

**Regular Session Minutes – Selectmen’s Meeting  
Selectmen’s Meeting Room, Town Hall  
Monday, January 27, 2014, 7:30 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** William S. Moonan, Chair, Margot R. Fleischman, Caroline Fedele, Michael A. Rosenberg, Mark Siegenthaler, and Town Manager Richard T. Reed

**ALSO PRESENT:** Ben Thomas, Finance Committee; Susan Baldauf, Director Youth & Family Services; Jeff Cohen, Zone and Planning Board; Sarah Buhler, Human Resources Manager; Jessica Porter, Assistant Town Manager; Victor Garofalo, Finance Director; Roy Sorenson, Public Works Director; Joan Bowen and Mary McBride, Press Representative

---

Chair Moonan called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**14-168      Public Hearing - General Bylaw Amendment – Article 58 – Salary Administration Plan Amendment – Classification and Wage Schedule**

**Mr. Rosenberg made a motion to open the Public Hearing to discuss the General Bylaw Amendment – Article 58 – Salary Administration Plan Amendment – Classification and Wage Schedule Ms. Fleischman seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

Assistant Town Manager Jessica Porter presented the Selectmen with Salary Bylaw Amendments for Fiscal Year 2015. The proposal states that the following categories receive a 2% raise: Management/Professional, Secretarial/Clerical and Library. Ms. Porter stated that this was consistent with surrounding towns as well as union increases for Fiscal Year 2015. Ms. Porter pointed out a few changes to Category A: Management/Professional. Economic Coordinator and Recycling Coordinator were newly added positions. Also the Facilities Operations Manager was reclassified from M-13 to M-15. This was a result of an examination of this position’s duties and responsibilities, as well as comparison of similar positions in neighboring communities.

Next, Ms. Porter stated that Categories D – H were all union positions and reflected the increases proposed by various unions.

Ms. Porter said that Category I had changes that were due to cleaning up the classifications and streamlining the rates for Springs Brook Park which falls under the Recreation Department.

Finally, Ms. Porter stated that there was a change in the maximum rate of pay for the “Temporary Painter,” also under Category I from \$26.00 to \$29.00 per hour.

Chair Moonan suggested that the Economic Coordinator and Recycling Coordinator positions should be at lower grades. Chair Moonan said that it would be better to start at a lower grade and then have them move to a higher grade.

Ms. Fleischman countered by saying she felt the Economic Coordinator position was one with a lot of responsibility and in essence a full time position that is only working part time. Ms. Fleischman felt that in order to attract a high caliber candidate, the position warranted the higher grade level.

Town Manager Richard Reed said that before creating this position, he looked at other towns that also had an Economic Coordinator and found that the chosen salary range is consistent with that of other towns.

Ms. Fedele asked about the history of a job moving from one category to another.

Mr. Reed stated there is an analysis that goes into rating a job for category placement. Those factors include experience, number of people supervised and responsibilities. There is a range that is then associated with the position. This information plus market conditions determine in which category a job should be placed.

Mr. Rosenberg asked if the Category I changes were recommended by the Recreation department. Ms. Porter stated that they were their recommendations.

Chair Moonan opened the hearing to the public for questions, which there were none.

**Mr. Rosenberg made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Ms. Fleischman seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

#### **14-169 Proposed FY15 Operating Budget - Review of Departmental Submissions**

Mr. Reed presented the Selectmen with the Proposed Fiscal Year 2015 Operating Budget. There was an update made to the Public Works Department budget. Initially it was indicated it would be \$58,842 over the Finance Committee's adjusted distribution target. It was since reduced to \$51,422. Mr. Reed also reminded the Selectmen of the two line items that are not factored into the Public Works budget; Water Purchase and MWRA Sewer assessments. The reason these are not factored in is due to the fact that those costs are covered by the rate setting process. Therefore the Public Works budget is \$6,033,856. It would be upwards of \$10,000,000 if those two line items were included.

The current Selectmen Discretionary Budget is \$15,995,650. The current budgets as submitted and revised are \$16,047,072, leaving a difference of \$51,422. Mr. Reed stated that in past years, there had been little to no growth allowance. He said that he felt the Selectmen could factor in a 2% growth allowance.

There were two budgetary requests that exceeded the 2% growth allowance. The first was from Youth and Family Services for Veteran's Benefits. There has been a significant increase in the benefits required of the Bedford Veteran's Hospital SRO residents. Mr. Reed stated that the Town is reimbursed 100% of this expenditure from the Federal government. The reimbursement does get reflected as revenue in the following fiscal year. The projection for Fiscal Year 2016 is approximately \$70,000 which is higher than the current coverage of \$51,352. It is Mr. Reed's suggestion to the Finance Committee and Selectmen to allow for this current year increase to the budget.

The other budgetary request in excess of the 2% growth allowance came from the Town Clerk's office with regards to Elections and Registrations. There were two elections last year. This year there will be four. This is the reason for increase in this category.

