town to develop it into fields, which was at least 10 years ago. The only thing the town contributed was some amount of money towards the playground, which always seems to be used, there were three women who tried to raise \$60k and an article was placed on the warrant asking voters to approve \$10k, which is the only money the town put into that facility Vice

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Chairman Butt noted it is the most widely used facility in town. There was a study done years ago and it was determined that it would cost \$1m to develop that facility paths and it has been proposed at substantially less than \$1m. Parking is a concern and it is difficult for emergency equipment to access the facility with parking on both sides. The organizations that use Bolton Field such as PARC and WAC have put a lot of money into that facility, John Stark Generals Football built a concession stand and numerous other things. He would like to see the community approve developing the facility. Regulation size soccer fields would allow for tournaments to be held at Bolton Field, which would be an economic benefit to the town.

Vice Chairman Butt said that the only article that the Selectmen are not recommending is Article 28, which is a request from the Conservation Commission to establish a relationship with Fish and Game to do patrols on town owned land, specifically to patrol for ATV use. There wasn't enough information provided to the Board as to when, where, and who would patrol and the police department also was not aware, therefore the Board did not recommend the article. Vice Chairman Butt has a problem with paying Fish and Game to do what they are supposed to be doing. The Finance Committee also is not recommending the article.

Chairman Clow said that he received an email from a citizen regarding the need for a new cruiser and the type of cruiser being purchased. If the article passes there will be two new vehicles in town. They were able to purchase one vehicle with money earned through details and an insurance payout due to an accident that involved a cruiser funds. Chief Velleca feels that with 60 square miles of roads, many of them dirt, some of the vehicles should be 4wd SUVs. The vehicle on order is a Ford Explorer Interceptor 4wd, beyond that no decision has been made on what will be purchased. Selectman Leary noted a concern about the cost factor, which is \$43-\$47k. Part of the cost is because the current vehicle equipment and light bar from the Crown Vics will not fit a new vehicle, no matter what vehicle they purchase there will need to be retro-fitted.

Selectman Lacasse mentioned Article 31 to adopt the provisions of RSA 72:29-a allowing the surviving spouses of anyone killed in active duty a tax credit. He was asked if the RSA includes police officers killed in the line of duty. Selectman Lacasse said that if someone would like to have the law changed to include police officers they would have to discuss it with their State Representative.

The Selectmen are the agents to expend from the Government Building and Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund. This past year new roofs were installed on the Town Office and Library, new carpeting was installed in the Library, and a new boiler was installed in the Town Office utilizing money from this fund. The Town Hall lost heat on a very cold night and will probably need a new boiler, which will come out of this fund. This fund provides money to maintain all government buildings without having to go back to the voters to request additional funds for every need. There are buildings that will need re-painting soon. Mildred Hall had donated a lot of money to the town in memory of her parents and donated \$50k towards the upkeep of the Town Hall, which paid for the new doors and fire alarm system. It is important for the Board to have funds available for these needs.

The Board encouraged all taxpayers to exercise their right to vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

Town Administrator Bolton presented the Board with a gravel tax levy that required their signatures.

Previously the Board had requested additional information as to why a Veterans Tax Credit was denied and it was discussed that the individual is currently serving and must be discharged to qualify for the tax credit.

Chairman Clow moved, Selectman Lacasse seconded to adjourn at 8:10 p.m. Passed 4-0-0

ADJOURNMENT

A True Record.

Cherry Palmisano, Recording Secretary