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MINUTES
TOWN OF BELMONT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM
Thursday, March 10, 2016
8:30 AM

APPROVED
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
DATE: 4-11-2016

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Board was called to order in open session at 8:34 p.m. by Chair Sami Baghdady in the Selectmen's Meeting Room. Selectmen Mark Paolillo and Jim Williams were present. Town Administrator David Kale and Assistant Town Administrator Phyllis Marshall were also present.

Chair Baghdady reviewed the agenda. He noted that the main purpose of the meeting would be to continue to meet with Department Heads to discuss the FY17 budget.

ACTION BY APPOINTMENT

Department Head Budget Meetings

Human Resources (HR) – Ms. Jessica Porter, Director

Ms. Porter and Mr. Brian Higgins (HR Generalist) appeared before the Board to provide an overview of the FY17 Human Resource budget. She began by reviewing the accomplishments: updating the employee handbook/policies, enhancements to the flex benefit plan (use of a card), formalizing the employee training program, creation of a streamlined Worker's Compensation reporting process, working cooperatively with the school HR office, updating the HR website, attending to reporting requirements for the Affordable Care Act (ACA), and work on contract negotiations.

The Board asked questions pertaining to contract negotiations, the ACA work, the Vision 21 plan, background checks for Fire and Police hires, and the updating of job descriptions.

The Board acknowledged the HR department for a job well done.

Police Department – Chief Richard McLaughlin

Chief McLaughlin and Assistant Chief MacIsaac appeared before the Board to provide an overview of the FY17 Police Department's budget. The Chief began with the budget, noting that the budget increases are due to things that are not in the Department's control. He stated that the SRO position has worked out extremely well. This position, and the benefits of it, was discussed.

The Chief briefly reviewed the staff transitions. He raised the topic of the new developments in town (Uplands and Cushing Village), noting that they may necessitate more staff. He touched on

the new software, the BGA event in town, the prescription drug drop off box, and the opioid epidemic.

The Board asked questions about the Alexander Street pathway, the security at the schools, and future security at the modular units.

The Chief briefly touched upon the need for more departmental trainings, which are an expense item. Ammunition costs have also increased.

The Board acknowledged the Police Department for a job well done. They expressed their desire to meet again with the department to discuss pertinent issues.

Health Department – Ms. Angela Braun, Director

Ms. Braun and Mr. Wesley Chin (Assistant Director) appeared before the Board to provide an overview of the FY17 Health Department's budget. She began by reviewing the mission/vision of the department. She reviewed the organization of the programmatic offerings, which revolve around state mandates. She reviewed some line-item changes: an inspection contract position, increased Veteran's hours, and flu clinic. She noted that the department has done well with grants – specifically \$10K from Mt. Auburn Hospital for the opioid epidemic.

She then reviewed some of the department's cross town and community collaborations as well as the trainings.

Selectman Williams asked several questions concerning collaboration and animal control. The Board briefly discussed the budget.

The Board acknowledged the department for a job well done.

Accounting Office – Ms. Chitra Subramanian

Ms. Subramanian appeared before the Board to provide an overview of the FY17 Accounting Office budget. Ms. Subramanian began by noting that the restructuring has been helpful for the Office. She noted the work on the audit report and the ongoing collaboration with the Treasurer's Office and the Assessor's Office. She touched on staff trainings, utility conversion billings software, the paperless goal, and the retirement plan.

The Board acknowledged the Accounting Department for a job well done. They expressed their desire to meet again with Ms. Subramanian to discuss pertinent issues.

Library – Mr. Peter Struzziero, Director

Mr. Struzziero and Ms. Kathy Keohane, of the Library Board of Trustees, appeared before the Board to provide an overview of the FY17 Library budget. Ms. Keohane reviewed highlights of the Library's accomplishments, including: increased utilization, the new website, the new five-year plan, new programming and services, and database upgrades.

Mr. Struzziero reviewed the budget highlights, noting that the increases are modest overall, e.g., personnel, materials, utilities, pay phone. The budget does include a request for additional staff for the Children's Room. The Board discussed the need and potential funding for this position.

Ms. Keohane explained the feasibility study to explore long-range plans for the Library building. She noted that the heating system is failing and that the building is 50 years old.

