

**Town of Boscawen
Select Board
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, December 8, 2022 at 6:00 PM**

In Attendance: Lorrie Carey, Paul Dickey, Matt Burdick, Kate Merrill, Katie Phelps, Kearsten O'Brien, Kellee Easler, Nicole Hoyt, Kevin Wyman & Jason Killary.

Guests: Polly Dawson & Loren Martin - Avitar Associates

Roll Call: completed and guests introduced.

Chairwoman Carey opened the public meeting at 6:00 P.M.

Chairwoman Lorrie Carey noted to remove the 12.01.22 minutes from the Consent Agenda.

Selectman Paul Dickey motioned to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Seconded by Selectman Matt Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Department Head Updates: Town Clerk Nicole Hoyt presented the 2023 Town Clerk budget. In terms of compensation, there are COLA, merit, and longevity increases. Town Clerk Hoyt reduced overtime based on what was used this year. The Moderator and Supervisors line was lowered but they kept a buffer in case there is an extra election. They reduced the cost of printing the Town Reports. Town Clerk Hoyt would like the election costs line to remain the same. The costs will increase in following years so budgeting more will give them a savings. Town Clerk Hoyt looked at different booths for town election. There has been discussion about having town election in the Town Municipal Building meeting room. Based on the square footage, legally, it would not be allowed. Town Clerk Hoyt reduced the Vital Records Preservation line to \$1. The Town Historian line was also reduced to \$1. They do not foresee that position being filled next year. Town Clerk Hoyt noted the estimated revenue line was left blank. They are still deciding on where it will go.

Selectman Dickey motioned to preliminarily approve the 2023 Town Clerk budget. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Town Clerk Hoyt presented the 2023 Tax Collector budget. The first 3 lines are compensation with 6% COLA, merit, and longevity increases. The equipment and software line was reduced based on current costs. Town Clerk Hoyt noted the supply line looks unused, but she will be buying a year's worth of toner for the machines downstairs. Town Clerk Hoyt pays the tax bills out of the Tax Collector budget. She will contact the company that printed the Town Report to get a quote on printing the tax bill notices. Town Clerk Hoyt reduced the lien expenses line. Lien expenses are based on how many people don't pay the prior year property taxes, people who need certified notices and people who pay off their lien. The meetings and travel line was increased to \$200 to ensure all four employees receive the necessary training.

Selectman Dickey motioned to preliminarily approve the 2023 Tax Collector budget. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Town Administrator Katie Phelps presented the 2023 General Government budget. The Select Board and Town Administrator lines had COLA increases. The Town Administrator position had a 2% step increase. The Recording Secretary line decreased by 3%. The Code Enforcement Officer line was increased based on 2022 actuals through November. She is still waiting on the December billing. The Assistant to Administrator position will be decreasing from 25% to 5%. There is a substantial increase in the computer licenses, software, and hardware line. All computers will be updated to Microsoft Office 365 which is subscription based service. The Police Department will cover their own subscriptions for Microsoft Office 365 and Adobe, however, the remainder of the subscriptions will be paid from that line. The contractual computer maintenance line increased by 32%. Currently, the town does not have a contract with their IT provider. They bill for a retainer of time to be used throughout the year. The increase is due to the upgrade to all of computers with the Microsoft 365 and Adobe subscriptions. Dues and subscriptions increased by 22%. The equipment non-computer line increased to replace two Town Clerk printers. The telephone line increased by 26%. TA Phelps said she is still budgeting for the Select Board cell phones in the event that they choose to use them. Meetings and Travel increased 50%. This covers mileage, Budget & Finance workshops and an added amount for Trustee of the Trust Fund training and expenses. Office supplies increased due to inflation. It covers the Town Clerk and Tax Collector supplies as well as Finance and Executive. The advertising and public notices line increased because the Town will hold two Administrative Fee public hearings. The Town Counsel line increased due to 2022 actuals. The legal books and updates line was previously paid out of the Town Counsel line. It is for updated statute books which are sent yearly. Property & Liability insurance increased 30% from 2022 with a reduction of \$3,297.47 for a payment holiday. There is a new expense line for the Commercial St Historical Exhibit. Per the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) there will be \$7,500 budgeted in 2023 and 2024 to fund the exhibit. The Contingency Fund has not been used so far this year and will remain the same at \$33,000. The Executive budget in total, is increasing by 12% for 2023.

Selectman Dickey motioned to preliminarily approve the 2023 General Government budget. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Chief Kevin Wyman presented the 2023 Police Department budget. Last week, approval was postponed in order to look for encumbrances. Chief Wyman stated they will pay their software bill of \$4,700 by the end of the year. It usually is paid in the beginning of the year for a yearly subscription to their IMC software.

