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**WEARE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
January 7, 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: Paul Marsh, Steve Flanders, Tina Connor, Jeff Springs, Frank Campana, Carl Knapp, Gregory Begin, Tim Redmond, Jan Snyder, Heleen Kurk, Bob Vezina, Ike Shepard, Matt Whitlock

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

PUBLIC COMMENT – Steve Flanders asked the Board if they would put an article on the warrant for the Cable Committee. There have been problems with the message board and the committee needs someone to come in to do the programming and keep the cable channel up and running. Heleen Kurk told the Board that they are requesting \$24,000, which represents approximately 33% of the \$73,674 revenue this year from franchise fees. There are 2,383 subscribers, which have decreased 200 subscribers since 2009, but the revenues are up due to higher charges. The person would be part-time to run the cable channel under the direction of the Cable Committee. Without having someone there who knows what they are doing and is committed, the money spent on equipment does no good. Mrs. Kurk said that the subscribers are charged a fee of 3% on their cable bill, which goes to the town and the Selectmen have the authority to decide how that money is spent. Only the cable subscribers are paying the fee, but the money is going elsewhere. When they started the cable channel it was run successfully by volunteers, but things have changed such as technology, commitments, and the availability of the volunteers. Mrs. Kurk said that the town is charging money for something that the larger portion of the public are benefiting from not the subscribers.

Selectman Lacasse entered the meeting at 7:14 p.m.

Vice Chairman Butt said that he can't support the request, but can support training for the equipment. He said that he can't support someone being paid \$24,000 a year, because he is not sure if it is needed without having proper training of the volunteers. Vice Chairman Butt said that for a lot of years they have spent money on equipment and the equipment was not used; he is concerned with the equipment being obsolete. They should do an inventory, know what is there, know the capabilities, and then determine if they need to have someone in. He mentioned that 4-5 members have been added to the Cable Committee. Mrs. Kurk said that this year there has been nothing on cable because the bulletin board is not running. No one has been able to do anything because they don't have the knowledge or any consistent knowledge. Mrs. Kurk thinks that the people on the Cable Committee have tried to do what they can do. She told the Board that if they aren't going to do anything with the cable channel she would like it re-assessed and have the 3% franchise fee removed. Mrs. Kurk read their article, which requests having 33% of the franchise fee deposited into a revolving fund and be allowed to accumulate from year to year and not be a part of the town's general fund. The article also refers to RSA 35-1-H, which governs the cable channel. Mrs. Kurk said that a lot of the wording came from the article that Goffstown will be putting on their warrant.

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Selectman Lawton asked if there is a description of what the person would be doing. Mr. Flanders said that there are disks that come in the mail to play on the station and they want to put those disks on the hard drive. This person would come in to ensure that the cable channel is up and running, keep the messages on the message board, and also help provide programs of interest to the town. Mrs. Kurk said that there are no vehicles for communication in town and this is one that has 2,500 subscribers. Mrs. Kurk said that in speaking with Comcast, \$24,000 is a reasonable place to start. Chairman Clow explained that this is public comment and the Board will take in the information and discuss it as a Board. If the Board does not decide to put the article on the warrant, a petition article is an option.

Frank Campana said that he read the article regarding the new Highway Garage in the Messenger. He asked the Board if the article was accurate. Town Administrator Bolton noted that if anyone was quoted it was from the minutes. Mr. Campana said that it was discussed that if the building was approved, and a number locked in, everything will be adjusted to what the voters approved. Chairman Clow said that whatever the voters approve is the maximum of what can be spent. Mr. Campana said that the article made mention of the Board discussing money being available in the operating budget for engineering costs and that there was a potential for \$182,000 remaining in the 2012 budget. Chairman Clow responded that currently there is approximately \$90,000 remaining. Chairman Clow said that they did approve up to \$10,000 for engineering costs, but believes that Mr. Redmond said the cost would be closer to \$5,000.

