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TOWN OF WINDHAM, NH
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
October 30th, 2023
Community Development Department
3 North Lowell Rd.
Approved Minutes

8 Attendance:

9 Chairman Ross McLeod- present
10 Vice Chair Heath Partington- present
11 Mark Samsel- present
12 Bruce Breton- excused
13 Roger Hohenberger- present
14

15 Staff:

16 Brian McCarthy- Town Administrator
17 Deb Padykula- Finance Director
18

19 Mr. Samsel wished to thank people for their patience when the Windham Rail Trail was closed
20 last week; there was about \$18,000 in work done on the Rail Trail.
21

22 Warde Senior Living
23

24 Mr. Russ Abell addressed the Board. Mr. Abell reviewed the history of the water use and
25 potential water acquisition thus far.
26

27 Mr. Don Ware from Pennichuck Water addressed the Board. Mr. Ware reviewed the available
28 water in the area that can be leased from Salem.
29

30 Mr. Hohenberger asked if they have contacted Salem to ask why they had rejected the proposal
31 of additional allocation from the water line. Mr. Ware stated that in Phase 1, Salem has 1
32 million gallons a day. Mr. Ware stated that they have to allow the 200,000 gallons allotted to
33 Windham as previously agreed. Mr. Ware stated that Salem used more than their 1 million
34 gallons last year because no one else was using it. The town would have 145,000 gallons
35 available after this new potential allocation to Warde Senior Living.
36

37 **A motion was made by Mr. Hohenberger to allow Warde Senior Living to work with**
38 **Pennichuck Water to allot 15,000 gallons out of the 200,000 gallons allotted to the town.**
39 **Seconded by Mr. Samsel. Vote 4-0. Motion passes.**
40

41 Joe Maynard/ Benchmark Engineering
42

43 Mr. Joseph Maynard of Benchmark LLC addressed the Board and is representing Ms. Susan
44 Mesiti. Mr. Maynard reviewed the plan as presented. There is a 30-foot swath and there is just
45 over .8 (eight tenths) of an acre that Ms. Mesiti is working to purchase from the town. Mr.
46 Maynard stated that he took the current lot lines and extended them. There is a 60 foot right of
47 way. Mr. Maynard reviewed comparable properties. Ms. Mesiti is offering \$50,000 to the Town
48 of Windham. Mr. Maynard stated that the potential purchase would need to go on the ballot
49 for March. Chairman McLeod asked if the town had any intent for the property. Mr. McCarthy
50 stated they did not at this time. After discussion, Chairman McLeod stated that Mr. Maynard
51 would have the support of 4 Board members to move this forward as a warrant article.

52

53 Deb Padykula/Third Quarter Update

54

55 Ms. Deb Padykula and Mr. McCarthy reviewed the third quarter expenditures and what had
56 been dispensed thus far. Ms. Padykula stated that part of the road expenses has not yet been
57 fully expended.

58

59 Mr. Bob Coole, the town treasurer, addressed the Board. Mr. Coole stated that there was an
60 outstanding county bill of \$2.4 million that will need to be paid.

61

62 Ms. Padykula stated that the welfare budget is \$25,000 over budget. Ms. Padykula stated that
63 the dispatch and overtime budget for police officers are both over budget presently.

64

65 ARPA fund balance

66

67 Mr. McCarthy stated that he tasked Ms. Padykula and Ms. Jamie Pelletier to go through and
68 gather what was previously approved to be expended. The ARPA funds are set up so that all of
69 the funds must be expended by the end of 2024. Mr. McCarthy stated that they have not been
70 experiencing the same technology outages they have been experiencing previously. Mr.
71 McCarthy stated that Rockport will be taking over the phone operations as well. Mr. McCarthy
72 stated they will be coming back, probably after budget season, to discuss these requests.

73

74 Mr. McCarthy stated that there are a few other items on the original list.

75

76 Dennis Senibaldi/Highway

77

78 Mr. Dennis Senibaldi stated that the Board has several pictures of large objects that were in
79 driveways that are hazards to the plows and are in violation of the ordinance. Mr. Senibaldi
80 stated that granite posts for mailboxes are all over the town and can become fragile during the
81 winter. Mr. Senibaldi stated that he would like to get the opinion of the Board on the large
82 rocks at the end of driveways as hazards to the plows. Mr. Senibaldi stated that he did not want
83 the responsibility to go around town and mark all of these large rocks and mailboxes on granite
84 posts (In a previous discussion, Mr. Senibaldi had mentioned that these were also in violation of
85 the ordinance but now there are many of these). Mr. Senibaldi stated that he is only protecting
86 the safety of their drivers. Mr. Senibaldi stated that many people do not pull permits for the

87 items that they install. Mr. Senibaldi stated that the granite post is more prone to snapping.
88 Vice Chair Partington stated that some of these things have been in place for 20 years. Vice
89 Chair Partington asked if they could be a little more collaborative and work with the residents.
90 Mr. Senibaldi stated that there were 2 people in this department for years. Mr. Senibaldi stated
91 that he has no issues with having a conversation with homeowners. Chairman McLeod stated
92 that he likes the idea of working collaboratively, yet, some of these are a clear violation of
93 building code laws. Chairman McLeod stated that he is not sure how to get on the proactive
94 side of this as people move into homes and are not aware of the setbacks. Mr. Senibaldi stated
95 that safety is the most important feature.

