

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
November 12, 2019
MINUTES**

Call to Order

5:30 pm – Chairman Robertson called the meeting to order

Present: Andrew Robertson, Chairman; Richard Pitman, Vice Chairman. Fred McGarry, Jeff Shute and Cindy McHugh, Selectpersons.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Chairman Robertson asks all to rise and pledge allegiance to the Flag

Chairman Robertson stated that they were going to be reviewing the insurance proposals that they received. He stated that it was the health insurance and asked Mr. Harrington if anything had changed.

Mr. Harrington stated that the Board would have to look at the second column which would be the renewal rate. It has gone up.

Chairman Robertson stated what he meant was what they had earlier on the sheet and it was confirmed that the numbers were still the same.

2020 Budget Review:

Insurance, Page 26

Chairman Robertson asked if they had a recommendation from their broker as to what they might do to hold steady.

Mr. Harrington answered yes and that he had been in discussions with Bill Bald and his recommendation is to continue with the same plan as they had last year which was the Tufts Health Freedom Plan which the first column is the current coverage. The second column would be the renewal amount.

He stated that he also talked to Mr. Bald about possibly bundling the dental insurance to see if they could get a better deal.

Looking at the numbers today and discussing it through email with him back and forth, they both concurred that they should stick with the plan that they have now. They would not be saving a significant amount and the plan would change enough for the staff that it really wasn't worth it.

Mr. Harrington also stated that he had the dental agreement for the 2020 renewal in the folder as well and he had some suggested changes to the insurance budget with a new bottom line to vote in tonight.

Chairman Robertson stated that without getting into any particular details or names, did he feel that the employees have been well-served. Had he been putting out fires or dealing with service issues in regard to Tufts.

Mr. Harrington stated that he hadn't heard many complaints with the current coverage. They do have one staff person who utilizes the coverage more than others. Their coverage is adequate but they would obviously like something different.

Vice Chairman asked if it was the second column that they should be looking at to which Mr. Harrington stated that it was.

Chairman Robertson stated that it looked like the prescription part, the employee contributes a little bit more for a prescription in this plan. He stated that it looked like the prescription cost in the recommended plan has gone up a little.

Mr. Harrington agreed and that they would also see the total out of pocket maximum has gone up \$1,000.00 and the total out of pocket family has gone up \$2,000.00

Chairman Robertson stated that the HealthTrust is the Municipal Association offering which would be the fourth and fifth columns.

Vice Chairman Pitman asked if they would need a motion to which the chairman agreed that they would need one to decide which plan that they would be going with.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to go with Tufts Health Freedom Plan EPO 3000

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion: Chairman Robertson stated that he would note that the provider at the end of the sheet has been given a go in the past and have had a lot of service issues, a tremendous amount of service issues.

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

Mr. Harrington stated that for those of them that had their budgets with them, he has some changes. If they don't, he could read the budget line changes off and they could write them down.

Under the Health Care Line – the current budget is \$168,000.00. The recommendation is to go to \$200,000.00. That will cover the increase in premium and also cover the increase in the amount of reimbursement should the plan be used.

Right now, the town has a policy where staff members are required to pay the first \$500.00 of the deductible and the town covers the rest of the premium for the deductible.

Chairman Robertson stated that they have made out pretty well with that over the years.

Mr. Harrington stated that it has been very under-budgeted and he looked at a five-year history and there have been some years that they have run way over that so he is recommending that they increase that a little bit.

Chairman Robertson stated that he didn't think it was a bad idea because if they had employees or their spouses that have life events that they might pick more people than they are budgeting for.

Mr. Harrington agreed and he stated that he had to withhold some dollars in case any staff members have a change in family structure. They have several, young, single people that are getting married or having children which changes the plan.

The second line that is a recommended change is under short term disability to up the amount \$400.00 to \$7,500.00 and this is based on quotes from the town's insurance carrier.

Long term disability is up \$1,000.00 to \$6,400.00.

Life insurance is up \$100.00 to \$2,825.00.

Combination of Life and Accidental Death or Dismemberment is down \$600.00 to \$3,000.00.

The last change in the budget is the deductibles at the bottom and he is recommending that they go to \$20,000.00 which is an increase of \$15,000.00 to cover any usage of the insurance policy.

The new bottom line for insurance is \$429,815.00. That's an increase of \$47,900.00 over the current year.

He stated that he would have had new budget sheets printed for the Board but he didn't hear about the dental insurance under just before they met. He stated that he would have a new page for them when they finish up with the last budget which is Assessing.

