

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
October 11, 2022
MINUTES**

Call to Order

5:30 – Chairman McGarry called the meeting to order

Present: Fred McGarry, Chairman, Richard Pitman, Vice Chairman, Alden Dill, Cynthia McHugh and Will Huebner, Selectmen.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Chairman McGarry: All right, uh, Chief Duquette. The last meeting, we had the, uh, board members were, uh, concerned about the, uh, accident that had occurred on South Road. I don't know, can you give us any update on the status of the folks that were struck and what... any investigation you've conducted thus far with what to may have caused the accident?

Gary Duquette: The investigation is still ongoing so I'm not going to talk about that. I'll just tell you, it's not over with yet. The lady was probably hurt the worst. She's got several broken bones. The two-year-old has a broken femur. The baby that was in a car seat, fortunately, uninjured. So, yeah, they've got a long road ahead of them.

Chairman McGarry: Board members have any questions, I guess, with regard to that?

Vice Chairman Pitman: No, none.

Chairman McGarry: One question did come with regard to, uh, the, uh, issuance of moving violations, tickets, and whether we got a high percentage of, uh, warnings that go out rather than actual tickets and I'd your, uh, thoughts on that.

Gary Duquette: Yeah, we definitely give a lot more warnings than we do tickets. Um, it's officer discretion. They're out there. There's a lot of traffic enforcement. Speeding is an issue in every town out there, right. There could be somebody speeding on any given road at any given point in time. They're active. They're out there. They're doing it. I know. It's a hundred and ten miles of road and generally one police officer on duty at any given point in time. Depending on scheduling, you know, sometimes there's two but for the most part there's one person out there and, you know, if somebody calls us and says, hey our road is having this issue with speeding we try and do details out there, you know. We can't... I can't have one guy sitting on a road, you know, everybody says South Road is a big issue. I realize that people's perception is their reality but I'm here to tell you, in my opinion, do we have a huge speeding problem in this town, no we do not and I can tell you that because many days my guys will come in off the road and literally say, I can't find a car to stop. I talk to people that drive through here and they'll say that they'll be somebody in front of them and they'll cross the Deerfield town line and they'll slow down to the speed limit. They know that we're out there. We just do not have the luxury of being everywhere we need to be at the right time. Nobody can do that. I think that, and don't get me wrong, horrible accident, I feel for the family, but things do happen, you know. You can't prevent everything from happening. You know, we've logged fifty vehicle accidents this year. That's the lowest we've had since I've been here. I mean fifty accidents in this town with as many roads as we have and, you know, getting close to a year, that's not a lot. It's not a lot. But this was a bad one. It gets people attention when somebody, especially kids, get hurt. I get it. I get it. We sit on South Road all the time but an officer can't spend ten hours sitting out there. You know, I hear people say, well we never see you. Again, a hundred and ten miles of roads. They try to hit them all. For someone to say they never see us, I mean, are you literally sitting in your living room window watching waiting for us to go by. Are you working during the day? Are you working during the night? Takes us two seconds to pass your house, I mean, you know, we are out there and we are responsive and I think to take away, I mean, I allow officer discretion as to whether they write or don't write and I leave that up to them. So, I think it's a strong reaction to a really bad incident which I get. Yes, majority of our, you know, we seek voluntary compliance. Whether you write a ticket or whether you don't write a ticket or you just give a warning it is traffic enforcement however you look at it. The message is being sent.

Chairman McGarry: Questions? Dick.

Vice Chairman Pitman: I think was more of a Will thing, chief. I don't know where he got his facts and figures from but he's kinda taken this and run with it personally instead us as a board.

Chairman McGarry: Will.

Selectman Huebner: Well, it is a Will thing and first of all I want to say, Gary, that I respect the police department of our town. I think you guys are doing a good job and I support the police department whole heartedly. I do, um, know that there was a survey taken a while back that the, uh, the police department put out a survey asking citizens about what they felt were the most important things the town and I believe, correct me if I'm wrong, I believe one of the things if not the most important thing the citizens felt was that speeding in the town was something that needed to be addressed better than it has been. Not necessarily that the police department has a knob to turn it up or down of course but, um, it was a concern, I believe, of most of the citizens and I don't know if you can verify if that's correct or not.

Gary Duquette: I acknowledged right at the beginning of this that speeding is one of the biggest complaints in this town. You'll also find that to be the biggest complaint of any town that you go to.

Selectman Huebner: Okay.

Gary Duquette: To say that we need to address it in a different way or... what is that, you know, mean? You know, what does that mean? Um, we have to have a reason to stop a vehicle to start with. Um, so, do we write more tickets? Do the people think that more tickets is going to fix a speeding problem? And again, I'll say it again, do I think it's a problem in this town. No, I don't. I don't think it's a huge issue. We have sat on the side of the road and offered to let people sit there with us and look at our radar. Everybody sees a car coming, everybody's an expert in visual estimates it seems. Look, folks, I'm telling you they're not and I know what it is. Sixty miles an hour. We sat there with people, and I'll do it with anybody. Sit in the car and watch. Look at the radar unit when they go by. IT's always way off. People look like they are going faster than they are. So, I'm not really sure what it is that you all want us to do. I'm certainly open to suggestion, I mean, that's why I came here tonight. I did watch the meeting that you had last week and there were some comments made. There were some comments made, not by you folks, by somebody else that I don't appreciate a whole lot, that called into question my management of the police department and my ability to do the right thing. That's pretty insulting to me. I've been doing this a long, long time but again, I came here tonight to hear what you guys had to say. You all said you wanted to get me in here so here I am.

Selectman Huebner: Well, again I believe I know that a roughly one and ten... I know there's...

Gary Duquette: That's correct.

Selectman Huebner: I think it goes up and down, I'm sure.

Gary Duquette: It's probably an average somewhere around there.

Selectman Huebner: One in ten is ticketed.

Gary Duquette: Yep.

