

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
Joint with Finance Committee  
MINUTES MARCH 9, 2013  
APPROVED**

**Present:** Stuart M. Schulman, Chairman;; John G. Petropoulos; Anna Eliot; Joshua A. Degen

**Absent:** Peter S. Cunningham, Vice Chairman

**Also Present:** Mark W. Haddad, Town Manager; Patrice Garvin, Executive Assistant; Rena Swezey, Principal Assessor; Patricia Dufrense, Town Accountant

Mr. Schulman called the meeting to order at 9:10a.m.

**Police Chief Palma**

Chief Palma discussed the Reverse 911 and the need for a better system for Groton. The cost was estimated at \$1.99 per household with no maximum in the number of call that can be made. The cost per year would be \$9k, and that covers the entire Town. Chief Palma stated that he has begun talks with the school to see if any cost could be shared. Mr. Prager asked how important the system was for the Town. Chief Palma stated that there have been a number of times where the Town needed a call system in the past. Mr. Prager noted the performance reviews for the bylaw employees and asked who approved those increases. Mr. Haddad stated that he receives recommendations from Department Heads and he is the one that makes the final decision. Mr. Palma noted the cruiser equipment has increased to fit the new vehicles.

Chief Palma stated that there has been no full time Dispatcher since anyone can remember. Calls are up and there is a new state mandate that states once a Dispatcher is on the line he/she has to stay on the line. This state mandate requires two Dispatchers on at all times. Chief Palma noted that funding from the k-9 unit has been through donations. In terms of the future Chief Palma felt that there may be a need to focus on school related issues, given past national event in schools.

**Fire Chief Joe Bosselait**

Chief Bosselait discussed that his full time fire fighter s are currently undergoing contract negotiations. Mr. Webber asked if there was an estimate of cost for the negotiations. Mr. Haddad replied no estimate has been given. Chief Bosselait spoke of the challenge to retain call members. Last year one FTE was placed into the budget which has helped weekend coverage and has allowed the ability for more rotation so there is coverage 7 days a week from 6am-6pm. Mr. Prager asked about the cost or the new fire station within the budget. Mr. Haddad accounted for some costs but that there is no impact on the FY14 budget during construction. Mr. Prager also asked about Ambulance Receipts and why in 2022 the balance drops by so much. Mr. Haddad noted that 20 years was a little too far to project out and focused on ten years.

**Library**

Mark McGrath and Vanessa Abraham stated their desire to join the Merrimack Valley Consortium. Mr. McGrath stated that this consortium would allow the library to have access to over 800k titles. Mr. McGrath stated that money \$60k was drawn from the Robin Trust. Mr. Prager noted the average 1.5% Performance Merit Increase. Mr. Haddad commented that these percentages were recommended and given by the previous Library Director. Mr. Petropoulos asked if the library anticipated the book budget decreasing given e-books and items available through the consortium. Also, if there was a way to track and measure the services given. Mr. McGrath stated that over a two year period the library would be able to measure the impact of e-books. Mr. Degen asked if the library was looking into acquiring more kindle hardware. Mr. McGrath stated that the library would look into technology of this type more but that it was challenging given how quickly technology changes. Mr. Degen reiterated the point that as the Town moves towards technology the book budget should decrease.

**DPW**

Tom Delaney distributed a form projecting the rest of FY13. Mr. Schulman asked about recycling and how things were going with other towns. Mr. Delaney stated that recycling was going very well and noted the Town of Littleton

will begin bringing in recycling the following week. Mr. Petropoulos asked if there was a way to track what is being brought in from other towns in order to see if the town takes in more than it pays out. Mr. Delaney was confident in the revenues the recycling would generate for the Town. Mr. Haddad noted that the Groton recycling was within the number presented. Mr. Haddad also explained the \$12k in OT due to a union issue and the need to follow state law.

## IT


Jason Bulger explained his request for a new full time desk top specialist. Mr. Bulger explained the need for this and to have a part-time web developer. Mr. Bulger gave the latest example of how technology is creating more efficiency in the Town Hall with the use of GEOTMS. Mr. Prager asked if that efficiency translated to a decrease in head count. Ms. Eliot stated that it still took a person to review the permit. The Boards discussed efficiency and if and when it would be seen in the number of employees. Mr. Haddad gave an example using the Clerk's office and the need to have someone in the office to help people as they come in throughout the day. Mr. Haddad also added that hours have been cut in the Town Hall. Mr. Degen suggested tracking efficiencies. Mr. Haddad stated that he is always looking at manpower and keeping the same level of services. Mr. Bulger stated that stated that the average time to close a ticket was 9.8 days. Mr. Haddad noted that 500 tickets were generated last year, and 19-35 tickets were generated per day. Mr. Prager asked why not have 2 part-time desktop specialists. Mr. Bulger replied that he thought of that but there was an overlap issue and that it was not as efficient. Mr. Bulger gave examples of what does not happen in town because he is dealing with other issues that come up.

Mr. Haddad stated that the Director of the Country Club was out of the country and would give more information to the Finance Committee at a later date.

## ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Degen moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:13p.m. Meeting adjourned.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

  
John G. Petropoulos, Clerk

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respectfully *submitted*,  
Patrice Garvin, Executive Assistant

Date Approved: 4-1-13