

Board: Select Board / Water Commissioner's Meeting
Date: Wednesday, May 10, 2023
Location: Erving Elementary School, 28 Northfield Road, Erving, MA 01344

Select Board Present: Jacob Smith, William Bembury, Scott Bastarache
Finance Committee Present: Debra Smith, Daniel Hammock

At 6:11 PM **Chairman Smith** called the meeting of the Select Board to order.

Surplus Property Request- Town Clerk Printer- 2nd Reading

The Select Board members conducted a second reading of the surplus equipment request from the Town Clerk to deem one (1) printer as surplus. The Board members discussed having no concerns with the recommendation. The Select Board will conduct a third reading at the next meeting.

Review of Recreation Settlement Agreement with FirstLight Power Resources for the Renewal of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Licenses of Northfield Mountain Pumped Storage Project (No. 2485) and Turners Falls Hydroelectric Project (No 1889)

The Select Board members reviewed the final Recreation Settlement Agreement with FirstLight Power Resources for their renewal application to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for the licenses of the Northfield Mountain Pumped Storage Project and the Turners Falls Hydroelectric Project. The Select Board members discussed having no comments at this time and agreed to carry the topic for review and discussion at the next Board meeting.

Surplus Equipment Request- Information Technology Dept. Computers- 1st Reading

The Select Board members conducted a first reading of the surplus equipment request from the Information Technology Department to deem four (4) Latitude E6430ATG laptops (KJFKF12, GFFKF12, HDFK12, & BDKF12) as surplus. The Board members discussed having no concerns with the recommendation. The Select Board will conduct a second reading at the next meeting.

Surplus Equipment Request- Town Clerk Computer- 1st Reading

The Select Board members conducted a first reading of the surplus equipment request from the Town Clerk to deem one (1) Dell Optiplex 9010 computer (95LMHX1) as surplus. The Board members discussed having no concerns with the recommendation. The Select Board will conduct a second reading at the next meeting.

Review & Award Gasoline & Diesel Procurement Contracts for FY2024 to FY2026

The Select Board members reviewed procurement memorandum from Bryan Smith, Town Administrator, that explained that the Town engaged the Lower Pioneer Valley Education Collaborative (LPVEC) to conduct a collective procurement with other municipalities and regional school entities for unleaded gasoline and diesel fuel, for the term of fiscal year 2024, with the option to renew for fiscal years 2025 and 2026. The memorandum explained that the successful bidder and the recommendation to award the procurements for both gasoline & diesel are to Dennis K. Burke, Inc. of Taunton, MA. **Selectman Bembury** made a motion to award the procurements of unleaded gasoline and diesel fuel to Dennis K. Burke, Inc. of Taunton, MA for fiscal year 2024, beginning July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2024, with the options to renew for fiscal years 2025 and 2026, and to authorize Bryan Smith, Town Administrator, to execute all necessary agreements. **Selectman Bastarache** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Review of Annual Town Meeting Warrant & Discussion of Proposed Amendments

At 6:15 PM **Chairman Smith** called the joint meeting with Finance Committee to order, noting that there was not a quorum of the Finance Committee.

The Select Board members discussed the Annual Town Meeting warrant and proposed amendments. **Selectman Bastarache** explained that based on community feedback at previous Select Board meetings, he is anticipating that a budget amendment will be proposed for the Elementary School budget. **Selectman Bastarache** discussed the recent conversation about the potential for a Proposition 2 ½ override, at least as it pertains to the demolition of the former International Papermill and the recent feedback from the Finance Committee that they would only consider support for a Proposition 2 ½ override for operational costs if it supported all town departments, not just one. With that context, **Selectman Bastarache** explained that he has reviewed the departmental reductions from the memorandum dated March 10, 2023, and that he is considering support for proposing a Proposition 2 ½ override for operational costs that would restore requested budget items that were cut. Specifically, **Selectman Bastarache** discussed considering amendments to Article 5, that would increase the budget Article total in the aggregate of \$226,270 in proposed line-item amendments as follows:

Line 1:	General Government	\$15,000
Line 2:	Public Safety	\$62,270
Line 3:	Public Works	\$130,000
Line 4:	Health & Human Services	\$5,000
Line 5:	Culture & Recreation	\$14,000

Selectman Bastarache explained his rationale for the suggested amendments and explained that he wanted to begin a conversation amongst the Select Board and Finance Committee members. **Selectman Bastarache** explained that another option to consider may be a one-time transfer from the Stabilization Account for FY2024 to allow the Town to spend the sufficient time to review the budgeting structure and consider a proper Proposition 2 ½ override proposal for FY2025. Additionally, **Selectman Bastarache** added that he will propose an amendment to Article 13 that funds wage and compensation adjustments for Town-side positions and suggested amending the Article by \$60,000 to make it \$120,000. **Selectman Bastarache** discussed having reviewed some positions that are of concern and waiting to have sufficient capacity to make the necessary adjustments.

Daniel Hammock discussed his recent awareness of the intention of community members to propose and support an amendment for the Elementary School budget. Daniel asked how to handle a situation if the proposed School Budget amendment, relying on a Proposition 1 ½ override, fails. **Selectman Bastarache** discussed the options for a Proposition 2 ½ override and structuring the amendment so that it would work with the approval of an override or if it failed at the Special Town Meeting or Special Election that the final School budget could revert to the proposed budget. Daniel discussed wanting to treat employees fairly and expressed support for the proposed amendment to Article 13. Debra Smith expressed concern that Department heads and the Finance Committee members had not had a chance to consider the proposed adjustments and therefore would be hesitant to support the proposed adjustments to Article 5. Debra discussed the approach that was used by the Town of Norwood, Massachusetts in their Proposition 2 ½ override proposal in 2019 and discussed the importance of having a full conversation with voters. **Selectman Bastarache** clarified that he had followed up with several Department Heads about his proposed amendments and how it might impact their departments and added that some other reductions had been adjusted because they were determined not to be needed.

James Loynd asked what the estimated withdrawal from the Stabilization Account would be to accommodate the anticipated amendment for the Elementary School budget and for the proposed amendments to Articles 5 and 13. **Selectman Bastarache** estimated approximately \$600,000 for Town and School adjustments and clarified that the demolition costs for the former International Papermill have not been addressed yet in the proposed budget. James asked if there is an ability to raise funds through a Proposition 2 ½ override in the future to restore funding to the Stabilization Account. **Selectman Bastarache** expressed agreement that it was an option. James asked how **Selectman Bastarache** arrived at his proposed amendment for Article 5. **Selectman Bastarache** explained that his proposal was an attempt to restore the reductions in requests made by Town departments. Daniel expressed his concerns about reducing the available balance in the Stabilization Account and hesitation for supporting such an amendment. Daniel discussed concerns about making the withdrawal from Stabilization without addressing the spending concerns. **Selectman Bastarache** acknowledged the validity of the concerns.

Chairman Smith discussed the proposed amendments to various articles to the Annual Town Meeting Warrant that had been submitted in the meeting packet. Select Board members discussed having no concerns with the proposed amendments.

Adjournment

At 6:44 PM **Chairman Smith** made a motion to adjourn. **Selectman Bastarache** seconded. **Vote:** Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Bryan Smith
Town Administrator