

Town of Fairhaven

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TOWN CLERK

Finance Committee

2019 MAR 11 A 11:11

Minutes of the meeting for <March 29, 2018> at the Jeffery W. Osuch BPW Administration Building, 5 Arsene St., Fairhaven, MA

Members in attendance:

Padraic Elliott, Robert A. Furtado, Kathi Carter, Lisa Plante, Bernard F. Roderick, Tracey Diggins, Jessica Dwelly

Member absent:

Thomas Alden

Town of Fairhaven:

Mark Rees- Town Administrator

Wendy Graves- Collector/Treasurer/Finance Director

Doug Brady- Rogers School Committee

Nils Isaksen- Rogers School Committee Chairman

Gary Lavalette- Historical Commission

Jay Simmons- Conservation Commission Chairman

Geoffrey Haworth- Conservation Commission

Meeting was covered by government access television.

Chairman Pat called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Announced that the meeting was being recorded by government access TV. Chairman has to be notified if anyone else present is recording the meeting by video or audio.

Motion made by Bernie to accept the minutes from March 22, 2018. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Motion passes 6-0-1 with Tracey abstaining.

- Mr. Rees presents a Reserve Fund Transfer request from the Rec Center in the amount of \$5,403.32.
 - The transfer request includes back-up information from the company responsible for the annual fire sprinkler inspection.

- The paperwork states the existing "dry pipe valve" has an internal defect, caused by corrosion, that could cause a failure in the event of a live fire.
- Parts are no longer available for the valve and replacement is recommended.
- Mr. Rees states because of the chance of life safety issues, this qualifies as a proper Reserve Fund Transfer request.
- The Chairman agrees stating it is unforeseen.
- After reviewing the paperwork to committee has no questions.
 - Jessica motions to transfer \$5,403.32 to Rec Center Acct. #001-640-00-5244-00-0412. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
- Ms. Graves distributes a copy of an updated spreadsheet showing the votes we had taken on the General Fund Budget, and what items remained.
 - Mr. Rees states the Selectmen have voted to use \$42,227 of surplus money found in the budget to fund a portion of the Police Salary for the SRO position. The balance of the approximately \$55,000 position will be founded from the Police overtime budget.
- Chairman starts with Human Resources-Operating Expenses.
 - This was held by Lisa.
 - Lisa states we were sold a Human Resources Director and ended up with a big HR Department.
 - Lisa states she doesn't believe in the milestone certificates for employees. States their paycheck is their thanks for their job.
 - Chairman states he agrees somewhat with Lisa, but states it is the HR Directors idea to acknowledge workers for their time with the Town.
 - Mr. Rees states any organization's biggest asset is their workers. Feels it is a small amount to keep good employees.
 - Lisa states workers already get vacation time, sick time, retention bonuses, etc. Questions whether people will keep the certificate.
 - Kathi agrees with Lisa. States we have wonderful employees in Town and she thanks them when she sees them. States she feels it is sophomoric and is more like a participation certificate.
 - Bernie asks if she can absorb the \$300 in her budget if it was cut. Chairman states she seemed to justify all the expenses in her budget.
 - Chairman states she is new to the job and is trying to do a good job.
 - Ms. Graves states the certificates are not for one year of service. States there are employees that have been with the Town for 20 – 25 years.
 - Jessica agrees that little things can mean a lot to employees.

- Bob expresses disappointment with the fact that the Wellness Committee's record keeping, in regards to participation, have not been good.
 - Jessica motions for Human Resources- Operating Expenses \$23,750. Seconded by Tracey.
 - Lisa motions for \$23,450. Seconded by Kathi.
 - Vote on Jessica motions for \$23,750. Motion passes 4-3 with Chairman Pat, Bob, Jessica, & Tracey in favor, Lisa, Bernie, & Kathi opposed.
- Economic Development Committee
 - This was held because of the increase in the budget.
 - Mr Rees states the committee is meeting tonight and the request is now for \$7,500.
 - Mr. Rees suggests waiting so we could get the input from the committee.
- Board of Appeals- Salaries & Wages
 - This was held by the Chairman.
 - Chairman states the amount is supposed to include a step increase for the secretary, but the number is a 57% increase over last year.
 - Ms. Graves states she spoke with Mr. Fostin, and he stated the secretary worked 120 hours last year on 40B cases. He increased it by 20 hrs. this year, based on the current cases.
 - Mr. Rees states she is paid by the hour and if the money isn't used it will return to the General Fund.
 - Lisa motions for Board of Appeals-Salaries & Wages \$2,572. Seconded by Jessica. Vote: Unanimous
- Legal Expense
 - This was held by Bernie.
 - Bernie states he no longer has an issue.
 - Lisa motions for Legal Expense \$170,000. Seconded by Jessica. Vote: Unanimous
- Conservation Commission/Sustainability Office
 - This was held because of the full time Conservation Agent.
 - Mr. Rees states the current Building Commissioner works 10 hours per week as the Conservation Agent.
 - Lisa states the cost will increase next year because this year it is prorated for only 8 months.

