

**Board:** Board of Selectmen/ Water Commissioner's Meeting  
**Date:** Monday, February 10, 2020  
**Location:** Erving Elementary School, 28 Northfield Road, Erving, MA 01344

**Selectmen Present:** William Bembury, Peter Sanders, Jacob Smith  
**Finance Committee:** Benjamin Fellows, Debra Smith, Charles Zilinski, Daniel Hammock (via phone 6:12 PM)  
**School Committee:** Erik Semb, David Chagnon, Jennifer Eichorn  
**Also, Present:** Bryan Smith, Glenn McCrory, Robert Holst, Stephen Zilinski, Mary Flanders Aicardi, Lisa Candito, Jennifer Cullen, Bruce Turner, Mackensey Bailey  
**Press:** Kathleen Nolan, Montague Reporter

**Review of Draft Town Employee Compensation Report- Joint Meeting with Finance Committee**

At 6:10 PM **Chairman Smith** called the joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee to order.

Bryan Smith, Administrative Coordinator, provided the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee with an overview of the project that began in February of 2019. Bryan explained that the draft classification and compensation proposal has made recommendations that consider external market factors and strives to create internal organizational parity for positions. Bryan cautioned that some employees and officials are making assumptions about the data and the proposal that are not accurate and that it could lead to policy decisions that are not based on facts. Bryan explained that the draft implementation scenario explores the recommendations from the UMass Collins Center, looks at employees' normal hours, and considers a July 1, 2019 implementation. Bryan cautioned again the assumptions that it would be appropriate to recognize years of service by simply moving an employee up the corresponding number of steps within a grade. Reviewing the draft implementation scenario **Chairman Smith** discussed concern about the cost total exceeding the current appropriation. Daniel Hammock discussed the importance of trying to recognize years of service. Bryan again cautioned about assumptions in data and attempts to include years of service. Daniel spoke to the importance of setting a policy for the Town to conduct periodic market studies to ensure that pay remains competitive within the market. **Chairman Smith** acknowledged the concern and spoke to the need to balance the proposal with the Town's ability to fund. **Chairman Smith** also cautioned individuals not to make assumptions about the data that is not supported by facts.

Charles Zilinski asked for an explanation of how the survey was conducted and how towns were selected for comparative purposes. Bryan discussed the approach that was used to find towns within a 30-mile radius and to sample towns with a mix of populations, compositions, and equalized valuations. Bryan asked everyone to remember that there are no direct comparable communities to Erving. Mary Flanders Aicardi, UMass Boston Collins Center, discussed the market approach. Mary also acknowledged there is no way to do a perfect comparison of Erving to other like communities. **Selectman Bembury** asked for employees that are present to review the proposed grades and steps. Robert Holst, Police Sergeant, noted that he could not speak for other employees and explained his belief that the police personnel were okay with the proposal. **Chairman Smith** discussed the uncertainty that he has heard from other employees. **Selectman Bembury** asked Robert if he had any questions that the Board should address. Robert explained that the discussion regarding the approach that was used to arrive at the proposal is helpful.

Stephen Zilinski raised concern about the impact of adjusting compensation as proposed and the burden it could create for the taxpayer. Stephen discussed the Town's demographics and stated his opposition to the Town using larger communities like Greenfield for the purpose of market comparison. Robert explained that the expectations for an Erving police officer is equal to the responsibility of any other town. Robert added that Erving police often conduct their work with less backup than other communities and are often working alone. Robert discussed the risk associated with the work. **Selectman Bembury** asked how many police officers have left Erving for communities like Greenfield in recent years. Robert explained that Erving has lost three (3) full-time officers to Greenfield and a part-time officer went to Greenfield. Robert explained that a sergeant pay in Greenfield is approximately \$7,000 more each year than Erving and that an Erving sergeant has more responsibility. **Selectman Bembury** discussed the cost of investment that Erving makes in preparing and training officers before leaving for another town.

