

Bethlehem Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
Bethlehem Selectmen Office
December 7, 2015

Present: Chairman Culver, Selectman Staples, Selectman Glavac, Selectman Blanchard.

Chairman Culver opened the meeting at 6:03pm.

The Board reviewed the budget.

Mary Jackson said the Town Clerk budget will be tight but will be ok. She said the increases are because of there being 4 elections. Mrs. Jackson said she may need to increase the moderator line or will add a deputy moderator line.

Brett Jackson came before the Board to discuss the Highway budget. He said it is up \$15,113.00 but he absorbed some of the increase in salary by decreases in other areas. He said the 5 year average for his budget is more than his proposed budget. Selectman Glavac said he has put in for a raise once in 4 years and said he would like to add 3% to the Road Agent's salary. Selectman Blanchard agrees with the 3% but would like to have a set % on all increases for Dept. Head's on a regular basis. Mr. Jackson said he is submitting a Warrant Article request for \$60,000.00 for a new truck. He has \$9125.00 in Capital Reserve now and needs to start adding to that. He said he would like to use the highway block grant towards highway purchases and uses.

The Board set the date for the Budget Hearing for January 19th.

Chief Ho-Sing-Loy came before the Board to review the police budget. There was discussion on whether to add health and dental amounts in for 4 months for a deployed officer and it was decided to add that amount in. He discussed with the Board how he needs to update his server and how it will store 90 days worth of videos. He said he will be requesting \$20,000.00 by warrant article for the police cruiser capital reserve fund. The balance in this capital reserve fund is \$2000.76. Chief Ho-Sing-Loy said he would need to get a new cruiser at the end of next year. Selectman Glavac asked if it doesn't get voted in what will happen. Chief Ho-Sing-Loy said he will run them until they die. He said the costs would increase because of the increased maintenance on the older cruisers. He also said the Impala is used for officers to travel to trainings, court, and used for stationary details. He said it is not outfitted for patrolling. Chief Ho-Sing-Loy said they put 40,000 miles per year on a cruiser and 4 cruisers are what he would like to have. The Board discussed the option of leasing a cruiser instead of buying it. The Chief will get some numbers on that.

Rhienna Miscio came before the Board to review the Rec budgets. The Board discussed how there is a surplus of approx. \$60,000.00 in her revolving fund. She said she would like to buy a

shuttle in the future with that money. There was discussion about using that money now instead of having a surplus. The Board said they would like to see salaries moved to the revolving fund. It was noted the summer salaries are approx. \$17,000.00 and could possibly be moved to the revolving fund. Selectman Glavac told Mrs. Miscio to focus on revenues. Mrs. Miscio said it is hard to predict. Frank Claffey suggested moving current year expenses to the revolving fund up to current year revenues. Chairman Culver moved to move expense for tennis court updates/maint. to the Rec Revolving Fund. Selectman Glavac seconded. Carried 4-0. Mrs. Miscio will look for more expenses to move over to the revolving fund.

Chief Anderson came before the Board to discuss the Fire and Ambulance budgets. He said he made some changes since last coming in with his budget. He increased salaries and two truck lines. In the Ambulance budget he added more to salaries and billing services. It was noted that the ambulance revenues for this year so far are \$51,300.00. Chief Anderson told the Board he would like to purchase a printer (\$350.00), about \$200.00 in misc. supplies, pager for \$49.50, and \$90.00 boots out of this year's budget. The Board told him he could make those purchases. He reviewed some expenses out of this year's ambulance budget with the Board.

The Board stated the concern with this year's budget is not as much of a concern anymore. They said the fuel will be moved to an asset account, the repairs to the furnace will not be charged to the Town and the legal expense for November was less than anticipated.

Mr. Anderson said he will need to either buy a new ambulance or refurbish the existing one so he will be requesting either \$30,000 or \$35,000 for a Warrant Article. He said he will be requesting \$5,000.00 for the Special Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. He said it would cost approximately \$155,000.00 for a new ambulance and that he was going with gas instead of diesel. He said he got a price for a refurbished one from Autotronics in Maine for \$98,863.00. He said he would like to add a safety net, back-up camera and a power stretcher. He said there is money in the BES fund that could help with the expense.

The Board discussed doing a mailing this year to explain the Warrant Articles and have the Department Head's write their explanation.