- Mr. Rees passes out a packet of information as back-up for the new position, including the job description.
The packet also includes a recommendation for the position in the Master Plan, as well as a letter from Planning Board Chairman Wayne Hayward in support of the position. The packet also includes information about the Community Rating System (CRS), used to lower flood insurance premiums.
- Lisa asks if there will be a request for an administrative assistant next year.
Mr. Rees states he cannot foretell the future.
- Lisa states she heard, at a Selectmen's meeting, that the Conservation Agent would be patrolling the shoreline.
Mr. Rees states the agent would be responsible for protecting the wetlands.
- Bernie asks if the duties in the job description are being carried out now.
Mr. Rees states they are not.
- Bernie asks if this position is prorated for 8 months now, could it be postponed until next year.
Mr. Rees states no, because the Building Commissioner is retiring in September.
- Bernie asks if it is necessary.
Mr. Rees states he feels it is critical.
- Chairman states it looks like we are replacing the building inspector with 2 people. Asks what we would do if he wasn't retiring.
Mr. Rees states this position was number 2 behind the HR Director, on his list of needed positions.
- Jay Simmons, Conservation Commission Chairman, states he feels there should be 2 building inspectors for a town this size. States that the current inspector cannot handle the work load.
- Geoffrey Haworth states that he was put on the Conservation Commission when there was a shortage of members. He states that 10 hours a week is not enough time to get the job done.
Mr. Haworth states Mr. Fostin doesn't have time to write up violations, and spends his time primarily attending meetings and compiling the paperwork for applicants.
- Mr. Hayworth explains how the CRS could save the Town and residents money on flood insurance.
- Mr. Haworth states the Town will not get another building inspector to do both jobs. He states the Conservation Commission must use consultants because they do not have the staff.
- Lisa states the job description seems very involved and questions whether \$75,000 as a salary will be sufficient.

- Mr. Lavalette states he was on the hazard mitigation team and if the Town wanted to do the rating system, a coordinator would be required.
 - Kathi asks about the possibility of regionalizing the position.
Mr. Rees states the need is too great to share a person.
 - Chairman thanks the Conservation Commission for attending.
 - Lisa asks if they are seeing the potential for violations because of the lack of staff.
Mr. Simmons states violations go unchecked because they know there is not time to follow-up on them.
 - Lisa motions for Conservation Commission/Sustainability Office-Salaries & Wages \$55,290. Seconded by Jessica. Vote: Unanimous
- Police Department- Salaries & Wages
 - Chairman states when the new command structure was put in place we did not expect to lose a School Resource Officer.
 - Mr. Rees states because the Fin Com found \$42,227 surplus in the budget, the Selectmen are recommending adding that to the Police Salary budget for the SRO position and let the Chief make up the remaining \$10,000-\$12,000 needed for the position from the Overtime budget.
 - Bernie asks if any more money is anticipated from the State.
Mr. Rees states he is not expecting any additional.
 - Chairman asks what the SRO does during the summer when school is out.
Mr. Rees states they patrol.
 - Lisa motions for Police Department-Salaries & Wages \$3,489,210. Seconded by Tracey. Vote: Unanimous
- Veterans Services
 - Chairman states the Veterans Agent is going from a part time position to a full time position.
 - Mr. Rees states they are looking at regionalizing the position, but they still have to comply with State law until that goes into effect.
Mr. Rees states the previous part time agent was grandfathered in when the law changed approximately 10 years ago.
 - Lisa motions for Veterans Services-Salaries & Wages \$71,614. Seconded by Tracey. Vote: Unanimous
- Mr. Rees states, with the exception of the Economic Development Committee, we now have a consensus budget with the Selectmen.

