

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes December 21, 2020

7:00 PM Meeting called to order by Selectboard Chairman, John Esposito. Also in attendance were Selectmen Kim Roberge and Tim Berry.

Esposito led the meeting in a moment of silence.

Esposito wanted to discuss the 3 warrant articles that will be put forth from the Fire Department.

#1 \$25,000 for SCBA protective gear. The \$25,000 is the Town's share if we get the grant we are applying for. There is a good chance that we will get it since the SCBA that we have is at end of life. That makes it a high priority with the Federal Government.

Roberge asked if it was a non-lapsing article and was told "yes".

Berry asked how much life is left in the old breathing apparatus.

Wilson said that ½ of them expire in 2021 and ½ in 2022. They might still be useable, but we can't get them certified as safe.

Berry asked if the grant comes from the Federal Government.

Wilson said yes. If you put in for a grant you will more than likely get it for protective gear.

Berry asked if he thinks it may take a couple of years.

Wilson said that if we don't get it this year, we will go after it again next year. We have Sean Mamone working on the grant, and he has done it before.

Esposito asked if the packs will still be good if we don't get the grant this year or next.

Wilson said that if we don't get it this year or next, we will have to purchase new ones.

Roberge said that she appreciates that they are using someone familiar with the grant process.

#2 \$75,000 for the lease/purchase of a \$600,000 fire truck.

Esposito said that rates are very low to borrow money right now. We need to look at this this year.

Wilson said that we now have a serious need for a new truck.

Esposito asked if there was any value in the old truck.

Wilson said "only \$5,000 - \$6,000.

Berry asked how much the cost of the vehicle went up vs, last year.

Wilson said that the cost of the truck increased 3%.

Berry said that interest rates probably have gone down even since last year.

Roberge asked if they would be back next year if this doesn't move forward this year.

Wilson said yes. Last year we were concerned about funding the library along with the fire truck, then you threw in the Town Hall.

Berry asked if the Capital Reserve will be used to pay for this truck.

Wilson said yes, there is about \$150,000 in Capital Reserve to be used for a new truck.

Berry asked if that means that the truck costs \$750,000.

Wilson said no, the \$150,000 will come off of the \$600,000; the bond could be for less.

Esposito said that bonds cost too much. He also wondered if it had to be a 2/3 vote or majority only.

#3 \$55,000 added to the Fire Truck Capitol Reserve Fund.

Esposito asked that if #2 passes, does #3 go away?

Wilson said yes, just like last year.

Town Clerk, Belinda Yeaton, came before the Board at the Boards request to discuss the salary line in her budget.

Esposito stated that she had said that part of her requested increase was 2% that she didn't get from last year.

Yeaton said that that was correct – she did not get the COLA that everyone else got last year.

Roberge said that she didn't understand the numbers. 2% from last year plus 2% from this year does not add to the proposed number.

Yeaton said that she must have typed in the wrong number. The budget number should be \$27,173.

Yeaton then said that the Town Moderator, David Sturm, had called about the Deputy Moderator's stipend.

He has never taken the budgeted stipend, and would like to this year. Yeaton said that she would like to pay him for all the years that he didn't take the stipend or \$350.00. She also said that the money could be taken out of her grant money.

Esposito said that he is budgeted for \$50 this year.

Yeaton said that that was a mistake; he should have been budgeted for \$50/election, so \$150.

Esposito said that he was fine with \$150.

Yeaton said that \$50 could come out of this year's budget and the extra \$100 out of her grant. She sees it as hazard pay.

Berry asked if she had any guidance he could look at on how to use the grant money.

Yeaton said that she could find out. She said that the Accu-Vote machine, fees and tents have come out of the grant so far.

Esposito asked when the money expires.

Yeaton said that she thinks it is the end of the year.

Berry asked if it could cover Town Meeting.

Esposito said that Town Meeting is going to be very expensive this year. He then asked who qualifies for hazard duty pay. Do the Selectmen?

Roberge asked if the extra officer for the elections could be charged to the grant.

Yeaton said yes; both September and November elections.

Esposito said to pay Peter King \$150.00. Board agreed.

7:30 PM Ben Crosby came before the Board with a quote for a high band antenna of \$8,142.15 from Beltronics.

He has gotten no commitment from Milford. He will talk with Wilton tomorrow. Lyndeborough put funds in next year's budget to pay for half the antenna. If we don't install the antenna this year, they can use the old radios for dispatch and the new radios for truck-to-truck communication.

Brown suggested that, in a perfect world, we would own the antenna outright.

Esposito asked if Lyndeborough was willing to pay for half the antenna.

Crosby said yes.

Berry said he agreed with Brown and to let her run the budget numbers.

Crosby said that he has the invoice for the radios and the quote for the antenna. Beltronics wants a letter from the Town that says it's ok to go ahead with the projects.

Roberge said that Lyndeborough is putting it in their 2021 budget, and asked if have to wait until March to get that money.

Brown said that she believes so.

Roberge said that they could spend it sooner if their budget line was no more than last year.