Mr. Campana said that he reviewed the MRI Report in regards to the Police Department. He said that the conclusion noted that the Police Chief should also give serious consideration to staffing patrol shifts on a different schedule than what is done now since the work schedule seems to be dictated according to the contract and the department management should be recognizing the trends contributing to overtime costs. Mr. Campana said that it is apparent from the discussions with the chief that he thinks his hands are tied due to wording in the collective bargaining agreement. He asked if there was any negotiation given to the items he pointed out about the chief's hands being tied. Mr. Campana hopes that the Finance Committee will ask the same question before giving their approval of the contract and serious consideration overall to the report. Chairman Clow said that as part of their negotiations they agreed there would be a committee set up by a certain date, which would include members of the Police Department and administration. They would meet jointly and come up with three different recommendations for various schedules and there could be an agreement on the changes or they become part of the next year's contract. Chairman Clow said he looks at it as a positive move. Mr. Campana feels it is a positive move as well, but said that if the chief's hands are tied, then the taxpayer's hands are tied.

Mr. Campana said that he does not know if the Board will have an article in regards to the police chief's position being elected as opposed to appointed. He asked if an appointed police chief is less or more tied to the suggestions in the report as opposed to an elected police chief. Chairman Clow responded that he does not know.

2013 BUDGET DISCUSSION – Vice Chairman Butt commented on the Assessing Department, which is one of the departments outside of the large three that had a significant hit. There is a difference between the 2013 default and the 2012 actual budget of \$50,000 and the reason for that is a contract line item for Avitar. The department did take a big hit because they entered into a five year contract with Avitar, which is spread out equally for five years so that there is no bulge for the re-assessment year.

The Police Department line 113 increased \$19,000 over the prior year. The budget was figured on current staffing, officers did not get an increase last year, and any increase this year is in the collective bargaining agreement. There is a \$32,000 charge in the default budget of line 190 that is for a potential retirement. Line item 291 for the NH State Retirement increased \$20,000 based on the projection of overtime hours next year and as a result of the town's increase for the retirement system. Ms. Connor said that the town's portion will increase from 19.95% to 25.3% in July. There is a \$63,000 increase in the Police Department default budget, half of which is \$32,000 for the retirement.

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The Highway Department wages increased by \$55,000; \$316,000 last year and \$371,000 this year. Ms. Connor said that she does not know how that line got calculated last year and said that there must have been someone missing last year. Town Administrator Bolton said that she thought was that there was a vacant spot from last years crew from this year's crew that did not get calculated. Ms. Connor notes the contractual issue for bonus days earned. Their contract states that the bonus days will be paid out to them for a total of \$7,100. Ms. Connor said that she was not always the one to do the calculating; she will revisit the wages with Mr. Redmond. In July the town's contribution for the NH Statement Retirement will increase from 8.8% to 10.77% for this group.

Vice Chairman Butt said that there are three areas where there are significant increases over 2012 and they need to be able to explain the differences. He said there is a \$55,000 increase in the police budget and \$35,000 increase in the highway budget. He would like a deeper review of the calculations. It was mentioned that the only thing not calculated into the retirement system is health insurance buyouts. In the police department budget details are not calculated into retirement. Vice Chairman Butt said that the MRI Report indicates that details are contributors to the increase in NH Retirement, but it is not. Nothing for detail is in the budget, they are paid for by the vendor who hires the officer, put into the revolving fund, and paid for out of there.

Police Department Budget – Vice Chairman Butt noted that there is a \$70,000 difference between what was spent last year and in default this year. Ms. Connor will review the discrepancy. Chief Begin said that they have not been spending salaries for the vacancies, but have been paying overtime to cover the shifts. There is a Sgt. position open and it was carried in the budget, but not expended. Ms. Connor said that when this was put together it was done so with the Sgt. position wage, but it could be at the salary of a new recruit. Chief Begin is budgeting for ten full time officers, one lieutenant, two sergeants, and seven patrolmen. When the budget was put together they figured for three sergeants. It was discussed that they can reduce line 113 by \$45,000. If the collective bargaining gets approved by the voters it will change the operating budget, which needs to be referenced in the article.

Chief Begin told the Board that he has one officer currently in the academy and a vacant position. He said it is a challenge to keep the overtime down and fill those 80 hours. Vice Chairman Butt mentioned policies and procedures and a policy being put in place that will change it. Selectman Lacasse asked how many hours of overtime for the year does \$120,000 get them. Chief Begin said that right now they are down two officers due to one vacancy and one being in the academy. There is one vacancy in part time and one vacancy in full time. Chief Begin told the Board that there are not a lot of people who will work for \$15.00 an hour part-time.