96

97 Budget Workshop

98

99 Mr. McCarthy stated that he is presenting a budget of \$22,184,272 which is a 13.1% increase.
100 Mr. McCarthy presented the 2024 Town Operating Budget.

101

102 Mr. McCarthy reviewed the categories as well as the increases. Mr. McCarthy reviewed the
103 Uncontrolled Major Increases. The uncontrolled increases; 80% of this is out of the town's
104 control. Mr. McCarthy reviewed the 5 year look back.

105

106 Mr. McCarthy stated that grant funded positions and the SCBA do not need to be part of the
107 budget. Mr. McCarthy and Ms. Padykula are reviewing this with Attorney Campbell. Mr.
108 McCarthy stated that they are looking to update the buildings since they are in dire need to
109 make changes.

110

111 Expendable Trust Fund- there are 6 potential retirements next year which would wipe out the
112 expendable trust fund. There is an unassigned fund balance; some of this can be used for the
113 CIP as well.

114

115 Chairman McLeod stated that the Board sometimes makes motions to accept part of the
116 operative budget but then they may go back and ask questions later.

117

118 Chief Mike Caron addressed the Board. Chief Caron stated that he is asking for a program called
119 Power DMS. The line item for training has increased and that is mandatory. Chief Caron stated
120 that the price and need for training ammunition has increased. Chief Caron stated that there is
121 a 3-year replacement plan for vehicles. Motorola increased the pricing for radios this year and
122 they will be purchasing one more mobile radio and a few other radios; this was carried over
123 from last year. They are requesting 3 cruisers as replacements and proposing that 1 will be
124 added. The trailer will be on a maintenance schedule after this as well.

125

126 The Chief's salary is \$10,000 less than the surrounding communities according to Chief Caron.
127 Chief Caron stated that he proposed his salary be the same grade as the town administrator.
128 The highest paid sergeant is also a starting salary of less than surrounding properties. Chief
129 Caron stated that there is a lot of overtime costs. They are only running with 2 officers on the

130 day shift. The School resource officers are back in the schools but they did take one detective
131 out of the office and put him back on the street.

132

133 When considering the chief's salary, Mr. Hohenberger stated that he does think Windham is
134 comparable to Pelham and Londonderry and Derry, but, the roster is larger in these other
135 communities. Yet, Hudson and Salem do have other business needs for their officers and
136 patrolmen so he does not think these communities are comparable.

137

138 B3- (earned time buy outs) The Board discussed that there is a new crowd of people and they
139 like to use their earned time and that people will not use their earned time but they have the
140 opportunity to use their earned time. Mr. Hohenberger asked why we are budgeting for 80
141 hours of earned time if many people are using it; he would like to see that not budgeted. Mr.
142 Hohenberger thinks this is part of the reason there is 1.3 million dollars in unused funds. Mr.
143 Hohenberger suggested budgeting for the worse care scenario for sign-on bonuses, do not
144 budget for the "worst case scenario" but for the most realistic outcome.

145

146 DMS software and outcomes- the Board discussed what does the idea of being certified mean.

147

148 B10- college reimbursement, 19 officers getting \$600, Mr. Hohenberger asked how often that
149 happened, if not anyone uses it, Chief Caron stated that it is spent by other officers as it is put
150 into a pool and others are allowed to use the funding. Officer Marisol stated that that money is
151 used every year.

152

153 The Board and the police discussed the high mileage; 98,700 miles are on one of the officer's
154 vehicles according to Officer Smith.

155

156 Mr. Hohenberger would like a more realistic number for gas and diesel.

157

158 Uniform purchases for new employees- Chief Caron stated that the town has purchased
159 clothing for officers since 2005 and all the clothing for the academy as well. Clothing is new to
160 the books but not new to the budget.

161

162 Mr. Samsel asked about the outliers, this is on B2. Ms. Padykula and Chief Caron explained that
163 this might be compared to someone who was on a lower paygrade with and was replaced by
164 someone with more experience and more education.

165

166 Chairman McLeod is a bigger fan of the risk base budgeting; this was in reference to a
167 statement made by Mr. Hohenberger where he reiterated that he did not think they should be
168 budgeting for the worst-case scenario.

169

170 Chief Caron stated that he did not budget for a School Resource Officer. Chief Caron stated that
171 he does not think that they will end up with 5 new hires in 2024. Chief Caron was able to only
172 get 2 new hires this year.