Crosby said that the updated quote for a like-sized 15 to 22 watt generator is \$15,000. Generac could use the same transfer switch.

Berry asked Crosby if he had gotten a quote for a diesel generator.

Crosby said that his rough quote does not include installation, and you have to add \$18,000 to his propane quote and that you would need a diesel source down there.

Berry asked about the life span of the propane unit.

Crosby said 15 to 20 years.

Berry asked if a diesel unit would have a longer life span.

Roberge said that a diesel generator may have a life span of 5 years more than that of a propane one.

Berry asked Crosby to look into that further. He figures that if the life span is 50% more but it doesn't cost 50% more it might be worth it.

Roberge said that this is something we need to make sure we are doing the appropriate research on. We also need to have an appropriate amount in the budget.

Esposito said that the current generator is over-speeding – can't they fix that?

Crosby said that they might be able to, if they could figure out what is causing it to happen. But they couldn't say how long the fix would last.

Generators run at 100%. This is a mechanical thing - I don't see why a part can't be fixed or replaced.

Crosby said that there is a place in Wilton that repairs generators and he has a call into them, and he is also waiting for the Generator Connection to get back to him.

Esposito asked about the tree work that needs to be done for MACC.

Crosby said we are waiting for the homeowner's permission.

Wilson said that he thinks he emailed that to the Town.

Brown will look for the email.

7:50 PM Berry said that he had previously stated that if he had to choose, he'd pick the generator over moving the diesel tank. Let's table the discussion of moving the tank.

Board agreed.

Berry asked if he got any more information from the part-time hire.

Crosby said "not yet". He said that LaCasse came back to work today. Also, that he hasn't gotten a quote for a whole season of sidewalk clearing. Crosby looked into renting a machine to do it ourselves, and came up with \$6000/ month for 3-4 months.

7:55 PM Esposito asked the Board to look over the Telecommuting policy and they will get it into the handbook after the first of the year.

Roberge said that the Code Enforcement Officer may need a letter from the Selectmen directing him as to what he should be looking for on his inspection of 66 Old Milford Road. Is the inspection just based on the complaint, or is it both the home and the illegal apartment?

Wilson said that if they find any safety violations, we have to issue a Cease and Desist right then.

Berry said that we have a complaint that cites issues in the main house and also an illegal apartment over the garage. Can't we inspect both?

Roberge said that we have the Zoning Violation and the complaint.

Wilson said the Selectmen can issue a Cease and Desist on the apartment right away.

Esposito said that he is right, but they do have some discretion over that.

Roberge said that we got a call referencing a multifamily house. It was listed as multifamily on the MLS. We only have single family residences in Mont Vernon. Our assessing company listed it as multifamily in 2014. The people just closed on the house 2 weeks ago. How do we close these gaps?

Berry said maybe we need to tighten up on our procedures with the assessors. Maybe we want to keep the full measure and list and not do the statistical update. We need to take a look at these cards.

Roberge stated that, per the State, if they are using the home as a primary residence, they can rent out the ADU.

Esposito said that people bought a house as a multifamily and we didn't know.

Roberge said that we need to have a discussion with CNP.

Eileen Naber interjected that when she saw that it was listed as a multifamily, she called the real estate company, and they called back to say it is listed as a two family.

Roberge said that the Building Inspector's office advised them that they could go in front of the ZBA. It was built like this in the 80's and probably never called in to be grandfathered.

Roberge asked if the Police Chief got back to us regarding the security cameras for the Town Hall.

Esposito said that the Chief has ordered them and will guide us as to where they should be installed.

Roberge said that the Board never went over the cost and installation and was disappointed that they got ordered without that conversation.

Esposito said that the whole system only cost around \$250, and that it was in the budget to do it.

Esposito asked about the Weston Hill property.

Brown said that she had Joan cut a retainer check to Attorney Tom Quinn for \$4000 and that he spent a morning with her going over the Selectmen's file on that property. He needs the tax collectors file also to see if the liens and the deedings were done correctly. That information must be up in storage because the Tax Collector does not have anything in her files.

Roberge asked if we could have the Tax Collector keep current on other properties to make it easier in the future.

Roberge addressed the complaint regarding speeding on Remington Road. She said that it was so dry that day – every road was making plumes of dust. The Board discussed that the speed limit is posted as you come into town from all angles (30 mph unless posted otherwise) and each individual road does not need a speed limit sign.

Brown asked how she should respond and was told to send her letter to the DPW and PD.

Board reviewed a letter from Doug LePage in answer to our letter regarding his junk yard. Of the 4 letters sent, two residents have responded. LePage's letter shows substantial effort being put forth to clear out his property.

Brown is to thank him for his response and tell him that, as long as there is continued effort, we will not bother him.

Board reviewed the minutes of 12/14. Roberge motioned, seconded by Berry to accept the minutes of December 14, 2020 as amended.

Roberge; yes, Berry; yes, Esposito; yes.

8:35 PM As there was no further business before the Board, Berry motioned seconded by Roberge to adjourn. All in favor. Roberge; yes, Berry; yes, Esposito; yes.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurie Brown