Chief Begin said that it is in the contract that if there is a full time officer out the shift shall be covered by a full time officer for 8 hours for that time and the wording does not give him any wiggle room. Chairman Clow said that they need to look at how it relates to holidays. In the Police Department they have to have people on patrol at holiday pay, plus time and half overtime. Chief Begin said that they are covering the Sgt. Shift with the part-timer, who works 32 hours per week. If the part-timer is scheduled for a shift and a full time officer is out, they don't have to staff it. MRI report says that they do not have enough officers to cover all the shifts. Vice Chairman Butt asked the chief if they were to hire an officer or two would he be able to reduce the overtime by half or more. Chief Begin's response was yes. By contract, they agreed to cover 8 hour shifts, not 12. 1,500 hours that is overtime is just to cover holidays and sick time.

There is \$32,199 in the budget for a planned retirement. Vice Chairman Butt said that the canine program contributed 237 hours of overtime at \$39.17 per hour in 2012 and he asked if that was taken out of the budget. Ms. Connor said that it was only calculated for regular 40 hour weeks. Vice Chairman Butt would like to see the overtime brought down to \$100,000, due to putting things in place that they think will have a positive effect on budgeting. It was mentioned that the largest contributor to overtime are late calls and investigations. There were 107 hours that they could have covered, but they covered 9.5. Chairman Clow thinks that the elimination of the canine program will help to reduce the budget. If they lower the overtime budget to \$100,000 and more than half is for vacation and holiday pay, it leaves \$50,000 for overtime for the year.

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Selectman Lacasse said that there is a delta of 65 hours per week. Chief Begin said that he works 65 hours per week and gets paid 40 hours per week, with no wage increase, and he is taking it personal. He said that he will stop covering calls everyday and work 40 hours per week and overtime will be bumped up. Chairman Clow said that anything related to shifts will need to be re-negotiated and nearly half of the \$100,000 is gone before they start with the schedules. Chief Begin said that they are starting two men down, 80 hours, until at least April.

They are currently covering 24 hours a week for an officer. There are a number of hours that are float time and the report is saying that they need to account for holiday, sick, and vacation. Chief Begin said that the report is the report, but it does not take into account all the other things contributing to overtime. He respects the report, but it is not all inclusive.

Chief Begin asked the Board to leave the overtime at \$120,000 this year and they will work diligently to try and keep it under six figures, but he does not know what will happen.

Vice Chairman Butt is concerned with some things put in place either through collective bargaining, budget, or policies and procedures. He does not know how they can go into the budget year without putting something in the overtime budget and thinks it is a good starting point to start out with \$120,000. Chief Begin said that they are starting out down 80 hours per week and it is not the time to cut. Chief Begin said that he actually budgeted \$140,000, which was reduced to \$120,000. Vice Chairman Butt recommends that they reduce the police overtime line 140 from \$120,000 to \$100,000 in the default and the proposed budget.

Vice Chairman Butt said that they have to put the collective bargaining agreement before the voters. He said that the Police Department will be treated like all other departments.

Chief Begin said that the proposed and default budgets are very close to 2012 budgets.

Selectman Lawton thinks that \$20,000 is a steep cut. Chairman Clow asked if they can compromise on a \$10,000 cut, which was the amount of the canine program.

Vice Chairman Butt moved, Selectman Lacasse seconded to reduce the Police Department overtime budget by \$10,000 in both the default and the proposed budget. Passed 5-0-0

Fire Department Budget – Chief Vezina pointed out that Medicare and FICA should be reduced in lines 225 and 226. He has already met with the Finance Committee. Vice Chairman Butt said that earlier this year the Board of Fire Wards came in to discuss issues and one issue was that there is no money to purchase equipment because the ambulance billing fee are now paying for the per diem. He said that one solution that was discussed was to put the EMTs salary into the budget and ambulance billing fees into the fund for equipment purchases. They would have to go back to the voters to see if they would be willing to change the funding source of per diem.

