

## FINAL



### WEARE BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES October 28, 2013

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

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Cherry Palmisano

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:** Naomi Bolton

**GUESTS:** Evelyn Connor, Tina Connor, Jan Snyder, Frank Campana, Bob Vezina,

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – Evelyn Connor reminded everyone that January is the beginning of the Town of Weare's 250<sup>th</sup> and there will be events every month until September 21<sup>st</sup> which is the actual day the charter was signed. The kickoff event will take place at Bolton Field on January 4<sup>th</sup>. All of the events will be listed on the town website and everywhere possible. Ms. Connor said that the committee is looking forward to a big year with lots of participation. She thanked all that have donated and sponsored them. There will be a booklet mailed out in January listing all of the events.

Frank Campana commented on the incident that happened the second week of August involving a police shooting. He knows the Selectmen don't have any influence in the Attorney General's offices, but he would like to know who the officers were that were involved in the shooting. Mr. Campana said that from a monetary standpoint he is not sure if the officers are on paid administrative leave and if that means they are doing administrative work off the road. He feels that it is inconsiderate of the Attorney General's office who should be sympathetic to the Weare taxpayers and get those officers back on the road. With those officers out it puts a strain on the rest of the Police Department. Mr. Campana said that he is not sure if the Board, through the town attorney, can push the Attorney General's office to see what is going on. Mr. Campana cited an article from the Concord Monitor regarding a police involved shooting in Manchester with a statement from the Attorney General's office in less than ten days. He feels the town has waited long enough to get a report on the incident.

Mr. Campana noted that the Board will be setting the tax rate tonight. He said that he waits for the March ballot to come to see if the Selectmen put in any money to offset articles. Mr. Campana said that the town needs whatever it needs to run it without borrowing money, he does not want the town to act as his banker, and feels that any money that can come back to him to relieve taxes should.

Chairman Clow said that both the Chief and Lieutenant retired from the Police Department and a sergeant left for another community. This incident, with two officers on administrative leave, leaves the department down five. The resource officer and detective have other responsibilities as well. Chairman Clow wants the incident resolved properly and noted that by the end of week the new chief will be permanently on board and will be the one who addresses the Attorney General, not the Board.

### DEPARTMENT HEAD AND COMMITTEE ITEMS

**2014 Fire Department Budget** – Chief Vezina said that the Deputy Fire Chief's wages increased from \$3,550 to \$4,200 and the increase reflects the amount of hours in the budget. Wages for fire fighters increased from

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\$74,316 to \$99,320 because last year they straightened out the anomalies in the pay scale. The department continues to struggle with coverage on nights and weekends. Chief Vezina added \$25,000 to the budget for the purpose of essentially extending the per diem program into Saturday and Sunday. The dispatch budget includes a 2% escalator. The Provident Policy is a supplemental insurance that they pay for the workers. The lawn care contract needs to go out to bid. The intercept line is for the amount of money the town pays to other communities when we need to pay for a medic from another town. There is a \$150 increase in office supplies. Software support has increased. They currently use Fire House Software for records management for non-patient care services, but are looking to change to Rescue Bridge Program which is produced by the same company that does their patient care report software. They are looking to change to this software because it is web based and they don't need to maintain a server, there is more flexibility and doesn't need to be maintained, and will allow them to interface with the CAD system that will be used by Goffstown and the State.

The department's photocopier needs to be replaced and is holding them back from doing things more efficiently on the web. The department does a tremendous amount of moving information through the fax machine, which is how they communicate with hospitals. The new copier will allow them to share pdf documents electronically. Chief Vezina said that a 36 month lease seemed to fit the budget better at \$129.65 per month with a \$236 service agreement. This copier will allow them to do two sided printing. The toner is supplied with the machine when it is leased.

Safety medical gear includes a \$3,000 increase because they are looking to purchase two small refrigerator units for the ambulances to refrigerate medication. If the medicine is not refrigerated it reduces the life of the medication. Line 636 includes \$900 for a cable that was replaced under warranty on the life pack machine.

