

Selectmen's minutes of meeting March 31, 2014

Members present: Jeffrey Gray, Patrick Barrett, Rosario Messina, Lisa Blackmer
Stephan Harasyko, Dolores Harasyko

Called to order at 7:02 p.m.

Steve presented highway department updates. They have been busy pothole patching, adding gravel to dirt roads and salting due to the ice. He is developing a work order request form for the Selectmen. This form will be used for the selectmen to fill out for work they would like to be done. He is working on chapter 90 project request for gravel.

Treasurer Teresa DellaGiustina in to review options to cover the snow and ice overage. Teresa has been working with the DOR and Steve on updated procedures for budgeting and tracking snow and ice expense budgets. She is going to have the accounts set up for FY2015. The bottom line budget numbers will not change, only the bookkeeping will change. The overage is at \$87,000 as of today.

Option 1: Place an article on the FY2015 warrant to transfer half the cost from either free cash or the stabilization account and request from the Board of Assessors the other half be paid from the overlay account. The Assessors discussed the overage at their March 24 meeting and are not opposed to the idea of releasing monies towards the deficit. They will vote once the Selectmen send them a letter requesting an amount.

Option 2: Wait until the fall of FY2015 and include the total on the FY2016 tax recap sheet. This will have a direct effect on the tax rate.

Option 3: Wait until free cash is approved for FY2015 which occurs in October. Then have a special town meeting to transfer money from the free cash account. This will not raise the tax rate but will decrease the free cash account below the "comfortable" zone.

Option 4: Raise and appropriate the entire amount on the FY2015 budget at this years town meeting. This will bring our budget over the levy limit and require a prop 2 ½ vote.

Teresa recommends option 1 and using the stabilization for this. This was an unforeseen extremely bad winter. Discussed paying the stabilization back. Town Admin. Lisa explained that the snow and ice is not an asset. It is a one time event that was unexpected. An example of an asset to pay back would be a vehicle that would be paid back over the life of the vehicle. Jeff feels very strongly about not increasing the tax rate to cover this, he likes option 1. Patrick would like to think this over and vote at the next selectmen's meeting. Rosario suggested voting now and request from the assessors one half of the expense and the other half from stabilization. He reviewed with Teresa the free cash and stabilization. After this years town meeting free cash will be around \$300,000, stabilization will be around \$950,000. Rosario feels strongly that we should go with option 1 using the stabilization and not paying it back and request half from the Assessors

overlay account. This way the bottom line budget amount will not change nor will it affect the tax rate. We will not need a prop 2 ½ override.

Motion by Rosario, second by Jeff with Patrick abstaining to place an article on the FY2015 warrant to pay the snow and ice overrun by transferring half of the amount from stabilization without a payback and request half from the Assessors Overlay account. Motion passed.

Alice Boyd and Ron Bernard in representing the Sandisfield Arts Center. They would like the town to transfer clear title to the parcel of town owned land next to the Sarc. They have been using this with the town's permission for parking. They would like to clear the parcel and make a proper organized parking lot. It is approx ½ acre on the corner of Hammertown and Route 57. By transferring the property to them the town would not be liable. Alice Boyd reviewed the future plans of Sarc. They are expanding their programs to include people of all age groups. They are creating a community center. The building would be available for the town to use for town meetings. The transfer of the land has to be voted on at town meeting.

Motion by Patrick, second by Jeff, passed unanimously to place an article of the FY2015 warrant to transfer clear title of map and parcel 202-0-11 for no fee to the Sandisfield Arts Center.

Motion by Patrick, second by Rosario, passed unanimously to re-appoint Kim Spring as the Inspector of Animals.

Mail reviewed

Warrants reviewed and signed

Minutes of meetings reviewed and signed

At 8:20 motion to enter into Executive Session for the express purpose to conduct collective bargaining strategy and to adjourn the regular selectmen's meeting immediately after.

Roll call Jeffrey, yes, Patrick, yes, Rosario, yes

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Jeffrey Gray

Patrick Barrett

Rosario Messina