Chairman Robertson stated that the actual premium increase is \$20,000.00 and some change and then they have to make sure that they have the offset for potential usage on top of that.

Mr. Harrington stated that they have been very lucky in not having to go over that amount but its been unfunded for the last two years.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the Insurance Budget in the amount of \$429,815.00

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion:

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

Setting of Tax Rate:

Chairman Robertson stated that they had boilerplate numbers that Mr. Harrington had prepared. They could play around with retention if they want.

They were in 2018 at \$23.07 and the boiler plate, they are looking at \$23.45 and asked if Mr. Harrington had the program set so that they could get a number to which he stated that he was doing at the amount and hoped it would be successful.

Chairman Robertson stated that if the Board looked at the back page, the current retention that they used was \$10.35 percent. Typically, DRA likes to see it in the 8 to 10 percent range. Actually, he thought that they like to see it is the 12 percent range, if they were there in person.

The chairman stated that one of the things that got through to him was what would it look like at a flat 10 percent. It would be close to 10.35 percent.

Chairman Robertson stated that the year prior to last year it was \$23.30.

There was discussion among board members regarding different numbers and they were trying to manipulate the numbers to come out with a zero increase.

Chairman Robertson stated as a Board, they had a rough idea as to what they wanted to use for retention in the fund balance so if the Board wants to make a motion that they hold the line at either what they were prior or if they wanted to use a flat 9 percent knowing that they would be close to where they were last year.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves that they go with a flat 9 percent in order to retain as close as they could to the \$23.07 rate that it was this year.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion: Mr. Harrington asked if the Board was looking to change the overlay any to which the chairman answered that they probably were not. He didn't know how the rest of the Board feels but he would be more comfortable using a little bit more of retained fund balance leaving the overlay.

Chairman Robertson stated that the only concern that he would have in regard to retained fund balance is utility valuation which he thought that they would be good until next tax cycle and hopefully going forward but he didn't see any needs in the next six to twelve months to have money on hand for that.

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

Mr. Harrington stated that he hoped to be able to get into the website tomorrow and will send the Board the final rate through an email.

Chairman Robertson added that for some reason that it doesn't calculate out to the way that the Board estimated, they could hold a special meeting but he thought that they were going to be exactly where they wanted to be.

Regular Business:

Review of Outstanding Minutes of November 4, 2019

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the minutes of November 4, 2019

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion: Chairman Robertson stated that he would note that he was in attendance of that meeting for the last 32 seconds

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

Accounts Payable Manifest - \$33,528.77

Motion: Selectman Shute moves to approve the accounts payable manifest as read

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion:

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

Chairman Robertson stated that they now had the dental policy rates to vote on as they wanted to wait until Mr. Harrington gave them the correct amounts.

He continued that after talking with Bill Bald, he didn't feel that he could do better with the dental policy rates to which he concurred with they should stay with the current plan through HealthTrust.

Chairman Robertson stated that they had a contract and that he would just read the rates under the dental coverage rates.

Single Person:	\$43.89 per month
Two Family:	\$84.96 per month
Family	\$154.57 per month

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the HealthTrust Dental Plan as read

Second: Selectman Shute

Discussion:

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

Chairman Robertson stated that they had a Town of Deerfield Winter Contractor Agreement with Steve Rollins and his route would be Meetinghouse Hill Road, Gulf Road, Pleasant Hill Road, Mountain Road and Parade Road and has the appropriate insurance in place and has signed the contract and is assuming that they had it in the folder because the road agent has recommended that the Board move forward with it to which Mr. Harrington agreed.

Motion: Selectman Shute moves to sign the agreement with Steve Rollins as read

Second: Selectman McGarry

Discussion:

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

Chairman Robertson stated that he would note that it is for a small truck, Ford F350.

Chairman Robertson stated that they had an abatement request, a Notice of Computer Adjustment and it is for the University of New Hampshire property on Saddleback Mountain Road and the reason for the abatement was that that the university land was removed from being exempt but the exemption wasn't added. Avatar recommended the abatement. The taxes have not been paid. This is for the principal only which is \$2,659.00

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the abatement as read

Second: Selectman Shute

Discussion:

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

Chairman Robertson stated that they had a Utility Pole/Underground Conduit Petition. It is for New Hampshire Electric Cooperative lines. It is a Candia Road property and the pole number is 3727. It appears to be approved by the necessary people in town and by the Electric Coop.

He stated that they needed a motion to grant permission to set a pole. Chairman Robertson stated that it was for Consolidated Communications.