The line for protective clothing is for the maintenance for the protective clothing and gets them five sets of gear. It was noted that there is a \$35,000 request in CIP to purchase protective clothing, but there was some discussion that it should be an operational expense. Vice Chairman Butt mentioned replacing the gear in a 2-3 year period and dividing the expense to include it the operating budget. Chief Vezina said that it is not only turn out gear with the jacket and pant system, but helmets and boots as well. Last year they requested 23 sets of gear. The \$35,000 would allow them to purchase 15 sets of gear. Moving the protective gear request into the operating budget would increase the line to \$20,000 and would bring them in line with gear in three years. Chief Vezina said that he is looking to do a purchase to catch up and then going forward would like to purchase five sets a year at approximately \$10,000 per year. The gear has a ten year life span, which does not always mean it is useless, but needs to be compliant with the codes. The gear expires by calendar date, not by hours used. They do some training in house and also have training from an outside source. The EMTs are outfitted with the same gear. Chief Vezina has identified the individuals that are active participants in the department. There is concern that if the request for protective gear is in a separate article on the warrant it could be voted down and the equipment is needed. Vice Chairman Butt would like to see it in the operating budget with a fixed number. Chief Vezina will get back to the Board with a maintenance number to level off the gear. Chairman Clow said that if Chief Vezina can provide enough equipment so that fire fighters are safe and over a period of time get caught up then he would agree to put the cost in the operating budget. Selectman Lacasse would still like to see the gear as a capital item because putting it into the operating budget could inflate the default number. Vice Chairman Butt said that purchasing the gear over a certain amount of time, should level the budget. They are not trying to purchase all the equipment all at once, but over a period of time. Chief Vezina would like to purchase 15 sets this year, because the gear they own will no longer be safe. Chief Vezina will come up with a budget number, it may cause a spike in 2014, but will level off in future years.

When a new person joins the department they need to go for a physical, which costs \$400-\$600. Vehicle maintenance is always an issue and was increased for 2013 to purchase tires for some vehicles, but there is always unforeseen vehicle maintenance and Chief Vezina thinks that \$10,000 is a realistic number. Chief Vezina told the Board that they need to have a discussion regarding fleet size in the future. Most of the training

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was done in-house this year, but Chief Vezina is proposing to send four members to get advanced EMT certification to increase their skill set and make them more valuable to the community and may possibly save money on the intercept line.

The 2013 adopted budget is \$315,698.55 and the 2014 proposed is \$354,820, which represents a 12% increase.

Vice Chairman Butt commented on the \$25,000 increase in wages to extend the per diem on weekends. Chief Vezina said that they will be EMT/fire fighters and there will most likely be more EMS calls than fire fighter calls. The huge benefit of having dual role employee, regardless of the call that comes in, is that people arrive with the appropriate equipment. There is a couple minutes difference in response time between the day shift time period and the call time period to get somebody on scene. Typically the response time is quicker during the day shift than nights and weekends. Chief Vezina said that given how they are figured today and how they pay for per diem, they would go beyond the \$90k which is earmarked for daytime coverage and they do collect enough money to pay for the extension into the weekend days. The funding source that pays for per diems, brings in more than what they spend. Vice Chairman Butt said that the issue is with whether or not per diem should be in the operating budget, rather than how it is funded now. He said that with the current funding there is very little money going into vehicle equipment fund. Chief Vezina noted that they have collected \$74,370 total through September. He thinks that the per diem program has been a success and has accomplished what intended, which was to cover daytime because they weren't covering their calls and it was an issue for surrounding communities. The per diem program has produced EMS and fire outcomes that they can be proud of. Chairman Clow thinks that having the program has encouraged more people to go out for training. Chief Vezina said that they have very good employees in the per diem program, 3-4 are from outside of the department, but all excellent employees willing to share their knowledge and experience. It was discussed that if they put the per diem into the operating budget and send that revenue stream back to the capital program they won't see the spikes when they need to make large purchases. Chairman Clow mentioned constructing a warrant article that phases the EMT expense into the budget over a three year period so it is gradual. Vice Chairman Butt said that the only large purchase in the capital program is an ambulance and they may look at a lease rather than a purchase. When equipment is needed, it is a problem when it is deferred because they don't have the funding.

