

**MINUTES  
TOWN OF BELMONT  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM  
Thursday, February 21, 2013  
8:00 AM**

RECEIVED  
TOWN CLERK  
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**CALL TO ORDER**

A regular meeting of the Board was called to order in open session at 8:11 am by Chair Paolillo in the Selectmen's Meeting Room. Selectmen Jones was present. Selectman Rojas was not present. Town Administrator David Kale and Assistant Town Administrator Kellie Hebert were also present.

**ACTION BY APPOINTMENT**

**Budget Meetings with Departments**

The Board continued its review with department heads about the FY14 budget: Assessor's Office, Town Clerk, IT, Building Services, Human Resources, Police, and Fire.

***Assessor's Office***

The Chair of the Board of Assessors, Mr. Robert Reardon, and Ms. Maryanne Knorr, Acting Assessing Administrator, appeared before the Board to address the department's FY14 budget.

Mr. Reardon began by updating the Board regarding the current vacancy in the Department. The Assessing Administrator position has been advertised, and the Board hopes to fill the position in the next few months. During the vacancy, Ms. Knorr has been serving in the position of Acting Assessing Assessor. He stated that, other than that, not much has changed within the department. He explained the professional services line in the budget and the process for conducting home evaluations. Regarding new growth, Mr. Reardon expects the Town to reach the \$500K mark as budgeted. He has begun projections on the Cushing Village Development. He noted that the commercial development in Belmont is declining as a percentage of total value, down to 4% from 9%.

***Town Clerk's Office***

Town Clerk, Ms. Ellen O'Brien Cushman, appeared before the Board to address the department's FY14 budget. Ms. Cushman explained that the budget includes three key programs: Legislative (Town Meeting), Town Clerk (Official Recordings for the Town), and Elections. There are four full-time positions in the office. The procedures of the office are being constantly evaluated and updated. The Board discussed with Ms. Cushman the storage of all the Town documents and official data that the office maintains. Ms. Cushman reported that roughly 8,900 hundred people have "walked through the door" since October. The average, she said, is about 60 visits per day.

The Board briefly touched on the topic of processing meeting minutes, which dovetailed into a "meetings management" discussion, as well as an exploration into how records are stored.

Regarding budget numbers, Chair Paolillo noted that the department's budget has risen. Mr. Kale pointed out that there has been a change in the way that election day poll workers are paid and an increase in the number of elections required. Ms. Cushman noted that the number of elections is typically predictable, but not always e.g., filling the seats of Senator Kerry, Representative Markey, etc. This causes extra elections, which requires more funding.

### ***Information Technology (IT)***

Director of Information Technology, Mr. Dave Petto, appeared before the Board to address the department's FY14 budget. Mr. Petto reviewed the functions of the Information Technology Office and some of the latest issues regarding the Town's increasing needs for data storage, server maintenance and the consideration to move the Town's MUNIS data to the cloud.

There are significant costs associated with storing data, whether internally or going to an outside vendor. Mr. Petto informed the Board that the Personal Information Security Policies and system upgrades are being completed. The town is upgrading its Windows operating system, Technical Support Tracking System and GIS system. The Mobile Device Security Project is almost complete. The software necessary to manage a new Mobile Device Security program will require an ongoing budget allocation but overall the changes may save the Town money because officials and employees can use their own devices. Mr. Petto noted that the wireless system at the library has been updated and that the DPW street-opening coordinator is now using an android to track street openings. The Board discussed these topics.

Regarding FY14, he informed the Board that the department is presently down from five to three employees. He said that for FY14, the department will work to maintain what was implemented in FY13. He informed the Board that the IT department does not have any administrative staff and that this is an ongoing challenge. Mr. Kale said that the department will need to analyze the ability to provide these services if a vacancy occurs in the department. The Board discussed which IT functions are centralized and which are not. The Board reviewed the budget numbers. Mr. Petto explained the ongoing costs versus the one-time costs. Chair Paolillo inquired about the IT requests from general government. Mr. Petto explained that he is aware of the IT requests and he is vetting the requests. Chair Paolillo said he would very much like Mr. Petto to review and give technical feedback to all IT related requests, as he has the expertise to do so. Mr. Kale noted that there are no IT requests this year.

### ***Building Services***

Director of Building Services, Mr. Kevin Looney, appeared before the Board to address the FY14 budget. Mr. Looney said the upgrade for the telephone system software has been ongoing. Each building took 2-3 weeks to install the software. He said the Police station and the Butler and Burbank schools have been repointed.

Mr. Looney reviewed the operating budget costs, specifically the utility costs. The Board then discussed energy conservation efforts and conversion from oil to gas since gas is less expensive than oil. Regarding FY14, he said the merger of town and school facilities under one director will require further work and thought. Regarding major building issues, Mr. Looney said that if the old electric light building is sold, the data that is stored there will need to be relocated, at an unknown cost to the town.