Stephen raised the concern about highway road miles owned by the Town and the number of staff members in the Highway Department. Stephen also raised concern about Town vehicles being seen out of town and suggested the use of GPS tracking devices to monitor the activity of Town-owned vehicles. Robert discussed the need for employees to use vehicles in other communities, or than Erving, to conduct the Town's work. Robert provided the example of court houses in Orange and Greenfield and the State's crime lab in Springfield.

Daniel discussed the recognition that the final classification and compensation proposal will not be perfect. Daniel discussed not wanting to hold up employee compensation and expressed his position that it needs to be determined in a fair manner. Daniel discussed allowing the voters to decide at Town Meeting and emphasized the fact that the Town used an independent consultant to prepare the recommendations. Mary discussed the importance for the Town to establish a structure for the classification and compensation of positions within the Town. Mary provided an explanation of how to understand the market study summary. Mary discussed the importance of working to establish internal pay equity, specifically focusing on positions that are traditionally underpaid positions. Mary discussed the need to finalize the classification and compensation structure and then to focus work on the personnel policies of the Town.

Benjamin Fellows, Finance Committee Chair, asked for Mary to describe any experiences with a phased implementation. Mary explained an example with the Town of West Boylston. Debra Smith asked about the assumptions include in the draft implementation plan. Bryan explained that the plan does not include overtime and call back time and discussed the process that would be used to determine those costs if the Board and the Finance Committee wanted to continue with this implementation draft.

#### **Review of FY2021 Budget Requests: Educational Expenses**

At 7:07 PM **Chairman Smith** called the joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee, and the School committee to order.

#### ***Review of the FY2021 Erving Elementary School Budget Request***

Bruce Turner, Union 28 Finance Director, joined the meeting to review the FY2021 Erving Elementary School budget request of \$3,361,524. Bruce discussed the primary budget drivers that include increased special needs costs. Bruce discussed the change in the Erving Teachers Association contract that include a 2% COLA and additional lanes for continuing educational achievement. Lisa Candito, School Principal, discussed the increases to teacher education and achievement. Lisa discussed the costs increases related to Individualized Education Plan (IEP) requirements. Jennifer Cullen, Union 28 Superintendent, discussed the complexity of the wage adjustments and the changes between employees in the correct

line item. Bruce discussed increased costs related to professional development to allow reimbursements for teachers for additional class work. Superintendent Cullen explained a discrepancy in early childhood education program, noting that the FY2020 budget planned for a reduction to a .2 FTE and that due to work demands the position remained at a .6 FTE. Superintendent Cullen explained that the position will remain at a .6FTE. Bruce discussed Erving's Union 28 assessment increase of .88 %. Bruce discussed the increases experience with energy costs. Bryan explained the rising cost is mostly related to rate changes but discussed a lack of energy consumption reduction. Bryan discussed current work with Eversource to assess energy consumption and discuss recommended improvements.

**Chairman Smith** discussed his initial reaction to the budget request and raised the concern about the overall percent increase. Daniel asked for a recap of the primary cost increases for the Elementary School budget for a better understanding of what costs are contractual and fixed versus discretionary. Bruce explained that the FY2021 budget reflects a 5.8% increase over the FY2020 budget and estimated that approximately 90% of the increase is related to contractual and special education costs. Erik Semb, School Committee Chair, discussed the need to work with School administration to review the budget request and to identify areas that can be adjusted. **Chairman Smith** discussed the constraints of proposition 2-1/2 and noted that the Town can only raise 2.5% on the levy and is anticipating limited new growth for FY2021. Superintendent Cullen discussed the concern about budget reductions and the impact on staffing. Daniel discussed the importance of maintaining a collaborative working relationship between the Town and the School Committee. Debra discussed the concerns about the proposed increases and discussed questions that she felt were present in last year's budget request. The Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee, and School Committee agreed to revisit the FY2021 Elementary School budget request.

#### ***Review of the FY2021 Erving Secondary Education Budget Request***

Bruce explained that for the FY2020 Secondary Education budget the School Committee level funded the budget at the Town's request. Bruce explained that the budget will remain tight for FY2020. Bruce explained that the FY2021 budget request of \$1,414,064 represents a 4.1% increase from the current fiscal year budget. Bruce discussed the anticipation of new placements that will have an impact on the special education costs for the School. Bryan discussed the availability of the of Circuit Breaker account to assist the School with unanticipated special education costs.