Chief Vezina told the Board that when he put the budget together it was to address the needs of the department. He thinks that capital improvement is very important to the Fire Department and the expense of the per diem should be in the operating budget and ambulance billing fees should go towards capital purchases. The Fire Department has many needs and if they have to postpone the change of the per diem funding, he is willing to wait. Chief Vezina said that the per diem program works great and should continue to be funded. Chief Vezina said that they provide 24/7 coverage, which is considerably less expensive then a lot of area communities. He thinks that the program they have works, but has created some inequities within the department, which they are trying to fix. Chief Vezina said that they can't ask someone to take 500 hours worth of training and then offer them \$8 an hour. They have a dozen or so less people than at the start of last year. Chief Vezina demands that the on-call people need to participate. He does not think that the wage scale changes that he is seeking are unreasonable. He is trying to protect their coverage on nights and weekends. Chief Vezina said that the day shift gets paid 10 hours whether they have a call or not and the night time people will only receive the pay increase if they are actually called out. Chief Vezina would like to be able to offer volunteers \$20 to be available. Selectman Lawton thinks that this should be a separate warrant article, because the department has been

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traditionally been volunteer and it won't be that again. It was discussed that there would be a percentage increase on each employee and their pay will be based on whether they have fire/EMS or just fire or just EMS. People are at varied levels in the pay scale. The employees only get the check when they go out on a call. Chief Vezina said that to fix the wage scale it was relatively a low cost; the larger portion of the increase comes from adding the standby compensation. The cost for standby nights is \$22,900 and the cost for standby weekend days is \$22,823.

There is one rate of pay based on what an individual possesses for skills such as a certified firefighter, EMT basic, EMT intermediate, or EMT Paramedic. Someone who is just an EMT will receive a lower rate of pay. Having medical skills is more highly valued. Chief Vezina is proposing a \$20 per person incentive to be on standby and each member is assigned to a group. There are three groups, so every third night a certain group is responsible for providing coverage on those nights and every six nights an individual would be on-call. There would be four people on standby each night, two of which would be a minimum EMS.

Selectman Lacasse moved, Selectman Leary seconded to make line 150 \$73,000 to cover the wage adjustments in the proposed budget and do the standby compensation as a separate warrant article.

\$110,520 covers the wage adjustment and standby pay. Usually a new expense in the operating budget is a separate warrant article. \$37,520 would be on the warrant as a separate article to provide some form of standby pay for fire and EMS coverage and once approved it would be incorporated into the operating budget.

Passed 5-0-0

Town Administrator Bolton will work with Chief Vezina to create the final warrant article.

There was discussion regarding the purchase of a Lucas Device for \$6,500 and two medical pumps for \$5,000 being in the operating budget because they are a one time expense. Ms. Connor said that they will have to appropriate the entire cost and then show the amount being offset.

The hose testing is done in-house at a much more cost effective rate to the town. Chief Vezina said that there is a value of doing the hose testing in-house to free up money to use for other needs in the department. Employees are paid to do the testing at a lower rate than a contractor. Chief Vezina would like to keep the money in the Fire Department budget to utilize it for other needs. Vice Chairman Butt would be against using the money for a different purpose. Chief Vezina does not know the amount spent on wages to test the hoses, but noted that to test the hoses is very labor intensive.

Selectman Lacasse moved, Selectman Leary seconded to change line 750 in the Fire Department budget to \$7,000 in the proposed and default. Passed 5-0-0

Highway Department Budget – Vice Chairman Butt questioned the \$7,500 of bonus pay in wages and said that \$316,000 is budgeted, but there is a \$55,000 difference. The bonus pay is in the personnel policy, not in the collective bargaining agreement. Mr. Redmond noted that the winter was mild last year and the number of gallons needs to be increased for 2013.

line 635 – The Board decided to increase the fuel in the Highway Department to \$108,595.

line 770 – overspent the line by approximately \$5,000; \$33,000 was for the dump body.

Hourly wage line – Ms. Connor will review to determine if there is a discrepancy; \$62,230 for proposed and default unless an error is found.

line 593 – co-mingle was reduced by \$3,700 for a total of \$5,775 for 2013

line 190 – A retirement was carried over into 2013 to cover accruals.

Highway wages – Mr. Redmond said that they did not fill a \$14.00/hr position, but he will make a recommendation to the Board soon to fill the position. There are four bonus days in the contract that they are to be paid in April.