### ***Human Resources (HR)***

Human Resources Director Ms. Diane Crimmins, appeared before the Board to address the FY14 budget. Ms. Crimmins said that \$25K was appropriated in FY13 for a formal Pay and Classification Study. Regarding contract negotiations, six of seven collective bargaining contracts have been settled. In addition to the day-to-day functions of the department, much time was spent in the past year on health insurance plan design changes, the Health Insurance Trust Fund, on union contract negotiations, and to assist with the hiring of the new Town Administrator.

The Board took a 10-minute break.

### ***Police Department***

Police Chief Richard McLaughlin and Assistant Police Chief James MacIssac appeared before the Board to address the department's FY14 budget. Chief McLaughlin reviewed the FY13 accomplishments, highlighting the police efforts that were extended during candidate Romney's presidential election. He said there were absolutely no issues and that the security measures were successfully executed. Chief McLaughlin informed the Board that the Prescription Drug Drop-Off Program is now available right in the police station. He explained how the drugs are disposed and the importance of educating the public about the prevention of drug abuse and the need to properly dispose of all medications in a timely manner.

The Chief informed the Board that the "high risk offender" partnership program with Cambridge is going well and that the Car-Seat Installation Program has been reinstated, as this is a highly valued community service. The Youth Safety Summer Camp with the Sheriff's Department is very successful and grows each year. Chief McLaughlin stressed that the staff of the Police Department continues to work well together and works very hard to keep costs down especially given the economic climate.

Chief McLaughlin then reviewed the issue of "Line-of-Service Injuries" and the Department's partnership with Meditrol to assist with medical claims, fee negotiation and follow-up. He reviewed the new Emergency Medical Dispatch System that was implemented last June. The new K9 Canine Program, funded through an anonymous private donation, is currently underway.

Regarding staffing, the department has five unfilled positions. He explained the police academy process for filling these positions. The Board discussed the issue of Belmont officers transferring to Cambridge or to the state police force as the pay and benefits are more generous there. Police staffing is lean, especially considering the population density in Belmont.

Regarding traffic, the Chief said that all officers are responsible for traffic. Once staffing is up to full strength, it will allow the department to have a dedicated traffic officer. Otherwise, the officer on patrol performing traffic functions is often called away to handle another matter. Assistant Chief MacIssac reviewed some of the traffic data to demonstrate the departments traffic enforcement activities. The Board discussed this issue.

The Chief highlighted the following goals for FY14: to continue to follow policies and procedures, to move forward with the accreditation process, to continue getting OUI offenders off the street, to close more detective cases, to respond to traffic concerns, to continue meeting public information requests, and to provide community training. The Board discussed the increase in calls to the department.

Chief McLaughlin noted that some of the costs are not in his control, e.g., Romney security, vehicle repair, etc. The Board discussed the need for the School Resource Officer to be reinstated at the high school. The Chief said he is in full support of this initiative.

### ***Fire Department***

Fire Chief David Frizzell and Assistant Fire Chief Angus Davison appeared before the Board to address the department's FY14 budget. Chief Frizzell highlighted the following accomplishments: moving forward with the new Advanced Life Support service model, the additional training of staff, implementation of Meditrol to help deal with injured employees, hiring of the Department's 9<sup>th</sup> paramedic, and the successful weathering of both Hurricane Sandy and the recent blizzard.

Regarding FY14, Chief Frizzell said the increases pertain to the implementation of the in-house Advanced Life Support proposal and the related start-up costs. Staffing levels remain the same for FY14, including being down by two positions. He has applied for grant money from the state to help fund new staff. The Chief noted the importance of planning in advance for upcoming retirements (succession planning). Mr. Kale stressed that the attrition must be planned for, otherwise overtime pay skyrockets in order to cover shifts and to deliver basic services.

Chief Frizzell said that he would like to restore the two firefighter positions. However, he said that any hiring decisions need to be data-driven with hard facts. As a result, a data analyst is necessary to review the data. The Chief said that better IT coordination and support is required within the department. Chief Frizzell said that the department will need assistance with the upcoming firefighter attrition, e.g., a solid succession plan in conjunction with HR training and support.

### ***Town Administrator's Office***

Mr. Kale noted that the BOS budget is about the same, but \$5K has been allocated for meeting management of Warrant Committee, Selectmen and Capital Budget Committee. Regarding staffing, Mr. Kale said that the department is building its staff capacity. He noted some of the many functions that the office is engaged in on a daily basis. Mr. Kale noted some of the

efficiencies he hopes to implement going forward, e.g., licensing fees, committee appointments.

Mr. Kale said the departments would like the opportunity to meet with the Board regarding the Board's goals and key priorities. Chair Paolillo agreed and noted the need for additional precinct meetings with Town Meeting Members. He would like to focus the topics for the meetings to discuss the budget gap, capital projects and warrant articles.

**NEXT MEETING**

The Board will meet next on Monday, February 25, 2013 at 8:00 a.m.

The Board moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:27 am.

  
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Mr. David Kale, Town Administrator