Selectman Huebner: And I personally do believe that, uh, a greater amount of ticketing... more people getting tickets would help people, some people, to curb their behavior and to slow down on our roads. Many of the citizens have a perception, you're saying it's an incorrect perception, but many of our citizens do have a perception that there is a lot of speeding on our roads especially during commuting times and people from out of town perhaps, I'm not sure but you're suggesting, I think, that there's no need to change anything in the department.

Gary Duquette: I'm not suggesting anything. What I'm telling you is that we are doing traffic enforcement. That's what I'm telling you. That's... can we do more traffic...? You're not asking us to do more traffic enforcement. I don't believe that. I don't think that's what I'm hearing here because my guys are out there. They are out there and they are doing what they're supposed to be doing. What I think I'm hearing is that you want us to write more tickets. That's what I think I'm kind of hearing here but I'm not really hearing that directly.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Maybe form one individual.

Selectman Huebner: Yeah, and the other members speak as well but I think for me I'll say, yeah, I think, I think we should write more tickets in order to give people more of a perception that the police are serious about the speeding... not that you're not serious, but I think to make it hurt a little more so people respect it more. I think that would help. Others...?

Chairman McGarry: Alden.

Selectman Dill: I don't think I said anything last week so I'm kind of walking into this a bit at a loss but I just wanted to ask, when you do a focused enforcement... I know there's been other times when the selectman said, hey this one road is bad... how often do you write the people... do you pull over the people that live on that road versus people that don't live on that road... is one of the other questions?

Gary Duquette: It's always the people that live on the road. Always. And again...

Selectman Dill: That's from what I remember.

Gary Duquette: Look, I get it. And I never mind, you know. We get called all the time, hey this road, that road and we sent people up there. Inevitably you end up stopping the people that live on that road and they get kind of mad and they say well, we didn't mean us. I mean, it's, you know, we're kind of darned if we do and darned if we don't. That's the problem with this business which I get and I'm fine with that, um, but it is. It's the people that live on the road that are the ones that are speeding because there are a lot of back roads.

Chairman McGarry: Will.

Selectman Huebner: So, are we suggesting that the people who live on the road should not get tickets when they speed?

Gary Duquette: I'm suggesting anything about not ticketing or ticketing.

Selectman Huebner: If they live on the road and they're speeding shouldn't they get a ticket?

Gary Duquette: Again, that's officer discretion.

Chairman McGarry: Any other board members have any comments?

Selectman Dill: Epsom just dropped everything to twenty-five and I don't think that's a great idea either, um, cause quite frankly it's impossible to do twenty-five on some roads. I know Nottingham did the same thing. Um, again, I'm not in favor of it but if it was something that you want to do, we can discuss it.

Gary Duquette: I mean, I don't think it's the speed limits. I mean, I, you know, you can do this any way you want you're still gonna have speeding on any given road at any given time whether you write tickets or you write warnings. Um, that's what I think. Again, I'll do whatever the board wants me to do but you just... I'm not hearing it but I'm listening.

Chairman McGarry: Any other comments or questions? Cindy.

Selectwoman McHugh: Is there any... is there more court costs for writing tickets? I mean, if you're gonna write tickets now, we get more court costs?

Gary Duquette: I mean, no. I mean, I don't think a lot of people fight speeding tickets. It's radar. If they get you radar it's kind of a done deal. There's not a lot of people that fight speeding tickets so the court cost is not an issue at all. Not at all.

Chairman McGarry: Any other questions?

(Inaudible speaking from the audience)

Selectman Dill: Speed bumps don't really work because we plow snow.

Chairman McGarry: Dick.

Vice Chairman Pitman: I just think Chief should do his job like he's been doing for the last, what, eight years?

Gary Duquette: Yes.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Runs a great department. We should let him do his job.

Chairman McGarry: Cindy.

Selectwoman McHugh: Do we need more officers?

Gary Duquette: I'll take a couple more any day of the week. Lay it on me. If y'all want to give me more money to hire two more I'll get two and we could have two people on the road maybe.

Selectman Dill: You are full right now, right?

Gary Duquette: No. I'm down one right now.

Selectman Dill: Down one?

Gary Duquette: Yes.

Selectman Dill: Okay.

Chairman McGarry: Will.

Selectman Huebner: Yeah, no, I don't want you to misinterpret my comments, Gary, and I don't think you do but, um, I'm not against the police department. I don't think they're failing in their purpose or their job but it does seem like we're pretty easy on folks when we pull them over, you know, and I personally think that if we were a little more tough it would be a benefit to the town in terms of safety. I see it and feel it myself. I don't think because they're not speeding. I think I can tell when I'm driving and they're piling up behind me. So, I suggest, you know, we're responsible for the... to the town, for the performance of the police department, the safety of the town. So, it's certainly within our prerogative to think about directing the police department to do what we think is the right thing. Most... the consensus seems to be that Gary is doing the right thing and that we should just rely on his expertise to do so. I think that's what I'm hearing, myself. So, I won't, you know, I won't press it any further but, um, I do support what the police department is doing.

Gary Duquette: Well, I, you know, I don't look at look at traffic enforcement as we're being easy or being aggressive. I don't look at it that way. Um, it's traffic enforcement. It's officer discretion. You know, you pull somebody over, first all, what, okay, speeding, how fast, how far over the limit they were going, have you been stopped before, um, what's your license look like, do you have other tickets on there, is this going to be your first one, I mean, these officers take these things into account when they make their decision whether or not they're going to write a ticket or not. And so it's not, oh, we're being easy or we're being aggressive and, um, as far as you saying it's your responsibility to make sure that we're doing our job, I think that's, I think that's what you pay me to do and if there's any issues with that then I'm all ears, un, but I think anybody that knows me and you know, I've been here for a few years now that, um, I take what I do very seriously and the safety and welfare of this town is my number one priority and I make sure that my cops do what they're supposed to be doing and they do it because they're good cops, they're professional and I just think they're doing what they need to be doing and I'm not one to want to take away their discretion, their use of discretion. They're not brand-new cops. Some of them have been here quite a while, uh, one of them sitting behind here, and so, anyways, I just... there's nothing that you're said, Mr. Huebner, that has offended me or bothered me one bit. I get where you're coming from.

