

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES JANUARY 14, 2013
APPROVED**

Present: Stuart M. Schulman, Chairman; Peter S. Cunningham, Vice Chairman; John G. Petropoulos; Anna Eliot

Absent: Joshua A. Degen;

Also Present: Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager; Patrice Garvin, Executive Assistant

Mr. Schulman called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m. and made some brief community announcements.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Mr. Haddad stated that at last week's meeting the Board asked that further research be done on securing a Saturday date in April for the Spring Town Meeting. The Board asked the we find out if there is an alternate location to hold the meeting. To secure a different location would cause some logistical problems. To use the gym at the Middle School would be very difficult based on the number of chairs that would have to be located and moved to the gym for the meeting. Using the Black Box Theater at the High School would move the Town Meeting out of the Center of Town. Mr. Haddad spoke to Ms. Tuomi and found out that the PAC is available on Saturday, April 20, 2013. The Moderator is available on that date, as is Town Counsel. Mr. Haddad spoke with the Regional School District to make sure moving the meeting up one week would not impact their FY14 Budget Schedule. It does not and they can accommodate that date. The only problem with the April 20th date is the fact that it is the end of School vacation week, which could limit attendance at town meeting. The Board has two choices for the first day/night of the Spring Town Meeting. It can either be held on Saturday, April 20th or Monday April 29th. Mr. Haddad enclosed two proposed scheduled depending on the date chosen by the Board. Mr. Haddad noted that the first day impacts the date of the annual Town Election. Mr. Petropoulos was concerned with the April 20th date being the end of vacation week. Mr. Schulman was not convinced a Saturday needed to be had and thought April 29th made the most sense. Ms. Eliot stated that the meeting set for 1-26-13 was a Saturday and noted the activities in the Spring on a Saturday. The consensus of the Board was to have Spring Town Meeting on April 29th at 7pm.

Mr. Cunningham called the Spring Annual Town Meeting for April 29, 2013 at 7pm at the Groton Dunstable PAC. Mr. Petropoulos seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.

Motions for Special Town Meeting[Document 1-Motions]

1. Mr. Haddad noted that the motion for Herbicide Treatment for Lost Lake will ask for \$95k from the Excess and Deficiency Fund (Free Cash). The balance in Free Cash is \$386k, and Mr. Haddad was comfortable with that balance.
2. Mr. Haddad presented the bid results for Fitch's Bridge. [Document 2-Bid Results] The bids are extremely favorable for the Town to both demolish and replace the Bridge if the Board so choses. The bids for demolition and replacement range from a low of \$375,244 (including alternate #1) to \$609,836. The three low bids were within \$25k of each other, which is very close. The apparent low bidder is E.T. & L Corp out of Stow, MA. They are the company that did the culvert/bridge repair in Littleton on Route 119 after the flood in 2010. The low bid for demolition is \$138,997 from New England Infrastructure

(the low bid from Onyx Corp was less than \$1,000 more.) The Board needs to decide whether to demolish the Bridge, or demolish and replace the Bridge. Based on these bid results, Mr. Haddad recommended the Town demolish and replace the Bridge. The Selectmen have options on how to fund this project. The Town can borrow the necessary funding and issue one bond for both the Bridge and the new Center Fire Station. This would bring the total bond issue to approximately \$8.2 million. The FY14 Budget contains \$500k for debt service for these projects. The Town would need to come up with an additional \$27k in the budget to cover the debt service on this amount based on projections by the Towns Financial Advisor. Mr. Haddad attached a proposed debt schedule. [Document 3-Debt Schedule] Another option would be to transfer a portion of the funds from the Stabilization Fund and the remainder from the CPC. Mr. Haddad stated that he would be meeting with a member of the CPC to discuss this option in more detail.

Mr. Haddad stated that there were 12 bids received. Mr. Haddad has not heard back from the Greenway Committee on the add alternate. Mr. Haddad asked the board to discuss and determine which option it would like to present to Town Meeting.