#### **Capital Project Support Request- Erving Elementary School Application to the School Building Authority**

Bruce explained that the School Department would like to apply to the Massachusetts School Building Authority for the repair and/or replacement of the Erving Elementary School roof, skylights, boiler, and windows. Bruce explained the rapid improvement project program. **Chairman Smith** asked for Bruce to discuss the benefits of the program for the Town. Bruce explained that the minimum reimbursement of for an approved project is 40% but can be higher. Superintendent Cullen explained that the State funding for the building assistance program has been increased. Bruce explained that he is requesting the Board of Selectmen's approve to submit a statement of interest for the application. **Chairman Smith** asked for an explanation of the program schedule. Bruce explained that the deadline to apply is February 14, 2020 with notification of the application status in April 2020. Bruce explained that if approved, that the summer of 2020 could be focused on the design process and FY2020 could allow for construction. Bruce provided an explanation for the reimbursement process allowed under the program.

**Chairman Smith** made a motion to approve the following resolution:

Resolved: Having convened in an open meeting on February 10, 2020, prior to the SOI submission closing date, the Board of Selectmen of Erving, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated February 13, 2020 for the Erving Elementary School located at 28 Northfield Road, Erving Massachusetts which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category(s) for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future, Priority 5, Replacement, renovation or modernization of school facility systems. The Erving Elementary School is asking for the replacement of the 47,176 square foot roof which is 25 years old and is currently leaking after continued attempts to repair and boiler that is 25 years old.; and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the City/Town/Regional School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

**Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

At 8:02 PM Daniel Hammock left the meeting.

At 8:02 PM **Chairman Smith** made a motion to adjourn the joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee, and the School Committee and to continue with the joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee. **Selectman Sanders** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

#### **Review of the FY 2021 Franklin County Technical School Budget Request**

Richard Martin, School Superintendent, joined the Board and the Finance Committee to review the FY2021 Franklin County Technical School budget request. Superintendent Martin reviewed the budget development process that is used. Superintendent Martin discussed the school's 2019-2020 school year accomplishments to-date. During the school year, Superintendent Martin explained the addition of the Veterinary Science program with articulation agreements at Mount Wachusett Community College and Tufts University, the addition of 1 FTE Co-operative Training Coordinator, the construction of one (1) new home on Central Street in Erving, the renovations and improvements to the welding and electrical studios and curriculum, and the developing plans to add a new Medical Assistant training program. Superintendent Martin reviewed new staffing changes and highlighted the honors received by the School for performance with Advanced Placement (AP) Courses.

Superintendent Martin explained that he built the FY2021 budget request with the prediction of student body of 515 in the 2020-2021 year. To-date, 200 applications for the freshman class have been received. Superintendent Martin anticipates Erving enrollment for 2020-2021 to be approximately 28 students. Superintendent Martin has proposed a FY2021 budget of \$12,580,000 to the Technical School's Executive Board, with \$300,000 sourced from the Excess & Deficiency account to be used to fund capital improvements. The FY2021 assessment for Erving would be \$488,703 which is a decrease from FY2020 of 13.03% due to a reduction in student enrollment from Erving. Superintendent Martin explained that Erving's capital assessment for FY2021 would be \$15,084.43.

**Selectman Bembury** asked if the Veterinary Science program would require additional construction on campus. Superintendent Martin discussed a plan for the construction of a 5,000 sq. ft. building on the campus and emphasized the use of the capital stabilization fund to avoid asking the Towns for additional

funding. Mackensy Bailey discussed her experience as a parent of a student who was excited with the School's learning labs, etc. **Selectman Bembury** asked if the School can utilize student work during construction. Superintendent Martin explained that students would be involved where appropriate and discussed the need to follow state procurement laws.

The Board and the Finance Committee discussed having no concerns with the FY2021 Technical School budget request.

