

**MINUTES
TOWN OF BELMONT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM
Monday, March 10, 2014
8:00 AM**

CALL TO ORDER of WORKING SESSION

A working session of the Board was called to order in open session at 8:13 am by Chair Paolillo in the Selectmen's Meeting Room. Selectmen Jones and Rojas were present. Town Administrator David Kale and Assistant Town Administrator Marshall were also present.

Chair Paolillo reviewed the morning's agenda, which will consist of brief meetings with the Department Heads (and the like) to discuss the FY15 preliminary budget.

Ellen Cushman, Town Clerk: Ms. Cushman reviewed the main duties of the Town Clerk's office, which includes a staff of four. The overall budget is down because the total number of elections is down. Successes include that 18,498 "people transactions" occurred last year, the archiving of records is underway, and filing of Town Meeting (TM) documentation has been handled. She reviewed all of the data (handled by the Town Clerk's office) which is now being electronically classified and stored. Challenges include managing the CPA, new electronic voting at TM, and the state ethics law. She said the office is interested in having a paid internship to have someone log and review the TM minutes and TM votes.

Dave Petto, Information Technology (IT): Mr. Petto reviewed that his office has a staff of five. He reviewed accomplishments, which include data storage, data security, various software upgrades, and a new permitting system (in conjunction with the Office of Community Development). Regarding the FY15 budget, the increase is .05%. The hardware, he said, is current and won't need replacing in the near future. The Board discussed data security with Mr. Petto. The Cloud-based system and how it will be helpful with email and data storage, was also discussed. He noted the need for support in training purposes.

Daniel Dargon, Assessors: Mr. Dargon and Mr. Reardon reviewed that the new growth number will be revised to \$550K. Mr. Reardon said that next year's number, though, will be projected at \$450K. The Board discussed the potential impact of Cushing Village and South Pleasant Street. The topic of PILOT payments was also discussed. He said the budget is down slightly from last year. For next year, he said that the office will continue working with GIS regarding linking data. The Board discussed a split tax rate for commercial and residential entities. Mr. Reardon said that this will not add additional tax revenue to the town, but would negatively impact the commercial businesses.

Chitra Subramanian, Accounting: Ms. Subramanian provided an overview of the Accounting department's functions. She reviewed accomplishments, e.g., free cash certification, OPEB data collection, CPA, and the meeting of all accounting deadlines. One challenge concerns staffing. She said added functions (as well as the loss of an intern) have necessitated the need for an

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additional full-time staff position.

Floyd Carman, Treasurer: Mr. Carman reviewed the statutory (and non-statutory) responsibilities of the Treasurer's office. He said the budget is mostly salary-based and is increasing only as a result of contractual salary increases. He reviewed duties related to the CPA, bonding of debt, OPEB financial policy, and the town's reserve policy. Accomplishments include the maintenance of the town's AAA rating and on-time filing of reports and audits. He said the office will continue with paperless billing, but that the vendor is now located in New Jersey. He discussed the tax billing cycle, noting the advantages of quarterly billing. Challenges, he said, include maintaining the AAA rating, which saves the town money when it bonds debt. He said having customers leave the Treasurer's office satisfied, and not anxious, remains a concern. The Board discussed how to keep the community up to date on the town's investments.

Glenn Clancy, Community Development/Planning: Mr. Clancy began by discussing enforcement of the snow removal by-law. He said his office has sent out 130 letters to those who are not complying with the by-law. Regarding staffing, the office is basically focusing on immediate (enforcement) issues and is not doing proactive work. The Board expressed its concern for the current staffing levels given that the office's responsibilities have expanded exponentially. Mr. Clancy said that the office has been reorganized using the Planning Manager vacancy position. He discussed the present vacancies, noting that various positions will be filled shortly. The Board then discussed the economic development perspective with the office.

Regarding accomplishments, he reviewed the reconstructed roads in and around Hawthorne Street, etc. He noted that the Trapelo Road project is underway and that various sewer projects are underway. Under Inspectional Services, he discussed the shared wiring service and shared inspection positions. Permitting activity has been increasing and the associated fees are being collected.

The Board then discussed the further need for road reconstruction and the potential allocation of an additional \$1M to do so. All parties agreed that money spent on roads saves money in the future.

The Board took a five-minute break.

Diane Crimmins, Human Resources: Ms. Crimmins was not available to meet this morning. Her report will be heard at the next Board meeting on Monday, March 17.

Peter Castanino, Public Works, including Recreation: Mr. Castanino (as well as Mr. Michael Santoro and Mr. Michael Bishop) began with a list of accomplishments: repairing the Underwood Pool so it could open last season, the consolidation with the Recreation Department, completing Joey's Park, CPA projects, the new Underwood Pool design, turf bidding, extending the trash and recycling contract, water and sewer rates planning, planting of trees and shrubs, sidewalk repairs, increased recycling initiatives and the annual DPW open house.

