

Approved

BOARD OF FINANCE MEETING SALEM TOWN OFFICE BUILDING SPECIAL MEETING

MARCH 26, 2009 - 7:30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Eckart, C
J. Griggs
Householder, G.
Lyden, K. (Alternate)
Pech, G. (Alternate)
Preston, G.
Weinschenker, W.

ABSENT:

Freiert, K.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Weinschenker called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

Agenda:

To complete review of the Selectman's portion of the budget for presentation at the public hearing.

Bill Weinschenker stated the purpose of this meeting is to finalize the budget with regards to the Selectman's portion of the budget. Bill stated that the BOF members have additional information in their folders that will not be addressed at this time. Chairman Weinschenker acknowledged visitors at the meeting and asked them to speak, if they wish, at this time.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS: Sue Spang, Gene Maiorano, Dick Asafaylo, Jim Miller

Sue Spang voiced her concerns with the reduction of \$4,000 in Dept #645-Recreation. She believes that the \$4,000 cut to this budget, that was almost 20%, was unfair since the other departments' deductions were based on 2%. Sue does not object to a 2% reduction. The information that led to the \$4,000 cut was incorrect. The league's "pay as you play" rule is already in place.

Dick Asafaylo spoke on the elimination of one state trooper. Dick referenced the letter from J. Fogarty that the BOF have in the packets. He agrees with the information in that letter. (Letter included with minutes) Dick's concern is with the elimination of the night patrol. He believes that in these economic times the presents of the State Troopers are needed more. It is a known fact that when the economy deteriorates, crime increases. Dick stated that the BOS voted on this reduction in town services and he voted against it. Dick would like the BOF to review this safety budget. He would like to use the undesignated fund to allow this serves to continue in town.

Gene Maiorano informed the BOF that he cut another \$1,200 from his budget to show support. Gene wanted the BOF to be aware that his budget was reduced 2 years ago, and last year he requested no increases. He stated that he cannot continue doing this.

Jim Miller informed the BOF of the new State's policy of making towns fund more of the Resident Troopers' expenses. More troopers will be removed from office jobs and placed on patrol. J. Miller informed the BOF that by sending the trooper back to the barracks does not mean that the town will be left unprotected. More information about the State's new policy should be collected before making any decisions

SEAT ALTERNATE:

M/S/C (Householder/Griggs) to seat K. Lyden in place of K. Freiert.

Yes: (5) Eckart, Griggs, Householder, Preston, Weinschenker

No: (0)

Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Weinschenker asked Selectman Ross to discuss the reductions he made to the department he was responsible for. The BOF asked B. Ross to come up with a reduction of \$74,000. Before proceeding further. Bob wanted to explain that none of these cuts reflect any displeasure with services.

A. Dept #105 - Salaries

Selectman Ross addressed the BOF with these recommended reductions in the 2009/2010. He stated that he meet with the 2 unions. The following consensus was realized:

EMT Union adjusted their uniform allows by \$1,150.00

PW Union will not grieve the reduction of OT and since we are laying off one employee, summer help can not be used.

The following positions were eliminated in dept #105:

Town Clerk Assistant in the amount of (\$12,580)

Summer Help (PW dept) (\$11,458)

Public Work Employee (\$36,357)

Adjustment to EMT/Maintenance line (\$ 472)

Total Dept#105 (\$60,867)

Neither of the two Unions was willing to forgo their increases in salary in the 2009/2010 year.

B. Dept #138 Employee Benefits

Recommended adjustments to this department are as follows:

FICA (ER Portion) (\$3,774)

Medicare (ER Portion) (\$ 883)

Insurance (\$2,200)

Pension (\$1,818)

Unemployment Expense \$38,155

Total Dept #138 \$29,481

G Householder does not believe that the unemployment amount is correct. Question where asked about the unemployment expense. This line was based on a 65 week rate. It was reduced to 52 weeks. This amount was changed from \$38,155 to 30,524. The total amount of adjustment for this department is \$21,849.

K. Lyden asked about insurance and if there should be a bigger deduction to the budget than the \$2,200 stated. It was explained that this full time employee is not enrolled in the insurance. The town has a policy concerning employee's that opt out of insurance benefits.

C. Dept #210 Security

The following adjustment to this department is - Resident Trooper- in the amount of \$41,227. Selectman Ross wanted it to be known that the trooper will not lose his job. He would be sent back to the barracks.

Other reductions not covered under the Selectman's department are Salem Fire Company in the amount of \$1,200 and IWCC in the amount of \$500.

1) #105 Salaries

M/S/C (Preston/Eckart) to approve the Selectman's recommendations for decreasing Dept #105 - Salaries- in the amount of \$60,867 to \$1,016,565 for presentation at the public hearing. Vote: Approved Unanimously.

G. Preston asked if we could reduce the amount of unemployment expense and adjust this line item at a later time. J Griggs would be opposed to this. People are looking at 6 to 18 months to find new jobs. G. Householder agreed with Janet and stated that the unemployment rate is at 8% and climbing. Griggs stated it is taking a lot longer to get a job. G. Householder agreed with Janet. It would be hard for a PW employee to find a new job in another town.

2) # 138 Employee Benefits

M/S/C (Householder/Preston) to approve the Selectman's recommendations for Dept #138 - Employee Benefit- increasing the amount by \$21,850 for presentation at the public hearing. Vote: Approved Unanimously

3) #210 Safety

G. Householder stated that when he decided to be on the BOF his number one priorities were safety/security, education then nice to have things. He is not in favor of this recommendation.
J. Miller stated that police work is not proactive but reactive. If you call the barracks a trooper will respond. If the town's resident trooper is off duty, you will have to call the barracks.
J. Griggs talked about the benefit of having resident troopers knowing the town and the people that live here.
G. Preston agreed and mentions that visibility is another benefit.
B. Weinschenker stated that if the town agreed to add this back into the budget the mil rate will increase. Selectman Ross reminded the BOF that the state wanted to increase the town portion of the cost of the resident troopers. He said he was not cutting the town's protection, but just restructuring it.
K. Lyden stated that the emergency services are a low percentage of the town's budget.

M/S/C (Preston/Eckart) to approve the Selectman's recommendation reducing Dept #210 - Security- in the amount of \$41,227 to \$162,923 for presentation at the public hearing. Vote: Voting for approval, Eckart, Griggs, Preston, Weinschenker. Opposed Householder, Lyden. Motion carried

Chairman Weinschenker informed the BOF that he received an email from Kim Siebert about the TAR funding. Revenue was over estimated by \$50,000. This will be addressed at the meeting after the public hearing. Bill asked for a motion to accept the budget as is for presentation at the public hearing.

M/S/C (Householder/Lyden) to approve the General Government budget at \$3,162,146, BOE budget at \$9,995,385 and Capital Expenses at \$649,985 for a total of \$13,807,516 for presentation at the public hearing. Vote: Approved Unanimously

M/S/C (Preston/Griggs) moved to adjourn the meeting @ 8:45 PM Vote: Approved Unanimously

Virginia Casey
Recording Secretary