#### **Review of Draft Town Employee Compensation Report (revisited)**

**Chairman Smith** asked the Board and Finance Committee members to identify what information and implementation options they would like Bryan to work on for the next joint meeting. **Chairman Smith** reviewed the overview of the implementation summary that considered a July 1, 2019 implementation and Bryan discussed the revisions that were made to the chart. Benjamin discussed the option for a phased implementation approach. **Chairman Smith** acknowledged that a phased approach is an option, but that he wants to address the most egregious pay discrepancies. The Board and the Finance Committee members expressed agreement.

Bryan discussed the complexity of elected official compensation and the approach that was taken to calculate the current hourly rates and to recommend adjustments. The Board and Finance Committee members discussed the expectations of elected officials to work their stated hours and to compensate accordingly. The Board and the Finance Committee discussed wanting to avoid having an elected official's compensation approved prior to the results of an election. It was agreed that it would not be appropriate for an incoming elected official to receive the same compensation as an outgoing official. The Board and the Finance Committee agreed that elected official compensation should follow the grade and step system that is adopted. The Board discussed the need to revisit the scheduling of the Annual Town Meeting and the Annual Town Election. **Chairman Smith** asked if there would be support for changing the schedule. The Board expressed support. Bryan will follow up with Town Counsel on how to amend the general bylaws of the Town to create a delay from the date of the election and when an elected official takes office.

The Board and the Finance Committee discussed the concern that some employees will feel that starting at step 1 in the newly established compensation schedule is unacceptable. **Chairman Smith** discussed the reasons the Town is going through the process to create a new classification and compensation schedule. The Board and the Finance Committee discussed the issue of retroactive pay adjustments and the option to make the adjustments for a future date in FY2020 and proceeding. **Chairman Smith** discussed his earlier intention of trying to provide for a retroactive pay adjustment. **Chairman Smith** explained that it is important to balance intentions with the Town's ability to pay with available funds. Benjamin discussed the decision to hold merit requests for FY2020 until the results of the classification and compensation proposal could be reviewed. **Selectman Sanders** discussed the importance of moving employees to the compensation associated with the appropriate grade for the position as outlined in the proposed classification schedule. Debra Smith discussed the importance of clarifying policies.

Glenn McCrory asked about the possibility of retroactive pay adjustments and referred to a past compensation adjustment. **Chairman Smith** explained that the example given was related to a pay equity issue between two (2) employees with the same position and that it is different from a plan to adjust the Town-side compensation for employees. Bryan explained that the proposed classification schedule is designed to address pay equity concerns. Debra suggested making the proposed pay adjustments going forward. Robert Holst suggested making the proposed changes in the near future and to ask employees

for feedback. **Chairman Smith** encouraged all employees to attend Board meetings to discuss if there are concerns. The Board directed Bryan to prepare an implementation schedule that would begin on April 6, 2020. The Board and the Finance Committee agreed to revisit the topic on February 24, 2020.

At 9:59 PM **Chairman Smith** made a motion to adjourn the joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee and to continue with the Board of Selectmen meeting. Benjamin Fellows seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

#### **Library Construction Project Update**

Bryan provided the Board with a brief overview of the Library Construction project. Bryan explained that the issues surrounding the fire alarm are being addressed with installation in the next week. Bryan explained that the Owners Project Manager and the General Contractor are working with Town department heads and the sub-contractors to finalize items on the punch list. Bryan explained that the project is nearing substantial completion.

#### **Millers Falls (IP) Mill Hazardous Materials Clean-up Project Update**

The Board reviewed a memorandum from Bryan Smith regarding the procurement for asbestos and hazardous materials abatement at the IP Mill. Bryan explained that the procurement was made publicly available on Wednesday, February 05, 2020 with a mandatory site visit for interested bidders on Tuesday, February 11, 2020. Bryan explained that the bids will be due on Tuesday, February 25, 2020. The Board will revisit this topic at their February 24, 2020 meeting and will review bid submission at the March 02, 2020 meeting.