Mr. Reed stated that if a department wanted something over the 2% target expenditures they would have to submit a contingency request. There were six in all.

The first was an additional \$620 to the Fire Department to cover the cost increase associated with the Fire Department NFPA subscription for the codes and standards utilized by Fire Prevention Officers. Due to this minimal amount, Mr. Reed is in favor of granting this funding.

Next the Police Department is asking for an additional \$10,082 to fund the increase in the overtime expenditures for Emergency Communication Officers. Mr. Reed stated that this is request that is made on a consistent basis and using the same argument each time. Mr. Reed does not see a reason to grant this request at this time.

The third item is a request for \$5,000 from Code Enforcement and Conservation for tree pruning and removal. Mr. Reed would like to discuss this matter further with the Public Works department as well as the Conservation Administrator.

The fourth request is for \$11,000 for a Healthy Bedford/Healthy Communities Coordinator with the Department of Youth and Family. This position currently receives a grant from the Northwest Suburban Health Alliance. Mr. Reed is concerned that if the grant does not come through, the Town would be responsible for the entire salary for this position.

The next item was also from Youth and Family Services. They are seeking funding of \$2,037.73 for the Administrative Assistant. Currently this position decreases to 24 hours per week for eight weeks in the summer. They would like to see this position remain full time during the summer.

The final item is from the Recreation Department. The Youth Center currently costs \$50,000 to be fully staffed. Half of this cost is covered by the Recreation Department's budget and the other half from the Revolving fund. The Recreation Department would like to have the full \$50,000 come from their budget.

Mr. Siegenthaler asked what the current balance was in the Recreation Department's Revolving Fund. Mr. Reed indicated that it was approximately \$550,000.

Earlier in the day, Mr. Rosenberg e-mailed some questions to Mr. Reed regarding the Selectmen's Budget. The first question was regarding the line item that showed an increase of \$5,000 to Magic/HATS. Mr. Reed stated it reflected the Middlesex 3 Coalition's annual dues.

Mr. Rosenberg wanted to know if the amount allocated for postage would be enough given the rate increases issued by the post office. Mr. Reed stated that the Finance Department which handles this cost under spent by 12% last year. This was due to the fact that people were requesting information online. Taxpayers now have the option to request paperless real estate bills. This will further reduce the postage budget needs.

Next, Mr. Rosenberg inquired about the Reserve Funds. Finance Director Victor Garofalo stated that fiscal policy dictates that the Finance Committee will carry a reserve fund of 0.5% of the operating budget. The current operating budget is \$75,000,000. Approximately \$375,000 represents the 0.5% and the remainder is what the School Committee anticipates needing to cover transportation costs for the homeless students, thus the \$609,000 in the Reserve Funds.

Finally, Mr. Rosenberg had questions about Energy Costs. Mr. Reed indicated that he reserved \$41,000 for energy costs. This increase is based on usage numbers generated by former Facilities Director Richard Jones. The Town of Bedford currently receives its electricity from Power Options. The contract is up for renewal and the costs are expected to increase significantly. It was decided that NStar would be a better choice as a provider. Mr. Reed was hoping to lock into a contract with NStar in March when the rates would be lower.

The Selectmen went through each department listed in the Operating Budget. There were a number of questions regarding the Automated Refuse Collection Program Savings. Mr. Reed stated that the revenue generated by the sale of overflow bags and the purchase of additional containers was reflected in the Revolving fund. The paper rebates goes back into the general fund at the end of the fiscal year. There was a total two year savings of over \$150,000 since the implementation of this program.

Chair Moonan asked if the increase to the water budget was due to the fact that flushing of the system had to take place in 2013. Mr. Reed stated that they didn't anticipate having to flush the system again as the bacterial issue was resolved. However there will be a reserve fund transfer of \$200,000 to the water budget later this year. This number will depend on water consumption.

While discussing the Recreation Department's budget, Mr. Reed stated that the Operating Budget pays for two full time staff with a \$25,000 contribution to the Teen Center. The Administrative Assistants' salary and all other expenses are paid through the Recreation Department's Revolving fund.

Finance Director Victor Garofalo discussed the Ambulance Enterprise budget with the Selectmen. The total projected revenue for fiscal year 2015 is \$957,886. The Finance Committee is using the same level of revenue and receipts. The Finance Committee will not be able to change this until they look at the rates. There are twenty-six firefighters that receive an EMT stipend: four are budgeted under the Ambulance Account while the other twenty-two are indirectly charged under EMT. Other costs charged to the Ambulance account are 20% for the Fire Chief's salary and 33% for the Administrative Assistant's salary.

Mr. Garofalo pointed out a large increase in the Operational Cost pertaining to Operational Reserve. There was an increase from \$5,000 in fiscal year 2014 to \$30,700 in fiscal year 2015. The reason for this rise was due to the Finance Committee using the same guidelines as it pertains to Operational Reserves: 0.5% of the total budget. Mr. Garofalo pointed out that the \$30,700 is actually a bit below this guideline.