Selectman Dickey motioned to preliminarily approve the 2023 Police Department budget. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Emergency Management Director Jason Killary presented the 2023 Emergency Management budget. The first two-line items were compensation with a 6% COLA increase for both. The Meeting and Travel line increased by \$2,400 to allot for a recording secretary for 2023 EMD meetings. The telephone line was decreased to zero. EMD Killary currently uses a phone through the Police Department. The Plan Updates line was decreased to zero. The Hazard

Mitigation update will be next year. It will be paid by a grant through ARPA funds from the State of NH. EMD Killary budgeted \$4,000 for the Emergency Operation Plan update. The total bill is \$8,000 and the remaining balance will be paid using grant money funded by Homeland Security. Discussion ensued.

Selectman Dickey motioned to preliminarily approve the 2023 Emergency Management budget. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

EMD Killary gave a brief COVID-19 update. Overall, the guidance remains the same. Upon exposure, a mask is required for 10 days. If symptoms develop, individuals need to get tested. If they are negative, they can end their isolation. If someone tests positive, they need to isolate immediately for at least 5 days. If an individual has been exposed, they should get tested on day 6. The updated COVID-19 guidance will be posted on the Town website.

TA Phelps noted that she asked Cybertron if they could show her how to do the planned software updates to reduce the cost of labor. She will still budget for the entire amount, but hopes not to have to use it in its entirety if she can assist.

Planning and Community Development Director Kellee Easler asked the Board for approval to encumber funds from the Economic Development Committee, in the amount of \$2,000. She also asked for approval to encumber \$3,000 for the Land Use account.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to approve encumbering funds from account 4651000 in the amount of \$2,000 under provisions of RSA 31:71, for purpose of paying for Economic Development updates in 2023. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Selectman Dickey motioned to approve encumbering funds from Land Use account 4191555 in the amount of \$3,000 under provisions of RSA 32:7I for the purpose of paying for Land Use Development Regulation updates for 2023. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

PCD Director Easler presented a Land Use Impact Fee request for five 3-drawer file cabinets and two 3-tier bookcases. The department is short on storage and needs space for storing petty cash, files, and binders for the office.

Selectman Dickey motioned to approve the Impact Fee request due to the need to provide the PCD office with more filing cabinets and bookcases. Furthermore, the use of Impact Fees for this purpose is warranted in the amount of \$565.31. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

PCD Director Easler updated the Board on Planning Board. They will be researching class 6 roads and coming up with a map. Chairwoman Carey asked if they would need to encumber money for an advisory team. PCD Director Easler stated research will be done in house. Legal will not be involved. Further details will come next month.

Ms. Polly Dawson, Chair of the Old Home Day Committee, presented the 2023 Old Home Day budget. The golf tournament budget was sectioned off by the teams who paid to participate and income from the raffle. The biggest source of their income comes from the golf tournament. They have also raised money by hosting yard sales. The budget has remained the same overall. On behalf of the OHD Committee, Ms. Dawson requested a line item to be resubmitted for consideration by the Budget Committee. In 2022, the line item was \$5,000. Ms. Dawson requested the Budget Committee place a line item for the total of \$7,000 for Old Home Day, to continue entertainment and fireworks at OHD. TA Phelps stated the line item will be listed under the Master budget sheet. Discussion ensued. Chairwoman Carey noted they will need to preliminarily adjust the Patriotic Purposes budget to \$7,000.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to preliminarily approve adding \$7,000 for fireworks in 2023. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Selectman Burdick motioned to preliminarily approve the 2023 Old Home Day budget. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Ms. Dawson asked in reference to the Trustees of the Trust Fund, what the deadline was to submit a warrant article. Discussion ensued. Chairwoman Carey said there is a working draft warrant. The article would need to be approved by the Select Board unless it is petitioned. Chairwoman Carey suggested presenting the advisory request to the Select Board as soon as possible so they can approve it.

Finance Director Kate Merrill presented Performance Review updates. They have received a majority of their employee reviews with the exception of a few. No further discussion.

FD Merrill presented Capital Reserve Fund transfers for approval.

Selectman Burdick motioned to approve the Trustees of the Trust Funds to transfer \$3,149 from the Municipal IT Capital Reserve Fund to the General Fund to reimburse for the following expenditures: Cybertron, Inc (Invoice 20220458), Cybertron, Inc (Invoice 20220459) and Citizen's Bank (Sept. Statement). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to approve the Trustees of the Trust Funds to transfer \$8,432.50 from the Municipal Buildings Capital Reserve Fund to the General Fund to reimburse for the following expenditures: Daniel J Labonte (Handicap Ramp) and Best Door and Lock (Invoice 7565). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

FD Merrill provided employee feedback about the Holiday party. Employees were grateful for the Board's decision to have the event. They look forward to attending next year.