Mr. Kale raised the topic of the repaired elevator.

The Board thanked Mr. Struzziero and Ms. Keohane.

The Board took a brief recess and resumed at 10:11 a.m..

Modular Classroom Discussion – Superintendent Phelan

Superintendent Phelan, Mr. Floyd Carman (Town Treasurer), and Mr. Gerry Boyle (Facilities Director) appeared before the Board to discuss the modular classrooms which will be installed at the Chenery Middle School (CMS) next fall. Superintendent Phelan touched on the work of the Enrollment Modeling Group. The increased enrollment is necessitating the need for Modular units, as there is not enough space to house the number of students enrolled in the system. Currently, three modular classrooms exist at the high school. He reviewed the short and long term needs of space across the district.

Superintendent Phelan explained that one large modular unit (housing six classrooms) will be placed on the tennis courts at the CMS this coming fall. He explained the research that occurred concerning these modular units.

The Board discussed the need for additional classroom space across the district as well as the burgeoning enrollment. Specifically explored was the trend in the enrollment at the elementary level and the subsequent need for additional space there as well.

Selectman Williams asked about security for the modular units at the CMS. Superintendent Phelan explained that the units will be secure. He addressed the evolving uses for classroom space (occupation and physical therapy, ELL, SPED, etc.).

Chair Baghdady raised the cost issues concerning these units, noting that it is more cost-efficient to *purchase* the units rather than to rent them. Mr. Boyle confirmed that owning is more cost-efficient. The Board discussed potential sources for the funding of the units.

Mr. Kale reviewed the timeline for ordering the modular units, noting that Town Meeting will need to authorize the funding in May. Mr. Boyle raised the issue of the "fit out" costs, which pertain to furnishings.

Mr. Carman addressed some finance options for the units. The overall cost will need to include interest costs, if the project is bonded. This (the interest) will impact the operating budget.

Chair Baghdady stressed that the Board and the School Department will need to stay in communication to address the enrollment trends and to develop a long-term strategy to deal with enrollment across the district.

Town Administrator's Office – David Kale, Town Administrator

Mr. Kale provided an overview of the FY17 Town Administrator's Office budget. He reviewed some major projects and accomplishments: the sale of Woodfall Road, the Sewer/Storm plan, the Pension presentation, the development of the FY17 budget using the FTF Model, collaboration with School Department in budget development, the combining of the town/school facilities departments, coordination of Town Meeting, participation in the Minuteman revised agreement and new building debt, MBTA meetings, the town's continued AAA status, the PGA tournament, development of a Recreation strategic plan, the Community Path RFP process, the solid waste contract extension, the Comcast/Verizon franchise license agreement, the hiring of the HR Director, the new Underwood Pool opening, the new utility accounting/billing system, the Belmont Center project, the Trapelo Road project, the new police radio system, tennis court replacement at BHS, the CPA process, the BHS feasibility next steps, skating rink public/private partnership, the Affordable Care Act 1095 reporting forms, the Logan airport noise issue, and the committee appointment process.

He then reviewed several on-going projects, e.g., the incinerator site, the Waverley Square train station, the BHS building process, the Capital Budget plan for buildings, collective bargaining, personnel policies, the Stormwater plan, Pension/OPEB planning, etc.

The budget, he said, is mostly level-funded.

The Board then asked several questions. Selectman Williams expressed concern over the workload involved in executing these accomplishments. He asked if additional resources should be considered.

Chair Baghdady agreed that the workload is impressive and added that several departments have been reinforced to help assuage the workload (HR, Accounting, Community Development, etc.)

Executive Session [Cushing Village]

The Board moved: To enter into executive session at 11:14 a.m. to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body and the Chair so declares. The Board will not return to open session.

A roll call vote was taken: Chair Baghdady said aye, Selectman Paolillo and Williams also said aye and the motion passed unanimously (3-0).

The Board will not be returning back to Open Session.

VII. NEXT MEETINGS

Monday, March 14, 2016, 7:00 p.m. – Town Hall, Selectmen's Room

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DKale', written over a horizontal line.

Mr. David Kale, Town Administrator