Mr. Rosenberg inquired when the rates would be reviewed. Mr. Reed indicated it would be in the spring of this year.

#### **14-170      Annual Town Meeting - Review of Draft Warrant - Article Recommendations**

Mr. Reed discussed some revisions made to the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Mr. Reed stated that Article 13 –Bond Authorization for Water Main Improvements might be a stand-alone article to fund Capital Project 15-39 for \$773,600. Mr. Reed indicated that Capital Project 15-38 – Sewer Inflow and Infiltration for \$308,000 might also be a stand-alone article. This would greatly reduce the total cost for Capital Articles in fiscal year 2015.

Mr. Reed said that there were some projects that might receive funding from the Community Preservation budget as well as Capital. Mr. Reed suggested the Warrant might list the Community Preservation budget item first so that Capital would know what portion would be absorbed by Community Preservation.

Mr. Reed indicated that the Finance Committee has preliminarily agreed to appropriate \$551,578 to the Other Post-Employment Benefits Liability Trust Fund (OPEB) as well as \$25,000 to the Supplement Accrued Sick Leave Fund. These are Articles 23 and 24 respectively.

Mr. Reed stated that the Warrant would be closing on February 18, 2014.

**14-171 Proposed Redevelopment – 285 The Great Road  
Former Travelodge Site  
Selectmen Comments**

The Selectmen spoke at length with Jeff Cohen of the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) about the former Travelodge site. The original proposal was to build a fast food restaurant on the site. The entrance to the restaurant would be from The Great Road rather than diverting traffic into the shopping plaza and have patrons enter the restaurant's parking area from the rear of the building. The owner of the shopping center stated that there was an agreement with the current tenants of the shopping center that traffic would not be diverted into the shopping center in this fashion as it would conflict with the large delivery trucks that use that section of the parking lot to unload their freight. The ZBA was concerned with the amount of traffic that would be generated in an already congested area should the entrance to the restaurant be from The Great Road. The new proposal is to have a bank with retail stores on the former Travelodge site rather than a fast food restaurant thus reducing the traffic in and out of this site greatly. The entrance to this site would remain via The Great Road. Mr. Cohen stated that the ZBA wanted to have a shared turning lane in front of the new business to alleviate the traffic burden. Chair Moonan's question to the Selectmen was whether or not they were in favor of the shared lane or if they should push through court action to have traffic enter and exit the new retail space from inside the shopping area. The Selectmen were not as concerned with traffic issues in that area now that the proposed fast food restaurant was replaced with a bank and retail shops. It was determined to allow the ZBA's recommendation of a shared lane on The Great Road to remain.

**14-172 Miscellaneous Action Items  
One Day Special Liquor License  
Vocal Revolution at St. Michael's Parish Hall  
March 1, 2014**

**Mr. Siegenthaler made a motion to grant a One Day Special Liquor License to Vocal Revolution at St. Michaels's Parish Hall on March 1, 2014. Ms. Fedele seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

**14-173 Minutes  
Regular Session January 21, 2014**

**Mr. Rosenberg made a motion to approve the Regular Session Minutes of January 21, 2014 as amended. Ms. Fleischman seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

**14-174 Town Manager's Report**

Mr. Reed informed the Selectmen that he received a letter from a tenant at the Town Center. They wished to have the \$270 fee waived to hold a special charitable event at

the Old Town Hall. Mr. Reed was inclined to not grant this waiver as it would set a precedent that would not be in the Town's best interest.

Finally Mr. Reed presented the Selectmen with proposed future Selectmen meeting dates. Mr. Reed pointed out that Special Town Meeting was tentatively scheduled for October 27<sup>th</sup>. However because this is a tri-annual reevaluation process to arrive at establishing a tax rate and a recertification of the overall value, he felt October 27<sup>th</sup> would not allow enough time to accomplish this goal. Mr. Reed stated that November 10<sup>th</sup> would be a more reasonable date for Special Town Meeting.

#### **14-175      Open Discussion**

Mr. Rosenberg asked what the plans were for assessing the force main. Mr. Reed stated that the engineers are working on it and information should be forthcoming. Mr. Rosenberg inquired if it would be on the Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Reed stated potentially it would be included.

Mr. Rosenberg informed the Selectmen that after talking with the Athletic Director and the Chair of the Community Preservation Committee he decided to file for a Community Preservation project to replace the press box.

Ms. Fedele informed Mr. Reed that she has received many complaints regarding street lights being out in various parts of Town. Ms. Fedele urged people to contact the DPW and they have received feedback from Town Engineer, Adrienne St. John. Ms. Fedele asked Mr. Reed to follow up on this claims.

**Ms. Fleischman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Fedele seconded the motion.**

**The motion passed 5-0-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.