Mr. Castanino then reviewed some of the Recreation Dept. programs and initiatives, noting that

Ms. June Howell has coordinated many of the undertakings. He said they are working to implement written policies and procedures. He then reviewed the Rec. Dept's current staffing.

Regarding the water program, he reviewed work that has been done (Belmont Center) and trench work that is underway. He said that the water main replacement program is an extremely valuable undertaking. However, this work needs to be coordinated with ongoing road repair work.

Mr. Castanino reviewed his budget adjustments (from FY14 to FY15). For challenges, he raised the issue of long-term replacement of the tennis courts at PQ, Grove Street, and Winn Brook. The skating rink is past its useful life and poses many challenges. The estimate for a new DPW facility is up to \$27.5M. He noted that the DPW has lost many staff members over the years, which impacts many functions of the town, e.g., street cleaning, tree pruning, trash removal.

Gerry Boyle, Facilities: Mr. Boyle, Mr. Looney, and Ms. Papa were present. Mr. Boyle said that the budgets of the school and town have not been combined at this time. The Board discussed their desire for a unified budget, going forward. Facilities accomplishments include: Town Hall doors and windows, Beech Street parking lot lighting accommodations, and school hardware updates. In the near future, each building will have a facilities policy book. He said he continues to work with the Wellington School and the Underwood Pool Building Committee. He touched on the work done recently on the Higgenbottom Pool.

Mr. Boyle noted that potential facilities issues, on the school side, are not adequately budgeted for. The Board agreed with this concern and stressed the need to appropriately fund major building repairs.

Stefan Russakow, Health Department: Mr. Russakow, Ms. Braun, Ms. Hsiu-Ann Tom (the new Veterans Service Agent). Ms. Tom provided information on her role and the work she has accomplished since joining the Health Department, one month ago. Mr. Russakow highlighted the department's accomplishments: vaccination outreach for pre-school programs, a Facebook account, a free vehicle for the department. He reviewed budget changes that relate to two staff changes. Ms. Braun spoke to the need for assistance (via an internship) with regard to pest control investigations. Mr. Russakow said that he would like to explore the possibility of structuring the duties of the Veterans Service Agent to include health outreach activities. Chair Paolillo said he would like to include Youth Services to this.

Maureen Conners, Library: Ms. Conners and Ms. Mary Keenan. Ms. Conners reviewed accomplishments: coordination with the schools, increased library programming, the fifth *One Book, One Belmont*, improved and expanded technology services, and floor tiling as well as improvements to the outside of the building. Chair Paolillo requested that a meeting be set up to discuss the future of the library. Ms. Conners noted that expanded Children's room hours are needed as well as more money for electronic resources, print, and audiovisual materials.

Nava Niv-Vogel, Council on Aging: Ms. Niv-Vogel and Ms. Penelope Schafer. Ms. Vogel reviewed the accomplishments, noting they applied for and received additional grant funding, partnering with McLean, improved transportation services, and a new senior services directory.

She stated that the fitness room membership has tripled and those programs are expanding. The Board discussed the snow removal by-law, noting that seniors at risk will require support.

Regarding the budget, there is an employee health insurance addition of \$16K. She said social worker summer hours are needed and custodial needs have increased. She said social media needs are also increasing and support there is needed.

Assistant Fire Chief Davison, Fire Department: Assistant Fire Chief Davison began with accomplishments, noting the implementation of the ASL program. He said that the service that advises the department on sick leave has been useful. Regarding budget changes, building maintenance costs have risen slightly. Fire suppression has also increased, including \$40K in overtime to provide backfill for vacant positions and some other step increases. The Board discussed the need to manage staff attrition and how the expected attrition will impact the overall budget.

Chief Richard McLaughlin and Assistant Chief MacIsaac, Police Department: Chief McLaughlin began by noting that the budget decrease is due to replacing senior officers with new officers. Under accomplishments, he noted that most of the Marathon Bombings' staffing needs were reimbursed from FEMA and from the state. He said the canine, Grim, is working out well. The department has new vehicles, which are saving on gas. The prescription drug take-back program has been successful. The Chief discussed the benefits of the NEMLEC program, as well as the partnerships with other communities. He discussed the increased concern regarding drug overdoses. This topic was discussed, including the use of nalcen to offset the effects of heroine. The child safety seat installation program has been a huge success.

Assistant Chief MacIsaac discussed the increase in PD calls, noting that there is not one area that is spiked, but a general up-tick.

Chief McLaughlin said that he would like to see the SRO re-instated at the BHS as well as increased police presence at the middle school.

Town Administrator/BOS: Mr. Kale noted that the TA budget supports five positions. One budget change is for legal services, as the fees charged have increased. He noted some areas of budget increases. He acknowledged the hard work of the TA office and of the department heads.

NEXT MEETINGS

Monday, March 10, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

The Board moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:13 p.m.



Mr. David Kale, Town Administrator