#### **Review of Erving Public Library Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment Procurement and Proposed Change Orders**

Bryan explained that there are some pending change order requests, but none that are ready for approval. Bryan explained that additional furniture and IT equipment has been ordered and has begun to arrive. Bryan explained that furniture will begin arriving over the next two (2) weeks

#### **Review of Designer Selection Policy Draft- 3<sup>rd</sup> Reading**

The Board conducted a third reading of the draft designer selection policy and discussed having no concerns. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to approve the designer selection policy, as written, with an effective date of February 10, 2020. **Selectman Sanders** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

#### **Discussion Regarding Springfield MRF Contract and FY2021 Solid Waste**

Bryan provided the Board with an update regarding the procurement for a new multi-year contract for curbside collection of solid waste & recyclables that will begin on July 1, 2020. The procurement was made available on Wednesday, February 05, 2020 with a deadline of Wednesday, February 19, 2020. Bryan will respond to questions bidders may have and will review bid submission with Jan Ameen, Executive Director of the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District. The Board will revisit the topic at the February 24, 2020 meeting.

#### **Review of Meeting Minutes of February 03, 2020**

The Board reviewed the meeting minutes of Monday, February 03, 2020. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of February 03, 2020 as written. **Selectman Sanders** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

### **Review of Meeting Minutes of January 27, 2020**

The Board passed over this agenda item.

### **Appointment Request for the Conservation Commission- Michael Shaffer**

The Board reviewed a letter of interest from Michael Shaffer to serve on the Conservation Commission. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to appoint Michael Shaffer as a member of the Conservation Commission with a term ending on June 30, 2022. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

### **Surplus Equipment Request- Town Hall Office Equipment (varied)**

The Board reviewed a surplus equipment request from Bryan Smith, Administrative Coordinator, for various equipment at the Town Hall. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to deem the requested equipment surplus and available for disposal. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

### **Review of Erving Center Planning Project Update**

**Chairman Smith** read the following memorandum from Mariah Kurtz, Assistant Town Planner, to provide an overview of the Erving Center planning project that is being conducted with architecture students from the University of Massachusetts:

*Students from the University of Massachusetts Architecture program will be conducting a visioning of the future of Erving Center as part of a case study for their Public Interest Design class during the Spring 2020 semester. Mariah Kurtz and Bryan Smith have met with Professor Erika Zekos several times throughout the Fall and Winter in an effort to plan the class to be useful to both parties and schedule dates the students will work with the following parties:*

- *Erving After School Program*
- *Senior Center*
- *Erving Center business owners*
- *Town Officials*
- *General public.*

*As a class, the students will review the history and current state of Erving Center then teams of 2-3 students will focus on analyzing one aspect of the visioning process such as:*

#### **TRAFFIC & PEDESTRIAN SAFETY**

*Evaluate pedestrian, cyclist, car driver, bus rider accessibility and safety. Look at the conventions for commuter bus pull offs, commuter rail, bike path design, etc.*

*Research precedents of complete streets use in similar communities.*

#### **EXISTING BUILDINGS & HISTORIC CHARACTER**

*Characterize Erving history. Identify building types (residential, commercial, institutional), zoning and property ownership (public or private). Identify elements of historic character/typology.*

*Research precedents of signage and other public elements to indicate conserved areas of historic and rural value used in other communities.*

**GREEN SPACES & RECREATION**

*Identify locations of current green spaces. Identify tree and other vegetation types. Assess locations for potential green spaces. Identify visual and physical connections to and from Erving Riverfront Park to residences and businesses downtown.*

*Research precedents for planted buffers, pocket parks, etc.*

**SOCIAL & PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURES**

*Characterize Erving demographics, economy, civic and social systems and traditions. Identify existing natural and physical infrastructures that impact the town. Look at existing sustainability infrastructure and opportunities for introduction of green energy production.*

*Research precedents for development of green energy production.*

*If time allows, the class may plan a design-build public art project for the Spring. At the end of the semester the students will present their final assessment and recommendations to the Town at the April 27<sup>th</sup> Board of Selectmen meeting.*

The Board discussed having no concerns with the progression of the project and discussed looking forward to the final presentation.

**Adjournment**

At 10:15 PM **Chairman Smith** made a motion to adjourn. **Selectman Sanders** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Bryan Smith  
Administrative Coordinator