

Board of Selectmen's meeting
February 24, 2014

Present: First Selectman Gayle Weinstein; Selectman David Muller; Town Administrator Tom Landry; Administrative Assistant Judy DeVito; Finance Director Rick Darling; Department heads; residents and members of the press.

Mr. Tracey joined the meeting by telephone

This meeting was recorded and videotaped. The tapes are available in the Selectmen's office. The meetings are available for viewing online via the Town's website.

Discussion/decision regarding the Board of Selectmen's review and transmittal of the Board of Education's budget to the Board of Finance. After much discussion Mr. Muller said that there were two areas that he would like to make a slight change. Reduce the stipend number to the contractual increase and eliminate contingent positions with the understanding that when they are needed we are happy and amenable to looking at them and approving them based on the educational requirements.

Ms. Weinstein proposed that they take out unallocated SPED funds of \$170,000, contingency teacher \$70,000, above contractual increase for current stipends \$14,000, dues and fees \$6,000, Drug and Alcohol programs of \$20,000 which adds up to \$280,000. She would like to take out one of the Middle School Teachers and that would bring the number to \$350,000. Mr. Muller said that he agreed with all of it except for the Middle School Teacher. Mr. Tracey agreed with Mr. Muller and they agreed to decrease the budget by \$280,000.

Mr. Muller moved to approve a Board of Education Operating Budget in the amount of \$47,214,856. Mr. Tracey seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/decision regarding the Board of Selectmen's review and transmittal of the First Selectmen's budget to the Board of Finance. Mr. Landry went through some changes to the budget that was submitted to the Board of Selectmen. The budget request tonight is about 3.018% increase.

Ms. Weinstein said she got a request form the Commission on Aging today to increase their budget. Mr. Muller asked what they were thinking about in terms of hours for the Senior Center. Wendy Petty said there is a need to be open full time and 9 to 3pm would be great but they haven't thought through what would be the best number of hours.

Ms. Weinstein said that she and Dr. Palmer have not sat down and figured out what space is going to be available or the time frame. She would like to hold off the discussion and vote the budget as it is. She would work with Wendy and Pam until Board of Finance votes on it and then bring that number back to the Board of Selectmen so that the Selectmen know what's going.

Mr. Muller moved to approve a Town Operating Budget for FY2014-2015 in the amount of \$12,067,068. Mr. Tracey seconded and the motion passed unanimously

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Mr. Muller moved to approve the Debt Service Budget in the amount of \$6,487,869. Mr. Tracey seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Weinstein said that she has an issue with the sound system at the High School. She feels that if the group is going to be putting in lights they should be responsible for the sound system. The neighbors are concerned with sound from the sound system as well as cheers, whistles etc. Mr. Tracy felt we had no choice but to support the sound system. Mr. Muller felt it was important to alleviate neighbors' concerns.

Dr. Palmer said they got an estimate from someone in Town who gave them a quote of approximately 40% lower than they would be able to find competitively. They are looking at approximately \$25,000. After some discussion Ms. Weinstein said she would like them to follow Town policy and bid it out and she would like Dr Palmer to ask the lights committee if they were willing to share the cost.

Mr. Muller moved to approve a Capital Budget in the amount of \$1,261,745. Mr. Tracey seconded and the motion passed unanimously

Discussion/decision regarding proposal from Weston Little League to install lights on Bisceglie field #1. Weston Little League did a power point presentation that is attached to the minutes. They asked the Board of Selectmen for approval to upgrade the Bisceglie Scribner field #1 with a small scorekeeper's shed and field light.

Seve Esposito said when AJ Cina passed last year his father asked that any sympathies be shown with donations to Weston Little League in AJ's name. The generosity of the community has put Weston Little League in a position to have this opportunity. There will be no cost to the Weston taxpayers now or in the future including maintenance and upkeep. A memorandum of understanding will outline the terms and agreement with the Board of Selectmen.

The Board would need to ask the Planning and Zoning Commission for an 8-24 referral, file a Conservation application for a permit and accept the project as a gift. Board of Finance would also need to accept the gift.

Mr. Muller moved to authorize the First Selectman to refer an 8-24 report application to P&Z and submit an application to Conservation Commission if necessary. Mr. Tracey seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/decision regarding disbursing funds from the vehicle sinking fund in the amount of \$82,576 for the purchase and build of two 2014 Ford Police Interceptor Utility Vehicles. Ms. Weinstein asked how many patrol vehicles they actually need. Sgt. Ferullo said in a typical day, there are two patrolmen and when a sergeant has to fill in for third man they sometimes use a patrol car. If there is Road jobs that's another vehicle and another vehicle for mile of safety. The vehicles they are asking for are four wheel drive vehicles because they are looking to phase out the two wheel drive vehicles. Chief

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Troxell said they are going to phase out the two higher mileage cars so there will not be an increase in the number of vehicles they have.

Ms. Weinstein asked if some of the equipment in the cars that is being phased out could be used on the new vehicles. Sgt. Daubert said most often the light bars are transferable but in the Crown Victoria to the new vehicles they are not.

There was discussion about taking the funds from the vehicle fund. It was decided that since they were unsure of the balance in that fund that that Board of Finance would make the decision as to where the funds would come from.

Mr. Muller moved to approve \$82,576 from vehicle sinking fund for the purchase and build of two 2014 Ford Police Interceptor Utility Vehicles. Mr. Tracey seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion/Decision concerning adopting an ordinance change with regard to changing our regional structure from an RPA to a COG- Mr. Tracey asked if he could get a copy of the bylaws as proposed. Ms. Weinstein said they hadn't changed since she had given them to him. One of the concerns that they are hearing from Housatonic is that they had proposed an executive committee and they are questioning the need for one. There has not been a new draft of the bylaws because they are waiting for Housatonic to get back to them with potential changes.