- A. Borrow the entire \$438k: Mr. Haddad noted that in this amount was including a 10% contingency and additional engineering costs.
- B. Receive funds from CPC (\$276k) and Stabilization Fund (\$162k): Mr. Haddad noted at this time that CPC could only borrow 80% of what the Town takes in and currently the CPC is at that 80% limit. The money would be taken from the CPC unallocated account. The CPC is willing to take a out of sequence application. Mr. Haddad is still waiting to hear back from counsel regarding any DOT regulations for taking CPC money. Mr. Petropoulos asked what the impact would be on Parks and Recreation Funding. Mr. Haddad stated that he has invited Mr. Straus to a meeting and noted that there are no shovel ready project from Parks and Recreation. There is one other application before the CPC which is \$150k to the Conservation Fund. Most importantly the CPC approval of Fitch's Bridge would not impact the Surrenden Farm Payment.
- C. \$428k from CPC: Mr. Haddad stated that this option would not include the add alternate. Money would be available to the Conservation Commission as well as Fitch's Bridge.
- D. Demo only \$150k: Mr. Haddad explained that under this option a different bid was chosen as the low bidder. The Low bidder here is New England Infrastructure. Mr. Haddad stated that the Clerk of the Works amount is in the total. Mr. Schulman stated that he wanted to hear from the CPC. Mr. Haddad did not feel a better price could be found for this project. Mr. Cunningham supported the article but was still unsure of how to fund it. Mr. Haddad asked that the selectmen bring one motion to Town Meeting and that an amendment could occur. Mr. Petropoulos stated that the two prices one with replacement and one without needed to be given at Town Meeting. Now that the Finance Committee has the bids their position could change prior to Town Meeting.
Mr. Petropoulos moved to support the demolition and replacement of Fitch's Bridge. Mr. Cunningham seconded the motion. Motion unanimously carried.

3. Fire Station Funding: Mr. Haddad noted that the motion was missing the \$150k for the Clerk of the Works which would be paid out of the Stabilization Fund. The amount of 6.9 million will be borrowed and not tied to a debt exclusion override. Mr. Haddad stated that he received the letter to the Editor from Mr. Loving and replied back to Mr. Loving with his own letter to the Editor regarding a debt

exclusion. Mr. Haddad explained the election process if the Fire Station Funding went to a debt exclusion vote. Mr. Haddad noted that he has been planning for the funding of the fire station within the levy for over three years. Mr. Haddad explained the levy capacity has been building over the years and even with OPEB a fire station can still be funded in the levy. Mr. Haddad stated that FY14 has expiring excluded debt. Mr. Haddad stated that excluding the fire station debt would potentially raise taxes raising the levy capacity. Mr. Haddad stated that in the future the Town can seek to exclude the debt. Mr. Haddad urged residents to consider current plan to fund within the levy.

Mr. Schulman clarified going back and making the debt excluded. Mr. Cunningham saw the debt exclusion plan as an 11th hour attempt to stop the Fire Station. Mr. Cunningham added that the funding mechanism for the station has been discussed many times. Ms. Sartini asked how OPEB could affect bonding. Mr. Haddad was unable to answer that question until he met with bond counsel.

Mr. Loving was in favor of making the fire station debt excluded placing the Town in a safe position down the road. Mr. Cunningham addressed the point that at any time it could become excluded debt through a ballot. Mr. Cunningham compared the turnout at a local election verses turnout at Town Meeting. Mr. Loving stated that a project of this size should be on a ballot. Mr. Haddad explained the thirty day award process and contractors will have to be asked if they were willing to hold their bids. If they don't hold the bids then the project might have to be rebid, driving up costs. Mr. Cunningham mentioned the change in government when past projects were placed on the ballot. Mr. Loving felt that placing the debt within the levy and then maybe excluding it in the future was a bate and switch.

4. Citizen Petition- Lost Lake: Mr. Petropoulos reiterated that this article would set seek funding.

TOWN CLERK MICHAEL BOUCHARD-VOTING LOCATION

Mr. Bouchard wanted to discuss possible polling places due to the recent reviews of having current polling stations in schools. Mr. Bouchard presented three possible scenarios:

1. Professional Day at Schools- Problem is with number of elections that could occur each year.
2. Increase Police Presence at schools-Problem is perception of armed campus.
3. Move Polling Location to Prescott, Town hall,

Legion Hall or Country Club- Mr. Bouchard would examine all polling locations and report back to the Board. Mr. Haddad stated that if no solution could be found for a new polling place then an increase in police presence at school polling stations would occur.

LIAISON REPORTS

Mr. Schulman stated the recent concerns with the School Committee regarding the fire station and that Mr. Haddad was going to meet with them to discuss the issue.

MINUTES

Mr. Cunningham moved to approve the meeting minutes of December 17, 2012. Mr. Petropoulos seconded the motion. Motion carried Ms. Eliot abstained. [Document 4-Draft Minutes]

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Petropoulos moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. Meeting adjourned.

Approved: 

John G. Petropoulos, Clerk

respectfully *submitted*,
Patrice Garvin, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 2-4-13