

Board of Selectmen's Minutes
January 19, 2008
8:00 A.M. Faulkner Room

Present: Dore' Hunter, Lauren Rosenzweig, Andrew Magee, Paulina Knibbe and Peter Berry by Conference Call. The Temporary Town Manager, John Murray, Steven Ledoux were present. Recording Secretary; Christine Joyce. The meeting was televised.

CITIZENS' CONCERNS

OPERATIONAL MINUTE

PUBLIC HEARINGS & APPOINTMENTS

SELECTMEN'S BUSINESS

Dore' discussed the Non-Quorum meeting last Sunday. The purpose was to discuss the issue of parity with the finance committee. They were also concerned that we have not hired a Human Resource Officer. Dore' noted the difficulty in hiring someone at the level we can afford.

DORE' HUNTER – Moved to direct John and Steve to execute search for HR Director to have on board by April or as soon after as possible. LAUREN ROSENZWEIG - second. Andy noted the irony that we haven't been able to hire an HR person because we don't pay enough and wants to move forward.

Paulina said she understands the problem is that compensation package was designed in the 60's and there is more wrong with the plan. The concern expressed by the FinCom was that it looked like we were not addressing the whole issue. She said that they looked at the package and we do need to look at the entire package with the HR person on board to look into the current package.

Paulina felt it is a priority to get it done and we do need to address the compensation issue and we should do both. Paulina noted next year we can do the obvious things we will have to do more hiring next year and the new town manager will need to decide how he is going to organize staff. Paulina said we will need to address the compensation pool that we choose not to do because of the compelling issue of parity.

Lauren noted we need to pay at least 10-14 thousand more than we offered to get the HR Director. Lauren said it will be up to the new town manager to reward performance.

Peter agrees with all that was said. UNANIMOUS VOTE

Dore' outlined the discussion on the wage increase. The Finance Committee asked about the comparative town's we used to review parity increases.

Dore' suggested that we move forward and change proposal to the 100 per cent average this year, but not the 105%. Dore' noted that staff would not be happy. He also noted that we need to take care of our employees to retain them.

DORE' HUNTER -Move with regret to get the whole thing done we move forward to go to 100 percent and to make the changes. Stick with the 100 % and do the research with the new town manager DORE' HUNTER – Moved go to 100 % of average of comparative communities, and interact with finance and others appropriate to move to higher amount . PAULINA KNIBBE – second.

Motion Withdrawn

Paulina said the entire subject of compensation is long overdue, and if we were to say that we are doing this year, but it is a multi year issue. The 105% increase for staff will bring it up to parity. She said that she was in favor of 100% this year and looking forward next year.

Andy asked how long it will take to get this completed. He felt we need to address this now. What he sees is we are telling staff this is the third study in the last five or six years in which it has been found that we are under-paying our staff and now we've tabled it again and are telling them don't worry we will resolve this. Andy suggested we set aside 105%.

Andy spoke about his frustration about the Fincom's issue regarding using Newton as a comparitable community. That is one town and removing it will not change the results of these studies.

Lauren said that the problem to solve is we have extremely professional staff and are devoted to the Town and care deeply for the Town. However, the staff needs to look for more money for their families. How do we keep the good people here and stop them from going elsewhere. She said the issue here is we need to have more of an increase. Moral is low and we do appreciate the staff and we want all those in town to be comfortable with the increase and to make sure people are sure it was vetted. She said she would be more comfortable having money for the new manager to hire a New HR Director.

Pauline said the objections from the FinCom were related to issues with the study. Second piece is the category of objects of a blanket 105% for every one. It was the broad brush stoke that would raise concerns with some people. She is not opposed to setting aside for the Town Manager and Human Resource Director for next year to use as incentive, bonuses and dealing with issues above the 100%.

Peter said he is in agreement with Paulina and put money aside.

John said if they go to 100 it would save \$125,000.

DORE' HUNTER - Move we take the 105% off the table. PAULINA KNIBBE –second. Vote 3-1 Andy No

Andy reviewed the letter prepared by Dore'. He said this is a very appropriate letter and felt it would be a good motion. Peter had no statement on the letter to non-union staff; he agreed with the letter also.

PAULINA KNIBBE - Move that the Board accept the statement letter and transmit it to town staff. DORE' HUNTER – second.

Peter asked that it be reformatted and signed by the entire Board.

Lauren said that we strongly look to our budget to create the delta. She said she wanted this letter to be given to the FinCom and the community.

Dore' asked that it be put on web site. Paulina asked that the Beacon also.

Dore' said the ALG situation that was outlined in the memo from Jonathan Chinitz.

Lauren said that faced with being told “no split” and go use NESWC funds her main thing is having more of a shift to town revenues. It is more difficult if we don't have an increasing split. She noted that the caveat said that schools, ALG will take a really comprehensive look at what the shift of revenue will be so we don't have to look at this each year.

Dore' said that they had a discussion of the fabric of ALG. He thinks the group can and will decide how many people should be there and thinks that each of the three groups have who they want there representing them.

Dore' noted that 80% of our time deciding how we will divide the big pot. Dore' hoped the group will stay active during the summer months. Dore' is concerned as we look ahead at the “Concrete Stone opinion” is that the state monies to the towns will shrink and at the same time a possibility that will be sent to the towns and shifted more into Chapter 70 for Education and if that becomes the case and the schools get their portion of Chapter 70 and say this is their money and Chapter 90 is ours.