Motion: Selectman McGarry moves to approve the Utility Pole/Underground Conduit Petition as read

Second: Selectman Shute

Discussion:

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

Chairman Robertson stated that the Correspondence Folder was a little thin and that they had a report from the Executive Councilor for District 4, Theodore Gatsas.

Town Administrator's Report:

Mr. Harrington stated that he had two items.

One is a follow up from last meeting.

The Southern NH Planning Commission Solid Waste Grant Program's director had a long discussion with Rick Pelletier and he was able to give her all the information that she needed in order to fill out the grant application.

He also stated that he also received a request from a family member of the Ambrose Property. This is one of the properties along Gulf Road that was recently deeded.

The family has indicated that they would like to purchase the property back.

Mr. Harrington stated that they haven't received the deed back yet from Rockingham County so he suggested to the family that nothing is going to happen to the property immediately and that the Board could decide what they wanted to do when the Town received the deed.

Chairman Robertson had a quick question and asked if Mr. Harrington knew how long the police cruiser was going to be out of commission to which he answered that he did not. He had just heard back from Primex today and they have connected with the chief. An adjustor is coming out tomorrow to take a look at the cruiser so it is moving forward rapidly.

Mr. Harrington stated that when he has an update, he would give it to the Board.

It was asked what happened to the cruiser to which it was stated that one of the officers ran into a deer at the bottom of Meetinghouse Hill Road a few nights ago. He stated that it was a pretty solid deer even though it wasn't that big but it must have been muscular because it did a lot of damage.

Mr. Harrington stated that there was damage to the front push bar, the hood and the bumper.

It was asked which cruiser it was to which Mr. Harrington stated that it was one of the newer ones and that everyone except the deer was fine.

Chairman Robertson asked if there were any other questions for Mr. Harrington to which no one had any.

Unfinished Business:

Chairman Robertson stated that he didn't think that they had much in regards to draft warrants at this time.

One of the things that they had discussed and he thought it would be good to move ahead with is the road reconstruction warrant article.

Mr. Harrington stated that based on discussions during the course of the year, he had a number of warrants in draft form with sample language in order to consider whether the Board wanted them in with next year's warrants or not.

He would present them along with the full draft warrant at the next meeting.

Chairman Robertson stated that they had a little bit of time still.

Mr. Harrington stated that it was early but he just wanted to get it out there so folks would have time to talk about it.

New Business:

Vice Chairman Pitman asked if they were going to discuss the highway shed furnace and Chairman Robertson stated that if he had information that the Board would like to discuss it.

Mr. Harrington stated that he had an update. They were able to get another option for the highway garage that the Board hadn't discussed yet.

They had a final quoted price for the standing oil burner that the Board originally approved with additional flue work that would be needed.

That quote total is \$11,083.00 but in trying to get other options, they also considered putting in the furnace style that was in part of the highway building which is a ceiling unit which would be oiled fired.

He stated that they got a new quote of \$8,000.00 for that unit.

Vice Chairman Pitman remarked that he was told that by putting it in the attic that they would not have the expense of a new chimney to which Mr. Harrington stated that the flue work would not be needed because it would connect right into the chimney as he understood it.

Chairman Robertson stated that they also had the option of an outside wood boiler, which is by far, the cheapest which he thought that it came in at around \$3,000.00.

Mr. Harrington stated that they also had quotes for a pellet stove, a hung heater, like at the fire station, so there are multiple options.

The ceiling unit is oil fired and would remove the cost of the additional flue work.

Vice Chairman Pitman asked the chairman where it stood now since they already okayed a vendor with a price.

Mr. Harrington stated that it was still Al Terry. In order to be fair to the vendor, they stuck with Al Terry. They originally had a signed agreement but they have since changed it once. They are still willing to work with the town. They are the ones that gave them the quote for the ceiling unit.

He thought, to be fair to the vendor that stuck with them and has come back out multiple times to give them options.

Vice Chairman Pitman asked what type of motion would be needed?

Mr. Harrington stated that he had a new agreement for the ceiling unit if that is the way that the Board wanted to go.

Chairman Robertson stated that if the Board wanted to move ahead with the ceiling unit, they are looking at the following:

- Installation of a new highboy-style oil burner in ceiling
- Removal and disposal of the old oil furnace
- Installation of a new Grandbe highboy-style oil furnace
- 66,000 BTU with a 3 Ton blower
- It includes the materials required to hang the furnace.
- It includes the thermostats, plugging it into the exhaust and existing flue pipe
- One-year parts and labor warranty
- \$8,000.00

Selectman McGarry asked what the BTU output was on the new furnace and if it matched what was currently there to which the Chairman stated that it did with both the 66,000 BTU and the 3-ton blower.