173

174 Ms. Cynthia Finn, a member of the Windham School Board, addressed the Board. Ms. Finn does
175 think that the SRO officers should be hired and used. She would like to see the 4 positions filled.

176

177 Ms. Shannon Ulery, 9 Magnolia Road and a member of the School Board, addressed the Board
178 to ask what the chances are that they would need to pull the second SRO officer once again.
179 Chief Caron stated that it is highly likely. Ms. Ulery stated that she does see the value of salary
180 increases; she thinks they are well deserved. Ms. Ulery asked how long the dispatch equipment
181 typically lasts; Chief Caron stated 15 to 19 years.

182

183 Chief Caron reiterated his desire to keep the SRO officer in the school, yet, they are struggling
184 as a department and a profession in terms of staffing.

185

186 Vice Chair Partington stated that it is important to have a discussion of how not to lose that
187 SRO officer. Chief Caron stated that he needed to make sure that the roads were protected as
188 well as the schools.

189

190 Mr. Hohenberger asked if they could incentivize how to encourage people not to retire. Chief
191 Caron stated that he did not know what it would take to incentivize those who might not want
192 to retire.

193

194 Mr. McCarthy stated there are ways that there can be money allocated to other items to make
195 the town a safer place.

196

197 Ms. Finn asked if one of the positions could be asked for as an SRO position, the chief said no,
198 this would need to be a road officer position.

199

200 Dispatch

201

202 This department had only one full time employee over the summer but is currently fully staffed.
203 Chief Caron stated that the part time position has worked for a number of years but it is no
204 longer sustainable.

205

206 Dispatch was almost 200% over budget because of the nature of how the money and position
207 was allotted. Mr. Hohenberger stated that he is not good with all these budgets as presented
208 and would like to circle back to them. Mr. Hohenberger asked how many course credits were
209 used last year in this department; none were used.

210

211 Mr. Bob Coole asked about the earned time and he asked how the dispatcher would have
212 gotten that time off.

213

214 Fire Department

215

216 Chief McPherson addressed the Board. Chief McPherson stated that he will be looking into the
217 salary increases in reference to other local officers as Chief Caron did in his budget.

218

219 Mr. Hohenberger asked again about buy out hours in this department.

220

221 Cost of Training- box on top of B11, Mr. Hohenberger asked about the top rates for the
222 firefighters and officers; Mr. Hohenberger would like to know the differential for the increase in
223 pay for training and experience. The Board discussed the desire for paramedics. Paramedics are
224 compensated for their training, yet, this is a 12-18-month program. A hazmat meter are 4 gas
225 meters that can detect levels of certain gases.

226

227 Mr. Hohenberger stated that he hopes that the gas prices will go down then inquired about
228 equipment maintenance. Chief McPherson explained that they have 8 garage doors, 4 in the
229 front and 4 in the back, Chief McPherson stated that the doors are starting to fail; the springs
230 have already failed and it is more cost effective to replace the entire door.

231

232 Assistant Chief Steve Brady answered a question regarding the iPad modems. The life pack
233 modems have to transmit data. The line item covers all the data services; these are in the
234 ambulance.

235

236 Mr. Samsel asked about vehicle maintenance. Chief McPherson stated that the ladder truck is
237 worth \$1.2 million and the oil change is done 6 times a year, the additional ambulances need
238 maintenance and there are 2 and they are both leaking and cost a lot to fix. Chief McPherson
239 explained that the generator is being rebuilt for half the price which is great but the parts are
240 few and far between and costs have escalated; Chief McPherson stated that they are just trying
241 to keep the fleet on the road. Training is up this year and a member of their staff is going to
242 paramedic school. Chief McPherson explained that he would like to invest in the people that
243 they have. The ambulance does bring in revenue and what most of the business is based on.

244

245 Mr. Wayne Morris addressed the Board and asked about elderly exemptions and whether or
246 not the Board would be considering that. Chairman McLeod suggested consulting with Mr.
247 McCarthy about this. Mr. Morris stated he does not want to wait on this in case there is not
248 another opportunity.

249

250 **A motion was made by Mr. Samsel to approve the October 16th draft minutes as amended.**
251 **Seconded by Mr. Hohenberger. Vote 3-0-1. Vice Chair Partington abstained. Motion passes.**

252

253 **A motion was made by Mr. Hohenberger to append the non-public October 16th draft**
254 **minutes to the public draft minutes and approve as presented. Seconded by Mr. Samsel. Vote**
255 **3-0-1. Vice Chair Partington abstained. Motion passes.**

256

257 The Board briefly discussed a few potential non-public items that have been attended to by the
258 Board in public or will be in the near future during the budget workshops.

259

260 **A motion was made by Mr. Hohenberger to adjourn at 9:10 pm. Seconded by Mr. Samsel.**
261 **Vote 4-0. Motion passes.**

262

263 Respectfully submitted by Anitra Lincicum

Approved