Selectman Huebner: Okay.

Chairman McGarry: Any other comments by the board members? Hearing none. Done. Okay. Thank you, Chief.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Thank you, Chief.

Chairman McGarry: All right. Twenty twenty-three budget review. The first item is the ambulance. Page thirty-two. Purposed budget of sixteen thousand and three dollars (\$16,003.00). We have a motion?

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Chairman McGarry: Motion to approve the budget of sixteen thousand and three dollars. Discussion?

Selectman Huebner: So, just for my own clarification, this is the supplies, the gasoline and the vehicle, uh, maintenance, repairs? This is based on what, you know...

Selectman Dill: Well, no, it's contracted services which based on the contract.

Selectman Huebner: So, this is a contract to maintain...?

Selectman Dill: No. This is a contact we have with Raymond for an ambulance.

Selectman Huebner: Yeah, for them to maintain their ambulance and charge us an allocated amount of it. Under a contract to take care of the ambulance. That's how I'm understanding it. We pay this to Raymond...

Chairman McGarry: Cindy.

Selectwoman McHugh: Have these three lines just been put in here?

John Harrington: These are new lines this year, yep.

Selectwoman McHugh: That's why it looks different. That must be...

Selectman Dill: So, when we buy one.

Selectwoman McHugh: ...when we get one.

Matt Fisher: So, yes, if we review the ambulance budget, you'll see the top line previous budget is what's in our budget now for eleven thousand five hundred dollars in the contract we're in with Raymond Ambulance. Next year's cost is sixteen thousand dollars. It goes up five hundred dollars every year. John and I came up with three new lines to add in the budget all as a dollar so when the ambulance does show up, we have some way of... equipments, you know, we could cost things somewhat appropriately for tracking. Specifically, costs associated with the ambulance. For the supplies, gasoline and maintenance of it.

Selectwoman McHugh: Shouldn't these three be put into your fire rescue budget not on ambulance and contract because we won't have a contract at that point? You have an apparatus line on your budget, right?

Matt Fisher: Right. I completely agree. It was the recommendation we came up with. Yeah. So, I guess it's whether or not we want to look at the subsection for the ambulance as, you know, in theory, if we no longer have the contracted ambulance that whole section, the zero one dot four two five would go away completely and that would just be moved into the regular budget. That's certainly an option.

Selectwoman McHugh: I just think that would be a little cleaner. Just put it under your apparatus line rather than...

Matt Fisher: Okay.

Selectwoman McHugh: I mean, because this looks like we're gonna pay Raymond supplies and gasoline to, uh...

Matt Fisher: Okay.

John Harrington: What I heard in the presentation of the ambulance is that we would be needing the contract for some years to come even after the purchase until there was adequate staffing that was funded for this job, uh, for this ambulance so therefore I would recommend leaving it separate. This can always be dissolved and once the ambulance is ready to operate with proper staffing that contracted services line can go down to one dollar and that budgeted money can be dispersed amongst the other three and if you still want to move it under the fire rescue budget at that time, we can always do that but, uh, what I was understanding is that the contractor services would not be going away for any sort time.

Selectwoman McHugh: Right. (Inaudible, very soft talking) ...agreement. Okay.

Selectman Dill: You were just speaking on the three dollars?

Selectwoman McHugh: Right. Just to make it, make it cleaner. It just...

John Harrington: But these three dollars are not going to Raymond, no.

Selectman Dill: They're holding lines. I don't know, I kind of think this is a little cleaner just so we know what we're spending on the ambulance right off so then we can budget it.

Selectman Huebner: I think if I understand Cindy, she's just saying she doesn't disagree with the dollars being there she just thinks they are in the wrong place...

Selectman Dill: Yeah.

Selectman Huebner: ...where they're accounted for.

Selectman Dill: I mean, it's just holders but yeah.

Chairman McGarry: What do we want to do?

Vice Chairman Pitman: Well, they got to go somewhere.

Selectman Dill: I mean. I'm fine with it as long as we know that we're taking... when we buy an ambulance, we're going to take it out of the fire rescue gas and diesel and maintenance line then if that's the... yeah, that works for me. I'll make a motion we delete line six ten, six thirty-five and six sixty knowing that it's in the gas and diesel line, repair line of the fire rescue budget.

Vice Chairman Pitman: (inaudible, speaking very softly)

Selectman Dill: Well, I was going to make a motion for an amendment. I'll make mine as an amendment.

Selectwoman McHugh: Move these three lines to the fire budget?

Selectman Dill: I was just going to delete them. It's three dollars.

Selectwoman McHugh: Yeah, but they need...

Selectman Dill: Do you need a separate ambulance gas line, I guess would be the question? Or would it just go under the regular...

Selectwoman McHugh: Supply...

John Harrington: There is already a gas line in fire rescue. There's already a supply line and there's already a vehicle maintenance line.

Selectman Dill: Would it help to have separate ones?

Matt Fisher: That's up to you guys. If we're consolidating in under fire rescue then that's fine. It would be a little more cumbersome to break out separately but then again, it'd be a whole lot easier to track something back. Pulling a financial report... having Pete pull something if we're just specifically looking at the ambulance.

Selectman Huebner: So, it could be as it is here. AMB, AMB right?

Matt Fisher: Yeah.

Selectman Huebner: That way you can track it separately.

Selectman Dill: Yes.

(Inaudible, a few people talking at once)

Selectman Dill: I think so.

Chairman McGarry: (inaudible, very quiet and can't make out what's being said) ... sixteen thousand and three dollars. Hearing none, all those in favor of the motion signify by saying aye.

Vote: Yea 3, Nay 1, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Matt Fisher: Just for my records, which one are we going with? Alden's amendment or the sixteen three without...?

Chairman McGarry: Sixteen three.

Matt Fisher: Okay.

Chairman McGarry: All right, water holes. Page thirty-six.