Chief Vezina told the Board that they are looking to go through the Board of Fire Wards in November to finalize the EMS billing policy, which will need a public hearing. They will review the rates to ensure that they are charging the appropriate amount.

Vice Chairman Butt noted that he would like to eliminate all miscellaneous budget lines from all budgets.

**Set 2013 Tax Rate** – Chairman Clow mentioned that DRA sent an interactive spreadsheet so they can move things around and apply amounts from the unassigned fund balance towards taxes, and change the overlay to determine the tax rate. Last year \$15,000 was paid out in abatements. Last year the Board used \$300k from the unassigned fund balance to reduce taxes. The proposed net town appropriation is down \$106k from last year and revenues increased by over \$300k, with appropriations down \$200k last year. Vice Chairman Butt thinks that they have done well on the town side and what the voters approve. They also have to consider the county tax, which went up considerably and the school tax increased by \$900k. Last year they used \$300k to reduce taxes and it was discussed that the more they take out of the unreserved fund balance, the smaller the amounts gets, and less will be available for following years. Last year they left 7% in the unreserved fund balance and 5% is the recommended minimum from DRA. The amount of the unreserved fund balance is not cash in hand, but money owed to the town. There is more in back taxes owed to the town than in previous years.

If the Board applies \$200k from the unreserved fund balance the town tax rate will be \$3.30. If the Board applies \$300k from the unreserved fund balance the town tax rate will be \$3.18. Applying \$300k would leave 7% in the unreserved fund balance.

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It was discussed that they did buy a few things at the end of last year as a result of having unspent money in the budget. If they use \$200k they may want to consider utilizing the unspent budget to purchase some items. If \$300k is used it leaves less flexibility next year.

**Selectman Lacasse moved, Selectman Lawton seconded to apply \$300,000 from the unreserved fund balance to offset the tax rate for 2013 with a tax rate of \$3.18.**

Chairman Clow said that they are applying revenue to reduce the tax rate, but if they don't have the revenue the tax rate will increase next year. He thinks they should keep the tax rate flat. Chairman Clow does not think they can count on revenue increasing by that amount every year and is nervous about utilizing \$300k. Chairman Clow thinks that using \$200k and having \$100k go into the unreserved fund balance is more beneficial. Selectman Lacasse said that it is additional revenue, so why let the \$100k sit in the unreserved fund balance until next year. Selectman Lacasse said that if they apply \$300k from the unreserved fund balance then the unspent remainder of the budget could be applied to the unreserved fund balance.

Vice Chairman Butt is concerned with using the \$300k and bringing the tax rate lower and then not having the money next year to keep the tax rate flat. Vice Chairman Butt hopes that the highway garage will get approved, which will be a big hit in the budget. Chairman Clow noted that if it does get approved it will be after the expiration of the safety complex bond and won't hit until 2015.

Chairman Clow said that he was going to recommend applying \$200k bringing the tax rate \$.05 below what it was last year.

**Failed 2-3-0; Vice Chairman Butt, Selectman Leary, and Chairman Clow were opposed.**

**Selectman Leary moved, Vice Chairman Butt seconded to apply \$200,000 from the unreserved fund balance of \$1,450,945.00 to offset the 2013 tax rate of \$3.30. Passed 3-2-0; Selectman Lacasse and Selectman Lawton were opposed.**

\$15,000 for overlay

\$3.30 town tax rate

\$14.95 local school effort

\$2.35 state school tax effort

\$1.15 county

\$21.75 total tax rate

## MANIFESTS

**Chairman Clow moved, Selectman Leary seconded to authorize the Board of Selectmen to sign manifests and order the Treasurer to sign checks dated October 31, 2013. Passed 5-0-0**

<b>Accounts Payable</b>	<b>\$6,435.00</b>	90% of the Clinton Grove Academy roof
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<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$6,435.00</b>	
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The Clinton Grove Academy roof is complete.

## ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

There is an abatement for the U.S. Government timber tax that requires signatures from the Board.