Doug Harman, Len Grubs, Laura Clerkin, and Joyce Tucker came before the Board to discuss the Library budget. It was stated that the expense for snow removal increased by \$2,500.00. Selectman Glavac asked if they would be increasing the hours open to the public because of the increase in the budget amount. Mr. Harmon said they are always busy and need the extra hours when the library is closed for the staff to do their work. Mr. Harmon said they under budgeted for this year. Selectman Staples asked if they would continue to ask for more each year. Mr. Harmon said there are no projected big increases going forward. Chairman Culver said there have been big increases over the years. Selectman Glavac asked if they could open ½ hour longer each day because it would be an easier sell to the people if they were getting something for the increase. Mr. Grubs said that is 6 hours a week for 2 people. Mr. Harmon said the public are happy with the hours that they are open. There was discussion about the school using the library. Mrs. Clerkin said there is a 78% patron increase since being in the new

building. Selectman Glavac asked about being open an additional 1 hour a week. Mr. Harmon asked Selectman Glavac if it was a perceived problem (selling the public on not getting additional hours) or a real problem and said the budget should be presented as cost for services provided. Chairman Culver asked what if they just got the increase of \$6000.00 for operations what would happen. Mr. Harmon said they would have to cut hours and citizens of Bethlehem would be upset. Mr. Harmon said the survey they sent to patrons supports the hours they are open. Chairman Culver pointed out that of course the patrons want the hours but not all taxpayers were surveyed. Mrs. Tucker said there are over 2000 Bethlehem patrons. Chairman Culver said Bethlehem has one of the highest tax rates in the state and people won't move into Town with the tax rate so high.

The Board discussed the executive budget and said to add money so they can do a mailing to educate the voters and discussed when the best time would be to send out a mailing. They discussed sending one out in January and having a handout at the library and putting it on the website. Selectman Glavac said he would like to add 3% to the admin assistant salary line.

Frank Claffey asked the Board if he could get a new chair and some ink jet and what budget to take it out of. He was told to get the items and they would be taken out of tax budget.

The Board discussed Department Head raises and said to make Chief Ho-Sing-Loy's, Admin Asst, Rec Director and Road Agent 3%. They decided to leave Chief Anderson's as it was requested because he hasn't received one in 5 years.

Frank Claffey told the Board they shouldn't sign any agreement with the trust management company until the warrant articles pass. The Board agreed with this.

The Board reviewed a quote for shredding and gave the ok to get the shredding done.

The Board reviewed quotes for the Town Report. There was a quote for \$2,925.00 from Harrison Publishing and a quote for \$1,307.00 from RC Brayshaw & Company. Selectman Blanchard moved to accept the lower quote. Selectman Staples seconded. Carried 4-0.

The Board reviewed the encumbrance report. Chairman Culver moved to encumber \$3,300.00 to finish the Master Plan. Selectman Staples seconded. Carried 4-0.

The Board reviewed abatements. Chairman Culver moved to approve the abatement for Map/lot 206/002 025 for \$137.83 due to overpayment. Selectman Blanchard seconded. Carried 4-0.

Chairman Culver moved to approve the abatement for Map/lot 409/025 001 for 2.41 due to overpayment. Selectman Staples seconded. Carried 4-0.

Chairman Culver moved to approve the abatement for Map/lot 409/018 002 for \$47.51 due to overpayment. Selectman Blanchard seconded. Carried 4-0.

Chairman Culver moved to approve the abatement for Map/lot 204/097 for \$12.43 due to overpayment. Selectman Blanchard seconded. Carried 4-0.

The Board reviewed a letter about the cemetery plot hole that was dug and questions about the expense. Brett Jackson will talk with Harold Friedman about it.

The Board reviewed the minutes from 11/23/15. Selectman Blanchard moved to approve the minutes. Selectman Staples seconded. Selectman Glavac said to add that Cheryl Jensen asked about the responsibility of the Country Club losses. Carried 3-0 (Chairman Culver abstained).

The Board discussed holiday hours for the Selectman's office and Chairman Culver moved that they would close at 12:00 on Christmas Eve and at 1:00 on New Year's Eve. Selectman Staples seconded. Carried 4-0.

The Board reviewed the corrected tax warrant. Chairman Culver moved to approve and sign. Selectman Staples seconded. Carried 4-0.

The Board reviewed the legal bill.

At 9:30 Chairman Culver moved to go into non-public session per RSA 91A for matters of personnel. Chairman Culver seconded. Chairman Culver did roll call with all members agreeing to go into non-public session.

The Board discussed personnel. The Board approved vacation requests from Chief Ho-Sing-Loy and April Hibberd.

Selectman Blanchard moved to not invite Darren Perkins back for employment for 2016. Chairman Culver seconded. Carried 4-0 pending approval from Primex.

At 10:00 Chairman Culver moved to come out of non-public session. Selectman Staples seconded. Chairman Culver did roll call with all members agreeing to come out of non-public session.

The Board reviewed extension requests for closing on properties. Chairman Culver moved to approve a 3 week extension for Healy and a two week extension for Gould. Selectman Blanchard seconded. Carried 4-0.

At 10:00 Chairman Culver moved to adjourn. Selectman Blanchard seconded. Carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,
April Hibberd
Administrative Assistant