Motion: Selectman Dill makes a motion in the amount of sixty-two hundred and fifty-two dollars (\$6,252.00).

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Selectman Huebner: There's a thirteen percent decrease. Does that mean we're doing less water hole?

Selectman Dill: No, it's a telephone.

Selectman Huebner: Oh, those are telephone charges.

Matt Fisher: I have yet to allocate anything to that line over the past five years so it's, it's... I don't feel it's needed which was the big deduction.

Chairman McGarry: (inaudible, seems like there is something wrong with the mic) ...signify by saying aye.

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: All right, fire rescue. Page thirty-seven.

Motion: Selectman Dill makes a motion in the amount of thirty-three... three hundred thirty-eight thousand five hundred eighty-nine dollars (\$338,589.00).

Matt Fisher: What number did you have, Alden?

Selectman Dill: Three, three, eight, five, eight, nine.

John Harrington: That all of the fire department that includes so you just have to focus...

Selectman Dill: Sorry, three, three, two, three, three, four (\$332,334.00).

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Selectman Dill: I apologize, Matt.

Matt Fisher: It did sound different.

Chairman McGarry: Movement seconded. Any discussion? Chief, any major changes that you wanted to point out?

Matt Fisher: So, the... as we are in our default budget, looking at the default budget, you know, we have sixty-two thousand dollars in the protective equipment line. Year after year we're trying to allocate that differently to where it's more appropriately spent in matching our typical expenses. Um, the only real increase from the default budget now to what we're proposing is, uh, matching the pay scale that was adopted last year.

Selectman Dill: That and the contracts line. The contract software line. It's up a hundred and eighty-two thousand percent.

Matt Fisher: You're seeing something I'm not seeing. Oh, yeah, (inaudible, someone talking) ...

Selectman Dill: Three, four, two...

Matt Fisher: ...budget has a two-dollar allowance and that includes... and so we're spending the life pack fifteen maintenance to Lucas Device maintenance in the I am responding which is, yeah, three thousand six hundred dollars which is a lot more than two.

Selectman Dill: Yeah.

Selectwoman McHugh: How did that happen?

Matt Fisher: So, when the fire and rescue were merged the line for fire rescue contracts and software, because it's a maintenance contract for the fifteen of Lucas and the software for the respondent, just...

Selectwoman McHugh: I understand that but the rescue, the rescue budget had those in a line. So, where did that go?

Matt Fisher: Yep. That's in whatever was allocated for equipment it's in the equipment line.

Selectman Huebner: And so, Matt you're saying that this ten percent increase over last year's budget for the, uh, part-time employees is already agreed to in a previous contracted negotiation?

Matt Fisher: Yeah. So, basically, if we look at what we have for the fire rescue stipends, which is the on-call department, and then the part-time employees with the three thirty-hour positions that we have, um, there was an increase in the cost with the hourly wage adjustment that was put into place last year which is what's reflected in that quest if you will.

Selectman Huebner: So, there's a ten percent hourly wage increase from last year?

Matt Fisher: I wouldn't say from last year. From what's in the default budget.

Selectman Huebner: oh, yeah, right. Okay. Form what's in the default.

John Harrington: That would also include COLAs for the part-time. That was approved.

Selectman Huebner: But that's the lion's share of this increase, I think.

Chairman McGarry: Dick.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Matt, how many phones do we have for seven thousand dollars and who has them?

Matt Fisher: Currently, right now, myself, assistant chief Dubiansky and Deputy Chief Gallant do. What we're in the process of swapping over from a Verizon cell phone network to, um, Atlantic Broadband for phones at the station and their ap so we can... by moving towards Atlantic Broadband we're actually gonna save money with, um, what we're paying Consolidated Communications and Verizon for those three or four phone lines. We also had one or two other Verizon phone lines on the account that I could not track down to a device.

Selectwoman McHugh: The rescue had a... I'm sorry.

Chairman McGarry: Go ahead Cindy.

Selectwoman McHugh: Rescue had a phone...

Matt fisher: Yep.

Selectwoman McHugh: Your wardens had a phone...

Matt Fisher: Yep. The life vac fifteen has a modem...

Selectwoman McHugh: Right. Okay.

Matt Fisher: The tablet and then a few others and there are still one or two lines on the account for Verizon that I would never track down so we're removing those as well.

Selectman Huebner: So, in the past two years we budgeted thirty-eight seventy-one and this year it's sixty-nine fifty.

Matt Fisher: So, the past two years that, I think, the default budget has been thirty-eight seventy-one. I would have to look at my previous requests but I'm guessing it's probably right around the same.

Selectman Huebner: Well, but two years ago it was thirty-eight seventy-one as the default budget and then we spent actually forty-two sixty-two.

Matt Fisher: Okay.

Selectman Huebner: And then last year we had thirty-eight seventy-one again because we're on default budget and we spent to date, which is as of the end of October, assuming end of, uh, yeah, end of August, uh, twenty-nine almost three thousand. That's right, yeah. So, we're on track end of August is eight, we're on track then three thousand about forty-five hundred if it remains steady for the monthly average. So, I just don't understand the magnitude of the sixty-nine fifty number versus typical spend on other years. It just seems like we're ballooning. Are we adding a lot more phone lines?

Matt Fisher: No.

Selectman Huebner: No, we're not, right? I just, I just don't know the reason for it.

Chairman McGarry: Cindy.

Selectwoman McHugh: The phone lines that are in the fire station, is that on this line or are these just cell phones?

Matt Fisher: Nope. There's seven, seven, two, one the fax line and phones for South Station all bill to this line.

Selectwoman McHugh: (inaudible, someone shuffle papers by mic) ...contract for a new system that you just put in?

Matt Fisher: We have an agreement with them yes.

Selectwoman McHugh: Is that in this... (inaudible, someone shuffle papers by mic). Makes sense.

Vice Chairman Pitman: I'm all set.

Chairman McGarry: Any other questions? Hearing none. (Inaudible, papers being shuffled by the mic) ...approving the fire department budgets ... (inaudible, papers being shuffled by mic) ...signify by saying aye.