Mr. Tracey said he had talked through a couple of concerns with Pat Sullivan regarding the ordinance and they agreed that the language that they have in front of them is appropriate.

Mr. Muller moved to adopt a change in Weston Code Chapter 167 Regional Council of Governments, an ordinance changing our regional structure from an RPA to a COG. Mr. Tracey seconded. Mr. Tracey asked how many other members of our RPA have approved ordinances. Ms. Weinstein said Westport did. New Canaan, Darien and Greenwich are all starting their process and are hoping for approvals in March. The motion passed unanimously.

Request for property tax refunds:

Ross & Lauren Abrams	\$288.40
Jorge Bermudez	\$270.00
Charles T. Bartholomae	\$36.20
George E. & Marianne G. Vochis	\$27.00
USB Leasing LT	<u>\$666.58</u>
Total	\$1,288.18

Mr. Muller moved to approve property tax refunds in the amount of \$1,288.18 as listed on the February 24, 2014 Board of Selectmen's agenda. Mr. Tracey seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Open Items

Updates

First Selectman updates- Ms. Weinstein said they met with CL&P this week and they will continue with their enhanced tree trimming program this summer. They did provide a route to her and she will be able to provide it to people who are interested.

We received another grant for Lachat for \$17,500. There is another grant for irrigation and fencing up to 20,000 that Tom has already applied for.

There were a lot of questions about the Solar Panel project. Ms. Weinstein said she spoke to CL&P because the paper had said that the Town of Weston lost a grant and that was not the case. A third party had applied through the ZERC program which is a 15 year contract to purchase renewable energy from CL&P. We can put in a bid for the next grant if we choose on that site. She wants to make it clear that it's not that we lost a grant, but we are losing a potential differential in the cost of energy that we would have paid.

Mr. Tracey asked about solar panels at the Transfer Station. Ms. Weinstein said that the Building Committee is very interested in studying this. Noel Lafayette said as a developer the deal that has been put together is one of the top three if not the best solar deal in the State. He knows everything you want to know about the roof. His concern is that someone on the Building Committee just assumed he's a two year old company, he doesn't have the money to do this so the answer is no. You have had a lot of rotating bodies moving in and out of these meetings so things started getting misconstrued along the way. The objections are not matching the facts.

Mr. Lafayette requested a public hearing. Ms. Weinstein said before a project gets to the level of a public hearing, we have to go through the standard Town process. Before we put out the request for proposals she would need Building Committee to vet it. The Building Committee has brought serious concerns to her about the roof load amongst other things and she cannot bring a proposal forward. Secondly, according to Town Policy it has to be bid out. None of that information came to her or through her so we are now trying to figure out how we clean this up and move forward. Mr. Muller said that it sounds like we have skipped the step where the Board of Selectmen makes a determination that this is a project worth pursuing. Ms. Weinstein said that we have not been involved in the process at all but she believes the building committee was asked by the school to review it.

Dr. Palmer said that they have been working with an attorney who is a specialist in the area of solar energy who has been advising the Board of Education. It has never been their intent to work in isolation and some of

the interpretations from the attorneys are different. The district worked in very good faith with very good counsel. They kept the First Selectman apprized, the chair of the Board of Finance apprized, they brought in the Town Building Committee along the way. It goes back to the question of who owns the process and they are in the process of clarifying. She didn't want to sit and say that they shirked that responsibility and they didn't seek information and didn't reach out to the Town. This was not done in secrecy.

Noel said when he first sat down with Dr. Keating he asked if this had to go to RFP and she said no. He would not have invested \$47,000, over a dozen meetings, 12 to 14 months of time, all of his subcontractors, CL&P, and everything else if he had known. If they want to cancel it that's fine but he is not going to eat \$47,000 worth of expenses. What he really wants is the project to get built. Ms. Weinstein said we have to sort out our internal processes first.

Any other business to come properly before the meeting. None

Discussion/approval of the Board of Selectmen's meeting minutes of February 6, 2014, the Special Board of Selectmen's of February 11, 2014 and Executive Session minutes of February 12, 2014- Mr. Muller moved to approve the minutes of the February 6, 2014, Board of Selectmen's Meeting, the Special Board of Selectmen's meeting of February 11, 2014 and Executive Session minutes of February 12, 2014. Mr. Tracey seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

At 10:44pm Mr. Muller moved to enter into Executive Session. Mr. Tracery seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session- Discussion regarding raises for non-union employees

ATTENDANCE: The meeting was convened at 10:45 pm in the First Selectman's Office by Chairman Weinstein, with Selectmen Tracey and Muller present. Also attending was Town Administrator Landry.

DISCUSSION: The Board discussed the status of labor negotiations and its continuing strategy in those discussions.

ADJOURN EXECUTIVE SESSION: At 10:54 pm, a motion (David Muller, Dennis Tracey second) to adjourn executive session and resume in open session passed unanimously.

Discussion/decision regarding raises for non-union employees

SALARY INCREASE: A motion (David Muller, Dennis Tracey second) to approve a salary increase of 1.75% for non represented employees retroactive to the commencement of the first complete pay period in the fiscal year (July 7) passed by unanimous vote.

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ADJOURN: At 10:57 pm a motion to adjourn the meeting (Dennis Tracey motion, David Muller second) passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted

Judy M. DeVito
Administrative Assistant
Approved 3/20/14