

- **MINUTES**
- **TOWN OF BELMONT**
- **BOARD OF SELECTMEN**
- **CONFERENCE ROOM 2, TOWN HALL**
- **Tuesday, January 19, 2010**
- **8:00 AM**

- **CALL TO ORDER**

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- A special meeting of the Board was called to order at 8:00 am by Chair Leclerc in Conference Room 2 of Town Hall. Selectmen Firenze and Jones were present. Town Administrator Tom Younger, Assistant Town Administrator Jeff Conti, and Liz Allison from the Warrant Committee were also present.

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- **MINUTEMAN FEASIBILITY STUDY**

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- The Board discussed a proposal from the Minuteman Regional High School for a feasibility study for capital improvements to the school. The Board noted the uncertainty in Belmont about the best way to move forward with Minuteman generally. If the Town does not place an Article for this on the Town Meeting Warrant, according to the Minuteman agreement it will be considered approved by default.

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- The Board moved: To place this question on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

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- Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

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- The Board moved: To recommend against adoption of this Article.

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- Motion carried unanimously (3-0).

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- The Selectmen discussed whether they should lobby other towns on this matter. The Board will notify the other Minuteman member towns of its vote and any follow-up would be up to the Minuteman Study Committee.

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- The Board recessed at 8:37 AM and reconvened at 8:55 AM. Warrant Committee member Mark Paolillo joined the meeting.

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- **BUDGET DISCUSSION**

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- **Police – Chief Richard McLaughlin /Assistant Chief Richard Lane**

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- Chief McLaughlin explained that the Department is operating below the staffing level it should be at and the needs of the Town cannot be served under the current budget. The FY11 budget proposes to restore the School Resource Officer at the high school, and the Chief would ideally like to add one at the middle school as well. He would like to expand the D.A.R.E program to all elementary schools. The roster of sworn officers

should be at least 50, but is currently at 46 (plus 2 on military leave.) The Chief would also like to expand the Traffic and Parking Division.

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- Of course, patrol officers on the street are always the Department's top priority. Any budget cuts would have to hit these other programs (SRO, D.A.R.E., Traffic & Parking) first.

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- Training continues to be an important need especially as technology changes (e.g., cybercrime.)

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- The Board recessed briefly.

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- **Fire – Chief David Frizzell / Assistant Chief Angus Davison**

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- Chief Frizzell said the Department should be at 56 firefighters with 52 assigned to fire suppression, but is currently at 54. The Department has had to rely on other Towns for backup and those towns, facing budget dilemmas of their own, are reducing what they can provide. Belmont uses a minimum of 11-12 firefighters on duty, which is below the national standard of 15. The Department has 2 ambulances but only one is staffed; the backup ambulance is used when the main ambulance is being repaired or during a storm if mutual aid were unavailable. About 7% of total hours worked are overtime.

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- The Department is looking into the possibility of cost recovery for responding to accidents in certain situations, from homeowner's or auto insurance.

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- There was discussion of the proposal to bring advanced life support (ALS) services in-house, which is still being reviewed by a committee.

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- Items the Chief would like to add are training funds, funding for a team to man the existing technical rescue trailer, and restoring a plans review officer in fire prevention – there is a concern that the Department will face increased calls from new housing developments.

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- If additional cuts are necessary, the first reduction would be the fire prevention training officer, followed by a reduction in overtime, which could mean putting the ambulance out of service.

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- Chair Leclerc had to leave the meeting. Vice Chair Jones presided in his absence.

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- **Public Works – Peter Castanino**

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- Mr. Castanino would like to restore 3 staff positions that were cut last year. He noted that the Department has saved over \$1 million in salaries since the DPW consolidation.

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- Chair Leclerc returned to the meeting.
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- Mr. Castanino said he would also like to see more funding for cleaning storm drains and sewer lines.
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- The Board moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:57 am.
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Thomas G. Younger, Town  
Administrator