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Library.

John Harrington: Before we move on, you have in your packets, while the fire chief is still here, the RFP draft.

Chairman McGarry: Yep.

John Harrington: If you wanted to ask, uh, the chief anything on that before he left the mic.

Selectwoman McHugh: I'd like to have a chance to look at it first.

Selectman Dill: Mostly what we talked about the other day, correct?

Matt Fisher: Yeah. So, if you... the first one that says request for proposals, um, John was able to find a few examples from other towns. This one, I believe, happens to be Bedford. So, John, Chris and I went over at what kind of fit Bedford, what might fit better for Deerfield language-wise, contractually, um, failures, warranties, that sort of thing. Regular bid documents is the first piece and then the second one, um, seems, I think, the three or four different examples that Chris and the ambulance committee had. Um, this was one that we chose to go with for the specs if you will for the ambulance. Just, obviously, with the brand information taken out of it.

Chairman McGarry: Dick.

Vice Chairman Pitman: What is there to vote on, on this tonight?

Chairman McGarry: I guess to, uh, either hold it until next week or, to give us a chance to look at it, or to, uh, advertise it for tomorrow.

Vice Chairman Pitman: (Inaudible, loud side conversation)

Matt Fisher: (Inaudible, loud side conversation) ...losing a week which is not the end of the world and we, obviously, just change our dates that are listed in here, the benchmarks is shot for in regards to getting prices back and, um, making decisions.

Selectman Dill: I don't think I'm ever saying this before in an RFP, is it overly detailed? Like, down to the switch colors and the seat color and the... will that limit people that are going to bid on it?

Matt Fisher: No...

Selectman Dill: Or the brand of lights?

Matt Fisher: I think there's language in here that allows for different, um, specifications and alternates if you will.

Selectman Huebner: So, they don't have to bid exactly to this.

Matt Fisher: Correct. It could be more once we get the pricing here's a review. I would almost rather be a little overly detailed and get... so they get a better understanding of what we're looking for and if someone comes back with, we're going to offer brand x instead of brand y knowing that before we enter in an agreement and it shows up in a year and a half and it's, that's not even close to what we wanted. At least, you know, if we know up front it'll be easier, I think, for everybody.

Chairman McGarry: Will.

Selectman Huebner: So, I don't personally have the background or experience to know whether this myriad of specifications is needed or not needed or, you know, I wouldn't personally need more time. I don't think, myself. Someone like Cindy who has more background and experience with it, perhaps, could go through it and make a recommendation to the board. Maybe Cindy and Dick together or something. But I, personally, am not going to benefit from another week extra on this one.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Leave it up to Cindy.

Selectwoman McHugh: I'd like a chance to look over it but if you guys want it to go...

Vice Chairman Pitman: No. I want your opinion.

Selectman Huebner: All right, so we should...

Selectwoman McHugh: We should have been given this beforehand.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Yes.

Chairman McGarry: Okay. All right, we'll take a look at it and your comments back to John.

Matt Fisher: Very good. Have a good night.

Selectman Dill: Thanks, Matt.

Selectwoman McHugh: I just want to say, if a BMS captain had been previewed to this information I probably wouldn't need a week to look at it.

Chairman McGarry: All right, library.

Motion: Selectman Dill makes a motion in the amount of a hundred and fifty-nine thousand four hundred and twenty dollars (\$159,420.00).

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Chairman McGarry: Good evening.

Anne Meyers: Good evening.

Chairman McGarry: Do you want to point out any, uh, significant changes being proposed?

Anne Meyers: Yes. Well, the two areas I would ask for your attention is the staffing and the programming and humanities line. I would like to increase the programming opportunities for our community, um, and add an hour to, um, two hours to one of the part-time library assistant positions in order to open up an extra hour on Saturdays and have those two assistants, um, have both have twenty hours a week so we have two full-time positions and two part-time positions as well as there is a line in the part-time employee line for substitute library technicians. Um, when I submitted a budget narrative to you, I don't know if you've had a chance to look at it but, on the back there's a graph that indicates where we've had the spikes for children's programming and where it might be useful to have a flexible individual to substitute to add for more hours for children's programming and not take away from other library services.

Selectman Dill: Would a thousand increase in that humanities line actually make a big difference?

Anne Meyers: We can a lot with a little and yes, but although I would happily accept more.

Chairman McGarry: So, right now you're showing a thousand-dollar increase, correct?

Ann Meyers: I am. I am. Yes. That covers our humanities passes for our families that are, well, and for everyone as well as any time we would have a presenter fee or have someone do a series of craft workshops that are not librarian led but are perhaps a local resource or someone who's coming in to provide a program that is useful for the general community.

Chairman McGarry: Any further discussion?

Selectman Dill: I'm actually thinking of bumping that up. I mean, it doesn't seem like a whole lot of money.

Vice Chairman Pitman: That's what I was thinking. We emend the motion, make that line two thousand.

Selectman Dill: Well, it's at, they have it at two thousand now...

Vice Chairman Pitman: Okay, three.

Selectman Dill: Yeah. That's... Okay. Are you making that motion Dick?

Vice Chairman Pitman: Go Ahead.

Motion: Selectman Dill makes a motion to amend line six eight three to three thousand which is a two thousand dollar increase over where it was.

Second: Vice Chairman Pitman

Discussion:

Selectman Dill: If you can do a lot with a little, I figure you can do a lot more with that.

Anne Meyers: Certainly.

Selectman Huebner: So, again, the lion's share in any budget seems to be the people. So, lines one and two are adding together in the new budget now to a hundred and twenty-five thousand which is a hundred and fifty-nine thousand budget. That's like ninety or eighty-five percent or whatever that is. So, can we, you know... I think asking for the town, can we get by with fewer salaried employees?

Selectman Dill: Considering there's a warrant article I'd probably say no.

Selectman Huebner: Well, we had a warrant article for a new librarian which was the storytelling children's librarian. I think, if I'm not mistaken.