Paulina spoke about how to finance roofs and boilers and the proposal \$1.5 m of the NESWC money will pay for a portion of roofs and boilers and the split will be moved for the amount of financing the first year (\$125,000) Paulina noted that we would get the \$1.5 back in 10 years. She said that this would be good for the Town and would leave the banks out of it. We would use our money. However, she is not happy with the proposed split; she felt it should have been more.

LAUREN ROSENZWEIG - Move that we adopt the proposal from the ALG that we offer to the schools \$1.5 million from the NESWC fund to pay for phase one of the roof and boiler capital plan, and we receive \$126,000 more to our spilt on going.

Withdraw the above motion.

LAUREN ROSENZWEIG - Moves in concept as we understand and approve, and won't take a vote until we know in writing all details. PAULINA KNIBBE.

John said he would take it to Bill Ryan and the Schools.

Paulina wanted to be sure it is a permanent shift of the split to equal to \$126,000

BUDGET DISCUSSION

The Board discussed the adding of the \$125,000 in the budget for the first phase of 100% parity and asked that it be included in the letter to employees to show our commitment.

Steve Ledoux pointed out a recent parity study in Westford and will share with the Board. It shows more of a split. The HR Director compensation will need to be looked at as to the market. They hired a police chief for \$116,000. Dore' asked that the information be given to John and the FinCom.

LAUREN ROSENZWEIG - Move we set \$125,000 aside for employee compensation fund to be used by the new HR Director and new Town Manager.

Dore' offered that we set aside \$200,000 we need to leave un-programmed to use it were we need to use it this year to demonstrate to staff that we could come back to it and we are not abandoned is proposal. He feels we need a fund for acquisition of employees.

Steve said that he could hire an HR Person and for the Board to set a target date for this. He said that during his meetings with Department heads, they talked about the parity increase and that it would not take place and also wanted the HR Director position filled. Steve wanted to know how to allocate the funds. It is important that the funds are allocated for incentives.

Paulina wanted funds set aside for Manager and HR for targeted uses.

Paulina offered that we set aside some pot of money (\$50,000-70,000) for a delta for HR Director and the targeted use by the Town Manager under his discretion this year (FY09).

Dore' suggested we let Steve and John talk about what money should be avail in the Manager reserve to hire or give bonuses to and get the number after the blue book (un -specified appropriation) what money do we have for the priority list. We need it quickly.

Andy asked about the delta in the blue book that Paulina was talking about. John said he could add a compensation reserve line in the Manager's budget. John said top step for department head is \$72,000. Andy noted the delta in professional salaries. Andy asked if that was the combination of the two deltas with 105%. Andy asked if we would go through the blue book in ripple down on each budget. John noted we are bottom line budget to get a HR Director on board and we will need this to happen in this year's budget. Budgets are authorizations from Town Meeting, and we don't have to implement them.

Andy asked about making changes in the Blue Book. John suggested it would be handled in the Budget Supplement.

John was asked to e-mail his recommendations to the Board.

Dore' asked that staff tell us when there is a substantial increase that is not related to parity.

John doesn't think we should be using funds for Woodbury Lane. We should fund the ABCC funds of \$2,000, Shuttle can be reduced to \$10,000, Hayward and Main Traffic Study can wait,

Board of Selectmen Special Meeting
January 19, 2008]

BOARD OF SELECTMEN AGENDA
January 19, 2008
8:00 A.M. – Francis Faulkner Room

I. CITIZENS' CONCERNS

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS & APPOINTMENTS

None

III. SELECTMEN'S BUSINESS

1. FY09 BUDGET AND ALG DISCUSSION

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

None

V. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Not Required

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Enclosed please find additional correspondence that is strictly informational and requires no Board action.

FUTURE AGENDAS

To facilitate scheduling for interested parties, the following items are scheduled for discussion on future agendas. This IS NOT a complete Agenda.

renovation of three fire stations be taken off (we can do with existing funds) and COA Expansion is not ready. We don't have to purchase the Main Street House. The social worker position and fund from free cash if the Town wants. The street light project to be reduced to \$125,000 for the energy savings and how we fund. Design services of the intersection and senior center to be left as pending.

Andy suggested that all environmental incentives' be funded through NESWC.

OTHER BUSINESS

DORE' HUNTER – Move to accept the payment plan for the restaurant as requested in the memo from Staff. ANDREW MAGEE – second. Lauren Abstaining

Lauren asked about the Planning Board coming in to discuss their articles. She wants the Board to review and go forward before the Planning Board begins extensive work on an article that will not be included. Christine will arrange for the Feb 4th.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

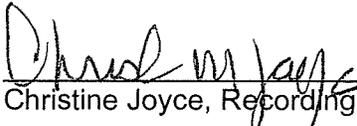
NONE

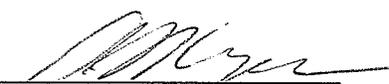
CONSENT AGENDA

NONE

EXECUTIVE SESSION

NONE


Christine Joyce, Recording Secty


Clerk, Board of Selectmen

Date 25 Feb 2008