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Sewer – Increased pumping based on gallon and tonnage.

Animal Control; line 150 – Selectman Lawton recommended reducing the Animal Control wage line to \$9,000.
Computer Software IT Code Enforcement; line 617 – It would cost \$2,500 to purchase Web QA software and \$250 monthly for a total of \$5,500 for the first year. Avitar Associations also has a building permit system at a cost of \$4,000 for the first year total, which includes converting all the data and each year after would cost \$1,800 for support.

Vice Chairman Butt moved, Chairman Clow seconded to include \$4,000 for the IT software in the Building Department and include it in default budget. Passed 5-0-0

Economic Development – Reduced to \$750

2013 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT ARTICLES – Vice Chairman Butt presented a plan submitted from Mr. Redmond for a Capital Equipment Program to be funded from revenues in a revolving fund. The plan is based on recycling and the hope is that recycling would increase if it was going to benefit the Transfer Station. This is an option that the Board may or may not approve.

MANIFESTS

Chairman Clow moved, Selectman Leary seconded to authorize the Board of Selectmen to sign manifests and order the Treasurer to sign checks dated January 10, 2013. Passed 5-0-0

Accounts Payable	\$351,828.41	(John Stark \$250,000)
Gross Payrolls	<u>\$44,245.77</u>	(Includes taxes, credit union, police detail)
TOTAL	\$396,074.18	

Also, to order the Treasurer to sign payroll checks dated January 17, 2013, that will include payment for weekly wages and matching taxes. Actual amounts paid and reports backing up the numbers will be disclosed at the next scheduled Board meeting.

MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Clow moved, Selectman Lawton seconded to approve the minutes of December 17, 2012 as amended. Passed 5-0-0

Chairman Clow moved, Selectman Lawton seconded to approve the minutes of January 2, 2013 as amended. Passed 5-0-0

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Traffic Control Ordinance Discussion – Will be put on a future agenda after budget hearings and Deliberative Session

Town Hall Doors – Selectman Lacasse is reviewing the report

Emergency Management Director – Fire Chief Vezina has expressed an interest

Cemetery Lawn Care Contract – The contractor was notified by certified mail that contract came to an end

Mildred Hall Advisory Committee – A meeting will be scheduled for a future agenda

Chase Park Wetlands Application – DES has been complete application and has 60 days to review

Fire Department/Town Office Computers – The computers have been ordered and should be delivered by the end of the week and installed the following week. It was discussed that there are three computers being kept for backup. Chairman Clow mentioned that an inventory of all equipment with serial numbers should be done. Town Administrator Bolton will pursue where the other three computers are located.

John Stark Scenic Byway – George Malette is no longer involved and SNHPC would like a Weare representative appointed.

Department Head/Staff Meeting – Scheduled for January 16th at 9:00 am

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Thursday January 10th – Four staff members have been registered to attend a half day customer service class with Primex.

Monday, January 14th 7:00 p.m. is the public hearing for the 2013 proposed operating budget as well as bond hearings for the DPW garage and the bridge bond.

Deliberative Session – Saturday, Feb 2nd at 9:00 am at Weare Middle School

The Board signed the contract for Avitar Software for \$4,000.

Chairman Clow questions if they are prepared to hold hearings for the bridge bond and the DPW garage.

Ms. Snyder told the Board that she received prices for \$675,000 for the bond for the bridge. She said that originally the town bonded for \$1 million, which included this project and once the project is done on Peaselee Hill it will be all used up. Ms. Snyder said that there is \$121,000 of the town's portion left. \$806,000 will be coming back from the State of NH, with \$516,000 coming up front. They can borrow as they go along. Ms. Snyder will prepare the wording for the warrant article. The other bridge would be \$59,000 from the town. A total of \$938,000 would cover both projects. There will be one warrant for the Peaselee Hill Bridge and then another warrant article to include the other bridge.

The Board will meet at 6:00 pm next Monday before the public hearing to discuss the highway garage.

Selectman Lacasse moved, Selectman Leary seconded to adjourn at 11:56 p.m. Passed 5-0-0

ADJOURNMENT

A True Record.

Cherry Palmisano, Recording Secretary