Anne Meyers: Yes. We have a children's and outreach services librarian.

Selectman Huebner: Yeah. The other thing I want to say is, I... with the graph, it's very helpful because you can see these peak times that you're pointing out where you need more help.

Anne Meyers: Yes.

Selectman Huebner: But there's also low points in the graph in January and February for instance.

Anne Meyers: Yes. This year we are going to be completing an inventory for the first time in a long time. To take stock of what's actually in our building and that will be useful as well. In terms of the graph also our children's librarian, um, we were, she started at the end of July in the mid of summer reading rush and so we did use significant substitute hours in order to make it to that point in the year but we did not delay in programming because, um, families, a summer reading program is a highlight for a library.

Selectman Dill: Probably ought to vote on the motion.

Chairman McGarry: Yeah. All right, so, we have the motion to increase the communities' line by a thousand to a total of three thousand. All those in favor of the motion signify by saying aye.

Vote: Yea 3, Nay 1, Abstained 1 – Motion Carries

Selectman Dill: Which makes the new total a hundred and sixty thousand four hundred twenty dollars (\$160,420.00).

Chairman McGarry: Right.

Selectman Dill: Even I can do that math, Dick.

Chairman McGarry: All right, any discussion on the main budget?

Selectman Huebner: Okay, so that vote we just took was to raise this, uh...

Selectman Dill: Mhm.

Selectman Dill: Yeah. Right.

Chairman McGarry: The communities by a thousand.

Selectman Huebner: So, again my... I think there's quite a dichotomy in our town about some people want more library services and more children's activities, uh, for their children and I think there's others who feel that it... in light of the total of the budget for the town and the size of the town and everything, that it's growing all the time and, you know, can we... we keep seeing, seeming.... we want to add more and more personnel to it and the library keeps seeming to want to take on more and more community, uh, activity and making itself a kind of center hub of the town. So, I'm just not sure if that's the direction, you know, do we want... we have a parks and recreation department for instance that does some things that probably overlap or could overlap, I don't know.

Anne Meyers: May I say that our programming line is also for adults as well. We are trying to reach the senior population. We trying to reach adults who are interested in, you know, spending time at the library.

Selectman Huebner: I'm just concerned that if we ask for too much, we're going to have another default budget again and that's not going to serve the library very well either so we, you know, I think we need to be realistic about what the voters are reasonably likely to pass. They did pass the warrant article as all of them pointed out so there is support for the library and I, and I support the library by the way. Don't take my comments wrong, I'm just trying to balance a budget and think about, you know, what's the priorities of the town. Are there any similar thinking on the board members or am I off in left field again?

Selectwoman McHugh: No, I agree with you. A thousand dollars for a road wouldn't go. Gotta know where we want to put the money is all.

Chairman McGarry: (Inaudible, seems far away from the mic or mic is not on) ... signify by saying aye.

Vote: Yea 3, Nay 2, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: All right. It's three two.

Anne Meyers: Thank you.

Chairman McGarry: Next item. Highway department.

Selectman Dill: All right, we're starting on highway administration then? Which is forty-four I would assume.

Motion: Selectman Dill makes a motion in the amount of two hundred twenty-three thousand eight hundred and sixteen dollars (\$223,816.00).

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Selectman Huebner: So, we have a three point four, three and a half percent increase in the salaries, right? That's what I'm reading here and we have an actual decrease in the part-time employee line and so the overall increase to the default budget is only three percent. Two-point nine five percent.

Chairman McGarry: Right.

Selectman Huebner: Correct? So, this has been a very flat budget through many years or at least in the last three years. Is that the right interpretation of this?

Selectman Dill: I would say...

Selectman Huebner: I think the town supports the highway department and the roads and maintaining the roads and maintaining the equipment and all of the things that are combined into this highway.

Chairman McGarry: (inaudible, seems to be far away from mic or mic is off).

Vice Chairman Pitman: Cindy, you have your hand up.

Selectwoman McHugh: Yeah.

Chairman McGarry: Cindy.

Selectwoman McHugh: So, why is that? Why isn't the highway employees under the highway budget?

John Harrington: This is the way DRA sets it up.

Selectman Huebner: I don't see it as separated. Well, it's forty-four and forty-five which is the... forty-five is just the same line as forty-four.

Selectwoman Huebner: If you look at the police department it's not separated. The fire department isn't separated. It's all one budget.

John Harrington: This is the way it was given to me when I got here. Why they set it up that way, I'm not quite sure.

Selectman Huebner: This is highway administration?

John Harrington: Correct.

Selectman Huebner: And then where's the highway budget...

John Harrington: Right behind it.

Selectman Dill: That's forty-five.

Selectman Huebner: But forty-five is the same number.

Selectwoman McHugh: Forty-six.

Selectman Huebner: Oh, forty-six. Right.

Selectman Dill: There's highways and streets and then you have road resurfacing and...

John Harrington: Multiple departments within that...

Selectman Dill: Block grants. That's the beauty of the MBC. There's plenty of stuff here. I was actually gonna say, aren't we interviewing... when do we have to have this done?

John Harrington: Preferably by next Monday. You should vote on it. The final... because all the changes you're making tonight will be incorporated into the budget. You'll have a final number to review and then vote on. The following day I will make copies for the MBC and I believe they meet next Wednesday.

Selectman Huebner: Right. And they are counting on us, uh, just ... (inaudible, someone going through papers very loudly near a mic) ...the MBC meetings. They're counting on us delivering this budget on the, uh...

John Harrington: Next Tuesday. Monday you'll vote on the final number.

Selectman Huebner: Seventeenth.

John Harrington: Tuesday budgets will be available for the members and then you meet Wednesday.

Vice Chairman Pitman: (inaudible, very soft spoken) ...in one night.

John Harrington: No. No, that's going to be the start of their review but they would like the entire budget Tuesday.

Vice Chairman Pitman: I think where Alden was heading with this, is to see how the interviews go before we agree.