Selectman Shute asked what was meant by ceiling mounted. He asked if it was in the attic to which Mr. Harrington stated that it was mounted between the suspended ceiling and the roof. There were still brackets there from the original unit that was up there.

Chairman Robertson called on Ray Ellis to give them a rundown.

Mr. Ellis stated that originally, there was a ceiling furnace up there. The old brackets are still hanging up there. He wasn't aware of that until after he went upstairs to see what the options would be for the flue.

He stated that he asked Al Terry if there was anyway possible that they could hang it up there. They wanted to know the clearance up in the space and it was determined that it was 42 inches.

It was determined that there was more than enough space to put one up there and if the Board wanted, they could make that an option.

It would give the highway garage a lot more space to use in their building because the big furnace is taking up half of the room anyway.

They thought that they would put it up there as long as it is safe and Mr. Pelletier stated that it passes all the codes.

Mr. Ellis asked them to bring him an option and he would submit it.

He stated that it would be suspended above the suspended ceiling and once the tiles are put back, no one would know that it was up there.

Mr. Ellis stated that currently, there is one in the fire station.

Selectman Shute asked if it would be a big deal regarding maintaining it as it would be in the ceiling to which Mr. Ellis stated that it wouldn't.

He continued that all the state sheds that he had worked at in the past, all had hanging furnaces because of the plows and wings and trucks getting into the garage.

Vice Chairman Pitman asked if they needed to do something different because the last quote was for \$5,800.00 to which Mr. Harrington stated that his recommendation would be to withdraw the original motion for the agreement that was signed a week or two ago and the chairman added that the date was 10/16/19.

Chairman Robertson stated that if they wanted to withdraw the motion and the second from the October 16th meeting.

Vice Chairman withdraws his motion regarding the awarding of the furnace contract of \$11,083.00 contract at the 10/16/19 meeting and take up the \$8,000.00 furnace

Selectwoman McHugh asked the road agent if that would work for him to which he agreed it would

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to award the contract for a hanging furnace in the amount of \$8,000.00

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion: Mr. Harrington stated that the funding for this project will come out of the municipal building trust fund

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

Selectman Shute asked if there was a timeline given and Mr. Ellis stated that it would be within two weeks but that he didn't have a signed document as of yet.

Vice Chairman Pitman stated that he would have one within one minute.

Chairman Robertson asked for any other new business.

He stated that he would mention that he has had a couple of conversations with Wes Golomb who used to chair the town's energy committee.

One of the things that he is interested in when talking with him, and he thought that he would be coming to the Board at some point.

He's been following closely, the solar installation that the Town of Derry did at their transfer station site to which the chairman wasn't aware that they could put solar installations at transfer stations sites but he believes their site is about the same age as Deerfield's and they were able to do that, and apparently with tax credits and some grants, that sort of thing, paid for it pretty handily.

They obviously have more electric usage than Deerfield does but the potential savings that they are on track to save are in the hundreds of thousands when it all pans out.

The chairman stated that he was going to meet with Wes and he is going to give the chairman a little bit of a pitch and will want to ask to come to the board and talk about it as well.

Selectman McGarry stated that he had talked to Mr. Pelletier about this at one point after looking at how much area that they had at the closed landfill and could put the solar panels there.

Mr. Pelletier stated that it would tie in with the Coop and that they don't spend that much money with the Coop. He then asked if the school was also the Coop to which the chairman stated that he didn't think that they were.

Mr. Harrington confirmed that the school was on the Coop.

Selectman McGarry continued that, conceivably, if it goes to the town or the school, the town is still saving money.

Chairman Robertson thought that a "seat of the pants" calculation that if there was five acres of open space with good tree line that was back and away, five acres computes to about 1 megawatt in New Hampshire for a site like that.

He stated that he brought it up so that it wouldn't be a surprise to the Board.

Chairman asked if there was any other new or other business.

Stating that he didn't hear any, and there wasn't any particular reason to go into a non-public session so they could skip that.

Citizen's Comments:

None

Motion: Vice Chairman moves to adjourn

Second: Selectman Shute

Discussion:

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

Next Meeting: Monday, November 18 at 5:30 pm

*The Minutes were transcribed and respectfully submitted by Dianne L. Kimball, Recording Secretary
Pending approval by the Board of Selectmen*