The Board will not be meeting on Monday, November 11<sup>th</sup> in observance of Veteran's Day.

The Town Hall doors won't be here until the first week in December, but the sill work will begin soon. The Board discussed that they voted for granite steps, but the base needs to be poured. Selectman Lacasse thought they were going to hold on the granite steps and Sherry Burdick was getting an actual price from Swenson Granite. The bid on the sill work did not include the base pad for the steps. A price is needed for the granite steps as well as the sizing on the pad. Town Administrator Bolton will contact Sherry Burdick.

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Vice Chairman Butt mentioned that the Board approved the layout for the town website on August 19<sup>th</sup> and at the last meeting the Town Administrator said that the website people were waiting for her to give them information. Town Administrator Bolton said that on November 5<sup>th</sup> the website people will come to town and go to each department to gather information. Vice Chairman Butt asked if the Board would object to activities and events being on the town website if they can get a couple of volunteers to post the community events. It was mentioned that there will be a link to all schools, Weare Athletic Club, sports clubs, snowmobile club, the Lions Club, and many more. It was mentioned that there could be a list of events for the week if there are a couple of volunteers willing to post the events.

Selectman Lawton said that they talked in the past about the purchase order software. Town Administrator Bolton said that Tina Connor is installing the software on Tim Redmond and Merry Rice's computers this week. Selectman Lawton is concerned with usage and feels they should have a deadline for utilizing the software for all purchasing to be able to account for things that the town has purchased.

Chairman Clow noted that several years ago, during an audit, they had to bring all the fixed assets into light. This is an accountability of the town's assets and they should be adding and deleting from that list. The purchasing policy also covers how to get rid of equipment.

There should be serial numbers on equipment so that they can track inventory. Selectman Lawton mentioned a computer that was in a vehicle that was totaled. Town Administrator Bolton said that Adamson Industries went to salvage yard to get all equipment that was on the vehicle. The \$ 21,450 insurance check for that vehicle is in the general fund to be used for another vehicle. There is enough money in the capital reserve fund to purchase another vehicle.

The DARE vehicle is at the Public Works Department, but the reason is unknown.

Selectman Lawton asked if each officer has their own computer to bring in and out of cruisers. He would like the purchase order records researched to see how many computers there are. Vice Chairman Butt said that it is more important to know what we have. Selectman Lawton would like to know how many they did buy and said that there should be a record. Selectman Lawton requested that the computers be researched. Vice Chairman Butt does not want to spend time on researching and adding work to an employee. He said that once the chief is here they will find out what they have in usable equipment. There could be 3 years of records in the computer system that should be easily accessible. Vice Chairman Butt thinks going back 2-3 years is sufficient. There also needs to be a record of when items become obsolete. Vice Chairman Butt said that they went through the process to create a purchasing policy and it is useless because it is not being followed. Selectman Lacasse mentioned that policies should be revisited each year.

Vice Chairman Butt said that in the capital program sometimes there is a request to replace a piece of equipment, but then they find that the piece of equipment was never disposed of and is now being requested to be replaced.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – Jan Snyder said that the secretary at the Police Department has been good with keeping up with Purchase Orders and it may be easier for her to find the information on the computers.

Ms. Snyder noted that the motor vehicle revenue only increased \$33,000 from 2011 to 2012.

**Chairman Clow moved, Selectman Leary seconded to enter into non public session @ 9:30 p.m. pursuant to the authority granted in RSA 91-A:3II (b). A roll call vote was taken, Vice Chairman Butt – yes; Selectman Lawton – yes; Selectman Leary – yes; Selectman Lacasse – yes; Chairman Clow – yes. Passed 5-0-0**

**Chairman Clow moved, Vice Chairman Butt seconded to come out of non public session @ 9:40 p.m. A roll call vote was taken, Vice Chairman Butt – yes; Selectman Lawton – yes; Selectman Leary – yes; Selectman Lacasse – yes; Chairman Clow – yes. Passed 5-0-0**

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**The Board reviewed a 3 month interim employment agreement for the Police Chief Velleca.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

A True Record.

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Cherry Palmisano, Recording Secretary