Selectman Dill: That's exactly where I was headed with that Dick. I would hate to say, congratulations here's a job and by the way you're stuck with this when we're doing this during budget season.

John Harrington: Entirely up to you.

Chairman McGarry: What do you want to do?

Selectman Dill: If we're meeting with people tomorrow, I think we can... we're not statutorily obligated to have that in by Monday, correct?

Selectman Huebner: So, we could table this item...

Selectman Dill: Well, this whole...

Selectman Huebner: ...next week before we approve the entire book.

Selectman Dill: Well, I don't know if somebody's gonna get in and be able to turn it that fast but I'd at least like them to be able to look at it.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Exactly.

Motion: Selectman Dill makes a motion to table the highway, the entire highway budget until ten seventeen.

John Harrington: Are you changing your motion?

Selectman Dill: I am.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh
Discussion:

John Harrington: Does that also go for the transfer station because this department head oversees both.

Selectman Dill: Yes.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Can we make that work for next Monday, John, timewise?

John Harrington: Uh, no, I have to send all these pages to Rita to enter into the system and then we'll get a final number so I won't have that instantly for you.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Okay.

John Harrington: And I do not recommend the board do their arithmetic for all the changes that night because that has caused problems in the past and the wrong number's been voted in. So, that would delay the delivery of the budget to the MBC by a week.

Selectwoman McHugh: They can do it at their following week, right? They meet each week so...

John Harrington: Whenever their next meeting is, I believe is...

Selectman Huebner: I think it's the twenty-sixth

John Harrington: twenty-ninth. They would have to pick it up on the twenty-ninth.

Chairman McGarry: All right. So, we have a motion to table, any further discussion? So, it will be this item, this budget and also for the transfer station.

John Harrington: Highway and transfer station.

Chairman McGarry: And transfer station as well. All those in favor to table signify by saying aye.

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: All right, Veasey park.

Selectman Dill: I don't see Travis.

Chairman McGarry: Proposed budget of thirty-nine thousand nine hundred and seventy-seven dollars (\$39,977.00).

Motion: Selectman Dill

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Selectman Dill: What's a Veasey park reimbursement? Oh, that's lifeguard certification. So, that's something we definitely don't want to touch.

Chairman McGarry: Every three lifeguards' certifications of three hundred each and...

Selectman Dill: Water safety instructors.

John Harrington: I believe the lifeguards' pay for it up front...

Selectman Dill: Yeah. That's something we're gonna leave in there.

Selectman Huebner: So, we had twelve thousand and a spend of twenty. Then we had twelve thousand and a spend of sixteen and now we're proposing twenty-one thousand for the part-time employees which is a sixty-seven percent increase.

Selectman Dill: From the twelve thousand which is the default.

Selectman Huebner: Yes.

Selectman Dill: But we've had a... this is one of the first years we've actually been able to hire people. So, I don't think we're going to be able to cut back an hourly rate because then we're not going to be able to hire anybody.

Selectman Huebner: Okay, but year to date, which is pretty much the whole year because of the season, we've spent only sixteen thousand. So why would we spend five thousand more next year.

Chairman McGarry: It's showing five lifeguards at twenty-four hours a week...

Selectman Dill: And two attendants.

Chairman McGarry: ...and two attendants at twenty-eight hours a week.

Selectman Huebner: But that's not different than this year, I think, right?

Chairman McGarry: (Inaudible)

Vice Chairman Pitman: I think it's more lifeguards.

Selectman Huebner: More lifeguards?

Vice Chairman Pitman: Yes.

Selectman Huebner: So more overage, more days and hours when the lifeguards are on duty then.

John Harrington: I believe it's a different distribution of personnel. There may have been, um, I think he added the number of lifeguards to increase the coverage.

Selectman Huebner: I know when Travis was in recently, we... he informed us that he had taken a stipend for... I think it was for himself. Right?

Selectman Dill: Mhm.

Selectman Huebner: Is that what this five thousand is?

Selectman Dill: No. If you flip two pages ahead...

Selectman Huebner: Yeah.

Selectman Dill: ...you have the breakdown of the budget and that's not listed at all.

Chairman McGarry: And I'm wondering about the hourly rate of eleven fifty an hour. I thought we approved higher rates than that.

John Harrington: That's what they're in for right now.

Chairman McGarry: That what he put in for...

Selectman Dill: Yeah, I thought we were quite a bit higher than that.

Selectman Huebner: So, the stipend that he took this year, is that included in this sixteen thousand this year?

John Harrington: His stipend is not in this budget. It is not covered by the budget at all.

Selectman Huebner: But we have a year to date spend, where did that... when we took that stipend where did we take that from? What line?

John Harrington: From a trust fund.

Selectman Dill: It was a donation.

Selectman Huebner: Oh, a trust fund, I see.

John Harrington: That is set up for Veasey park. They are the agents to it.

Selectman Dill: Agents to expend, not us so we didn't vote on it.

Selectman Huebner: So, the Veasey Park Commission approved that.

Selectman Dill: Yep.

John Harrington: Correct.

Selectman Huebner: So, again, I just don't understand the sixty-seven increase of twenty-one three forty over twelve seven seventy-six on a spend of sixteen three O four. He must be adding a whole lot more lifeguards.

Selectwoman McHugh: Oh, is that the bump up from last year that he's included in there and just didn't change this?

John Harrington: Without Travis here I am unable to answer that.

Chairman McGarry: You want to hold this until next meeting?

John Harrington: No, he's not on.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Maybe John could find out.

John Harrington: Well, he rescheduled it to today, so... Why he didn't show up, I don't know.

Selectman Dill: I agree with Fred, I think we bumped the lifeguards quite a bit higher than eleven fifty in order to hire people. I think it was like thirteen.

Selectman Huebner: I remember like twelve...

Selectwoman McHugh: Twelve something.

Chairman McGarry: HE wanted them to get more money than working at McDonald's.

Motion: Selectman Dill to table the Veasey park budget.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Selectman Dill: Could you please find out from Travis?

John Harrington: I will remind him again that he's supposed to come in. I cannot control his attendance.