Deputy Planning and Community Development Director Kearsten O'Brien followed up on the exemptions discussion from last week. The findings showed that the Town of Boscawen had over \$78 million of exempt untaxable property. With an additional \$937,400 worth of exemptions and credits combined. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien stated at this point they are

focusing on elderly exemptions. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien spoke with Avitar about the warrant article for the Veteran's credit. They need to readopt the language for the \$500 credit. Mrs. Loren Martin from Avitar, clarified that the warrant article language was changed through legislation. The unintended consequence is if the Veterans credit is not readopted, it will automatically reset to the standard \$50 credit. Currently the town has an optional Veterans credit of \$500 and an all-Veterans credit of \$500. Ms. Martin recommended correcting the language and readopting the Town's current rate. She noted any changes or increases should happen next year Mrs. Martin reviewed the elderly exemption reports that Selectman Burdick put together. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien's recommendation was to increase exemption amounts. For ages 65-74 increase to \$20,000, 75-79 to \$30,000, and 80+ to \$50,000. Assets cannot exceed \$75,000. Individuals cannot have more than \$30,000 for income and married couples cannot exceed \$40,000. Currently the net income cannot exceed \$25,000 for single and \$30,000 for married. Mrs. Martin noted the recommendation would be in line with what they are seeing for percent increases. She stated in 2023, the value of properties will increase, and the rates will go down. The town value on average, should go up 40% to 50% in 2023. Selectman Burdick stated the median income is \$51,480. If they proceed with a \$5,000 increase, the percentage is almost identical to where they are now. Selectman Burdick recommended for ages 65-74 increase to \$32,000, 75-79 to \$48,000, and 80+ to \$64,000 based off the assessed value of their home. Ms. Martin would not recommend increasing the income and assets that substantially. She noted if they raise the income and asset limits too high, it will never go down because more people will qualify. Discussion ensued. Deputy PCD Director O'Brien agreed with Selectman Burdick's recommendation of the exemption amounts to be \$32,000 for 65-74, \$48,000 for 75-79 and \$64,000 for 80+. Furthermore, individual's net income cannot exceed \$30,000 for single and \$40,000 for married. TA Phelps included the recommendation in the Town Report preliminarily. The Board will finalize the recommendation after reviewing the meeting notes.

Town Clerk Hoyt noted in January, filing for Town office in March will be announced It will be posted in the Newsvine and Valley Voice.

Town Clerk Hoyt noted upcoming open positions for committees. There will be one 3-year term for Cemetery Trustees. Two 3-year terms for Library Trustees. One 3-year term for a Select Board member and one 5-year term for Supervisors of the Checklist. Lastly, one 3-year term for Trustees of the Trust Fund.

Town Clerk Hoyt presented a resignation from Pam Hardy for the Supervisors of the Checklist, effective December 2. The Select Board accepted Pam Hardy's resignation as Supervisor of the Checklist with regret and gratitude for her time.

Chief Kevin Wyman clarified the Highway Safety Grant previously discussed is a patrol grant that reimburses the Police Department for extra patrol. Chief Wyman noted they don't get an actual check. There will be extra patrols on New Year's Eve to ensure safety. Chairwoman Carey asked how much grant money the Police Department has been funded. Chief Wyman estimated about \$40,000 in the last couple of years.

Mrs. Loren Martin asked when taxpayers could comment or ask questions on budget items. Chairwoman Carey stated the public can comment and ask questions at the Public Budget

Hearing on February 2nd. Mrs. Martin commented on the Old Home Day budget pertaining to the fireworks. She questioned why the fireworks weren't listed in the actuals on the OHD budget. Discussion ensued. FD Merrill will note the total for fireworks on the OHD budget.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to enter a nonpublic session at 7:21pm under RSA 91-A:3 II (a). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to close a nonpublic session at 7:23 pm under RSA 91-A:3 II (a). Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Public meeting reopened at 7:23 pm.

Selectman Dickey motioned to promote Corporal Robert Mottram to Seargent. Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to enter a nonpublic session at 7:25 pm under RSA 91-A:3 II (l). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to close a nonpublic session under RSA 91-A:3 II (l). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Public meeting reopened at 7:35 pm.

Selectman Dickey motioned to seal the nonpublic minutes for 1 year under RSA 91-A:3 II (l). Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to enter a nonpublic session at 7:36 pm under RSA 91-A:3 II (c). Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Chairwoman Carey motioned to close a nonpublic session under RSA 91-A:3 II (c). Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None opposed.

Public meeting reopened at 7:45 pm.

Selectman Dickey motioned to seal the nonpublic minutes for 3 years under RSA 91-A:3 II (c). Seconded by Selectman Burdick. All in favor. None opposed.

Next Meeting: Thursday, December 15, 2022 at 6:00 PM.

Selectman Burdick motioned to adjourn at 7:46 PM. Seconded by Selectman Dickey. All in favor. None Opposed.

Respectfully submitted by Hannah Gardner