

BOARD OF SELECTMEN – March 10, 2015

MINUTES:

Meeting called to order at 7:08 PM. Present were First Selectman Donald Stein and Selectmen Ray Pech and Mark Hemenway.

DELEGATIONS: No delegations were present.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mark Hemenway, seconded by Ray Pech, and passed unanimously to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2015 meeting.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mark Hemenway, seconded by Ray Pech, and passed unanimously to approve the following tax credits and refunds:

\$ 282.17	Toyota Motor Credit Corporation	refund
\$1247.80	Lightstat Inc.	refund
\$ 43.13	Christopher C. Eaton	credit

DISCUSSION: The Selectmen reviewed the expenditures through February 28th and the proposed budget for FY 2015/2016. Relative to the current fiscal year, it was noted that the actuals were in line with the budget and there were no apparent issues with the current year budget.

MOTION: On a motion made by Ray Pech, seconded by Don Stein, and passed by a 2 to 1 vote (Don Stein/Ray Pech – yes, Mark Hemenway – no), the updated ‘15/’16 General Government budget of \$2,069,966 (5.69%) was approved for submittal to the Board of Finance. This includes the full cost for the Resident State Trooper, as described below. If the cost basis for the Trooper were unchanged, the General Government budget increase would be 2.79%.

A short summary of the approved budget and the discussion is as follows:

- The October 2014 Grand List increased by 0.75%, from \$339,270,646 to \$341,702,725, which will slightly help to offset any approved tax increase.
- The Town’s Undesignated Surplus, after transfers are made as approved for this fiscal year, will be \$1,434,112, which is ~12.6% of the current year expenditures.
- Since the last Selectmen’s meeting, minimal changes were made to the line items, other than the Resident State Trooper. Most of these changes reflect input from the agencies that the Town supports. As far as other budgets, Regional 7’s budget only shows a \$25,549 increase to the Town due to shifts in population at the High School. RRDD #1 is down by \$1,627, and the Barkhamsted School budget is up by 2.08% (\$84,935) from last year’s budget as amended at the Town Meeting which authorized funds for an additional teacher.
- The Selectmen discussed the proposed change to the cost of the Resident Trooper, which would go from 70% to 100%, per the Governor’s State budget proposal. The impact of this change as compared to this year is \$61,498, which reflects the change in cost share and a 3% increase in the full line item. This brings the cost to the Town for the Trooper

to a level of \$187,720, versus a cost under the old formula which would have been \$131,104 for FY '15/'16. The discussion focused on the merits of the position vs. this newly proposed cost.

There was consensus that the Trooper position was important to the Town, but Mark Hemenway was opposed to spending the full amount and voted against including it in the budget. Ray Pech and Don Stein voted in favor of referring the budget to the Board of Finance, with this cost increase included, to allow the Board of Finance to have a full debate on the subject. However, Ray expressed his discomfort with the Governor's current proposal, but voted in favor of it in order to forward the worst case scenario to the BOF.

The Selectmen agreed that this was a very difficult issue and Don Stein also took an action to determine if there were other, regional approaches to policing that could be implemented, although that is unlikely by the end of this fiscal year. He will prepare a data sheet and options for the Board of Finance to facilitate the discussion. He also told the other Selectmen that he had testified, along with other small town Selectmen against the budget bill on Monday at the Legislative Office Building.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mark Hemenway, seconded by Ray Pech, and passed unanimously to authorize Maria Mullady, Town Clerk to apply to the State of Connecticut for a Historic Document Preservation Grant and to authorize Donald S. Stein, First Selectman to execute a contract with the Connecticut State Library Board for the same grant.

MOTION: A motion was made by Ray Pech, seconded by Mark Hemenway, and passed unanimously to authorize Donald S. Stein, First Selectman to enter into an agreement with Campion Ambulance to provide Paramedic Intercept Services to the Town. This agreement is a continuation of the services that are currently provided to the Town to supplement our ambulance service agreements with New Hartford and Barkhamsted.

Other Business:

- Don Stein will be meeting with Berkshire Alarm, who currently provides alarm services to the Town, to assess options for upgrades to the Town Hall alarm system.
- Don Stein has advertised for a Building Official and is also discussing the possibility of regional services with other towns. The availability of qualified individuals to work on a part time basis is extremely limited, so a regional solution might be of long term benefit.
- Discussions are continuing with the Recreation Director regarding her responsibilities and compensation and Don Stein will attend the next Recreation Commission meeting to get their input on this subject.
- The Town has closed on the loan for the School Roof and Photovoltaics projects. This loan for \$1,850,000 is for a ten-year term at 2.55 with large payments of around \$500,000 in the first two years to reflect the reimbursement by the State for the two projects. Once those payments are made, the annual cost will be approximately \$105,000, for the remaining 8 years. There will be tax impact in the '15/'16 fiscal year for these bonds.
- The Selectmen discussed a request by a resident to publicize a fundraiser for a child's medical condition. The conclusion was that this would not be appropriate for the Town as there was no way to do this for one individual and not for everyone. Don Stein will make the Town Facebook page available for this kind of issue.
- It now appears that the Town Clerk's map copier will be able to be fixed at a cost of

\$400. Therefore, the purchase of the new copier will be deferred.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald S. Stein
First Selectman