Vice Chairman Pitman: If you could just ask him how many lifeguards?

Selectman Dill: Yeah, if you could just get the info.

John Harrington: I prefer he'd be here to answer your questions.

Chairman McGarry: All right, all those in favor of the motion signify by saying aye.

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Review of outstanding minutes.

Motion: Selectwoman McHugh makes a motion to approve the minutes from ten three.

Second: Selectman Huebner

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 4, Nay 0, Abstained 1 – Motion Carries

John Harrington: Who made the motion?

Selectwoman McHugh: Me.

John Harrington: Cindy and Dick?

Selectman Dill: Cindy and Will.

John Harrington: Thank you.

Chairman McGarry: Okay. Voucher and manifests. Accounts payable manifest in the amount of a hundred and fifty-nine thousand four hundred and seventy-eight dollars and sixty-three cents (\$159,478.63).

Motion: Selectwoman McHugh

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: That's all I have for manifests?

John Harrington: That's it. You have one document in the folder to sign. The MS...

Chairman McGarry: The MS four thirty-four. Department of revenue administration. So, it's showing, it's just showing anticipated revenues and credits...

John Harrington: What happens is, uh, the revenues are proposed for the year and then the DRA wants you to go in and revise them to see if you met any of the goals. Whether your goals are short, over and that's what Rita and I have done. This is the first step that needs to be completed before tax rate settings so that DRA can calculate what they think our tax rate should be.

Chairman McGarry: Okay. It's showing, two million one hundred sixty-eight thousand fifty-three dollars (\$2,168,053.00).

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion:

Chairman McGarry: One signature by the chair. Any discussion? Hearing none, all those in favor of the motion signify by saying aye.

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: We have anything else?

John Harrington: I will be looking for a non-public, brief non-public.

Chairman McGarry: Correspondence. The memo from Ray Ellis... (inaudible, things being shuffled around in front of mics) ...interim road agent transfer station. Thank you all for the chance to serve as interim road agent transfer station manager. I was looking for a chance to make a difference with a new look at running and making a more efficient combined department and so for that, I am sorry it did not work out. However, this is a critical time of year before winter and we need to get someone in here to take over so I will stay on later than November ninth and then step down and go back to being facility supervisor. Sincerely, Ray Ellis.

John Harrington: And that's the non-public we'll cover.

Chairman McGarry: Okay. All right, uh, Town administrator's report.

John Harrington: One item for you this evening, just to put a thought into the board's mind, we do have a budget issue with highway, we're coming up on winter, to consider making a transfer at some point from the winter highway

maintenance fund. That budget's currently a hundred and one thousand five hundred and nine dollars (\$101,509.00). we're likely to need a good portion of that to cover winter contractors, sand and salt purchases. Uh, I recommend waiting at least until we see what we're spending on those three items before you make a transfer because once you take it out of the trust fund and put it in the budget, if you've over transferred money then that money would go back into the general fund so you want to make a transfer to cover what over expenditures you have. So, sometime around the beginning or mid-November would be a good time to look at that and transfer a portion over to cover some of those costs that's going to be overages.

Selectman Dill: Wass that one hundred, what you said?

John Harrington: one hundred and one thousand five hundred and nine dollars.

Selectman Dill: In the trust fund?

John Harrington: In the trust fund.

Selectman Dill: Okay.

Selectwoman McHugh: Is that that winter emergency line?

John Harrington: Winter road maintenance trust fund. Just to keep in mind that likely would be a good time to look at how much you want to transfer in depending on how much you've expended to that date.

Selectman Dill: So, we probably also want to think about doing a warrant article to put some money back in that.

John Harrington: Warrant articles will come later in December when you're reviewing them.

Chairman McGarry: Certainly, that should reflect...

John Harrington: This has been topped off for about a year or so because the cap on that was a hundred thousand. The additional money over a hundred thousand is just interest that's accrued.

Chairman McGarry: Okay. Also, any warrant article should reflect the cost of... increased cost of gas and salt, right?

John Harrington: Right. So, you might want to increase... you might want to renew that warrant article to increase the cap that you want to hold onto. That was it for me this evening.

Chairman McGarry: Okay. Any unfinished business? All right, vote for a non-public.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman makes a motion for 91-A:3 II (d) Consideration of the acquisition, sale, or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community.

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion:

Chairman McGarry: Will?

Selectman Huebner: Aye.

Chairman McGarry: Alden?

Selectman Dill: Aye.

Chairman McGarry: Cindy?

Selectwoman McHugh: Yes.

Chairman McGarry: Dick?

Vice Chairman Pitman: Yes.

Chairman McGarry: And McGarry, yes.

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: All right, no votes were taken in the non-public session and a motion to seal the minutes.

Motion: Selectman Dill

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Chairman McGarry: Will?

Selectman Huebner: Aye.

Chairman McGarry: Alden?

Selectman Dill: Aye.

Chairman McGarry: Cindy?

Selectwoman McHugh: Yes.

Chairman McGarry: Dick?

Vice Chairman Pitman: Yes.

Chairman McGarry: And McGarry, yes.

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: All right, citizens comments. Cady.

Harriet Cady: I'm concerned with the fact that once again we're going through a budget and while we have a recreation department there's nothing to speak of for adults going on. The library is, again, children and then our school is children and I'm just wondering, is there any direction to the recreation department and the library to do more. Such as games for adults. Programs for adults. The Epsom library has movies every Wednesday. They have talks. People come in and I would like to see Deerfield have something going on for people my age as well as the people that are middle aged and in their twenties. I think it's time. If we're going to spend the amount of money on children which I don't begrudge children anything, look to doing more for the adults. Thank you.

Selectman Dill: They did just have a craft night the other day.

Chairman McGarry: Any more comments from the public?

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman makes a motion to adjourn at seven thirteen

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Next Meeting: October 17, 2022, at 5:30 pm

*The Minutes were transcribed and respectfully submitted by Randi Long, Recording Secretary
Pending approval by the Board of Selectmen*