8:05 PM. Chairman calls a recess. Back in session at 8:10 PM.

- Capital Improvement Plan- Preserve and Restore Rogers School
 - Mr. Rees states the Town has struggled with what to do with the building.
 - Mr. Rees states the Town has put out 2 RFP's with no useful response.
 - The last study showed there was no economical use for the building.
 - The consultant feels the most viable solution is a public/private partnership.
 - No one will move in the building without some sort of subsidy.
 - The plan is to apply to have the building put on the National Registry of Historic Buildings. This would allow for receiving grants.
 - The Town cannot apply for the tax credits itself. It must set up a nonprofit to apply for the tax credits.
 - The plan also calls for reactivating the heating system to maintain the building at 55 degrees, to help combat the moisture issues.
 - Mr. Rees states there is currently a proposal for housing before the Rogers Committee, but the building still needs to be stabilized.
 - Lisa questions putting the building on the National Registry. Would this make it more expensive to maintain the building because of the standards?
Mr. Rees states you have to comply with certain standards, but without the grants it would not be possible to do the public/private partnership.
 - Bernie questions whether the overall issue is preserving the building or the overall site. He suggests either using the building as a Town Hall Annex or tearing the building down and making a park with the bells on display.
 - Mr. Isaksen states taking the building down is the worst case scenario. He states demo would be expensive and he wants to preserve the building, and the skyline of Fairhaven.
 - Bernie asks, if after mothballing the building nothing happens, then what.
Mr. Brady states we are looking at a ten year process. We have to start somewhere if we are going to save the building.
 - Mr. Lavalette states with the National Registry the building would be eligible for grant money.
 - Bernie asks if the Town would give up ownership.
Mr. Brady states the Historical Register would protect the building with restrictions whether the Town was the owner or not.
 - Chairman states he feels it comes down to 2 options. We either maintain and preserve the building or it is the cost to tear it down.
Chairman asks what the cost is to tear the building down.
 - Mr. Rees states the report from the consultant is on the Town website.

- Mr. Lavalette states the number of house lots that would be created by the demolition of the building, does not financial cover the cost of the demo.
 - Tracey questions where do we draw the line. Asks what the status of the Oxford School process is.
Mr. Rees states that is still moving forward.
 - Chairman states we have already done 2 RFP's, used 1 consultant, asks Mr. Rees if he confident continuing this process.
Mr. Rees states there are risks in everything.
 - Discussion of placing the building on the National Registry.
 - Discussion of only mothballing the building for 3 years.
 - Chairman states it basically comes down to: if you are voting in favor of this you are voting to save the building. If you vote against you are voting to tear down the building or have it fall down.
 - Chairman states we will wait until next week to vote.
 - Lisa states she would like to see the building saved.
- Review and voting of Articles:
 - Article 4- Sewer Capital Fee (FY18)
 - This Article transfers money taken from the Capital charge on sewer bills to the Sewer Capital Stabilization Fund.
 - Lisa motions to Recommend Approval at Town Meeting. Seconded by Jessica.
Vote: Unanimous
 - Article 5- Amended FY18 General Fund Operating Budget
 - Lisa motions to Recommend at Town Meeting. Seconded by Jessica. Vote: Unanimous
 - Article 6- Amended FY18 Sewer Enterprise Fund Operating Budget
 - Lisa motions to Recommend at Town Meeting. Seconded by Jessica. Vote: Unanimous
 - Article 7- Amended FY18 Water Enterprise Fund Operating Budget
 - Lisa motions to Recommend At Town Meeting. Seconded by Jessica. Vote: Unanimous
 - Article 8- Bills of Prior Years
 - Lisa motions to Recommend At Town Meeting. Seconded by Jessica. Vote: Unanimous

- Article 9- Setting Salaries of Town Officers-FY19
 - Lisa motions to Recommend Approval at Town Meeting. Seconded by Jessica.
Vote: Unanimous
- Article 11- FY19 Water Enterprise Fund Operating Budget
 - Lisa motions to Recommend Approval at Town Meeting. Seconded by Tracey.
Vote: Unanimous
- Article 12-FY19 Sewer Enterprise Fund Operating Budget
 - Bernie motions to Recommend Approval at Town Meeting. Seconded by Lisa.
Vote: Unanimous
- Article 13- Appropriate Matching Funds for FEMA Grant-Mobile Radios 5% or \$12,585
 - Lisa motions to Recommend Approval at Town Meeting. Seconded by Jessica.
Vote: Unanimous
- Article 14- General Fund Capital Plan (FY19)
 - Lisa motions to Recommend Approval at Town Meeting of the following amounts:

A. BPW Loader 963 (final payment of Lease/Purchase)	\$143,190.62
B. Fire- Hydraulic Rescue Equipment	\$32,000
C. Information Tech.- Fiber Optic Connectivity Project (GF portion)	\$430,000
D. Information Tech.- Hardware Equipment Replacement	\$30,000
E. Police- Two Patrol Vehicles	\$90,000
F. BPW- Vehicle	\$30,000
H. Fire- Radio Communication Repeater	\$64,000
I. School- High School Gym Dehumidification Project	\$283,000
J. BPW-Security Camera System	\$20,000
K. COA/Recreation-Replace HVAC system at Senior/Rec. Center	\$200,000
L. Police- Live Scan Finger Print Machine	\$25,000
M. BPW- Replace 2000 Ford Van-Unit #13	\$55,000
N. BPW- Replace 1986 Bobcat- Unit #23	\$72,000
O. BPW- Replace Ford Tractor- Unit #1920	\$44,000
P. BPW- Parking at Livesey Park	\$70,000

 - All items seconded by Jessica. Vote: Unanimous
 - Bob questions why the Bobcat increased from \$65,000 to \$72,000.

Mr. Rees states the BPW is now purchasing a brush attachment to clear snow from the bike path.

- Article 15- Roadwork FY19
 - Mr. Rees states Billy's Way is now in question because some residents do not want it paved.
 - We will hold until next week.
- Article 16- State Aid to Highways-FY19
 - Lisa motions to Recommend Approval at Town Meeting. Seconded by Jessica.
Vote: Unanimous
- Article 17- Funding Capital Stabilization Fund-Transfer from Free Cash and SBAB Reimbursement
 - Mr. Rees states this should amount to \$2.3 million from Free Cash and \$341,000 from the SBAB for the middle school roof.
 - Lisa motions to Recommend Approval at Town Meeting. Seconded by Jessica.
Vote: Unanimous
- Article 18- Ambulance Stabilization- FY19
 - Lisa motions to Recommend Approval at Town Meeting. Seconded by Jessica.
Vote: Unanimous
- Article 19- Water Enterprise Capital Plan-FY19
 - Lisa motions to Recommend Approval at Town Meeting for the following amounts:

A. Fiber Optic Connectivity Project (Water Ent. Portion)	\$40,000
B. New dump truck	\$75,000
C. Water Rate Software	\$20,000
D. Meter Evaluation	\$150,000

 - All above amounts seconded by Jessica. Vote: Unanimous
- Article 20- Sewer Enterprise Capital Plan-FY19
 - Lisa motions to Recommend Approval at Town Meeting for the following amounts:

A. Fiber Optic Connectivity Project (Sewer Ent. Portion)	\$35,000
B. Treatment Plant Nitrogen Removal Upgrade Planning Studies	\$180,000
C. West Island Treatment Plant Improvements	\$700,000

- D. Pump Replacement at Abby Pump Station \$30,000
- E. Replacement of Portable Pump Station \$36,000

➤ All above amounts seconded by Jessica. Vote: Unanimous

- Article 21- Community Preservation Program Appropriations-FY19
 - Members have questions about parts:
 - H. Bell Committee- Revere Bell Restoration & Permanent Display Project \$18,500
 - J. Recreation Center/Wellness Committee- Bike Path Fitness Stations \$7,500
 - Ms. Graves will see about getting more information on these items.
- Lisa asks Mr. Rees about Article 25- Maintenance to Rogers and Oxford School Buildings-FY19
 - Mr. Rees states this is just minimal maintenance, broken windows, etc.
- Mr. Rees passes out a chart showing the changes to Town Hall personnel over the past 2 years and runs through it for members.
- Mr. Rees passes out a breakdown of the Real Estate Property Taxes for the past several years and runs through it.
- Chairman states next week we will discuss the Economic Development Committee, Roadwork, and CPC

9:38PM. Lisa motions to adjourn. Seconded by Jessica. Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted by:

Robert A. Furtado
Finance Committee Secretary

accepted 4/9/2018
Robert A. Furtado