

Erving Board of Selectmen

Monday, September 11, 2017

Town Hall, Erving, MA

Selectmen Present: Jacob Smith, William Bembury, Scott Bastarache

Board of Assessors: Jeffrey Rollins, Daniel Hammock, Mark Burnett

Also Present: Bryan Smith, Jacquelyn Boyden, Julie Wonkka, Deb Mero, Tom Scanlon, Peter Mallet, Rebecca Hubbard, Carole Lyman, Kim Lyman, Jeanie Schermesser

Press: Christine Miranda, Athol Daily News; Katie Nolan, Montague Reporter

At 6:30 PM **Selectman Bastarache** called the meeting to order.

Review of Meeting Minutes from August 28, 2017

The Board reviewed meeting minutes from Monday, August 28, 2017. **Selectman Bastarache** made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from August 28, 2017 as written. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. Unanimously approved.

FY2019 Budget Calendar

The Board reviewed the revised FY2019 budget calendar. Bryan Smith, Administrative Coordinator, explained that he was still awaiting a response from Joe Markarian, FRCOG, regarding the capital budget calendar outline that was discussed on August 28, 2017. The Board agreed to review again on September 18, 2017.

FY2016 Financial Audit Report

Tom Scanlon, Scanlon & Associates, presented the Board with a discussion of the FY2016 Financial Audit. Tom stated that the Town has a strong financial team in place with strong financial practices. Tom spoke to the strong contributions to the OPEB account, explaining that the Town's contribution rates exceeds most other communities and recommended that the Town should begin to draft a policy on paying retiree health insurance out of OPEB account and reduce the cost on the General fund side. Tom noted that the Tax Collector's office is very effective in collection with a collection rate of 99% which exceeds a good standard. Additionally he explained that the Treasurer's Office and the Town Accountant balance the cash receipts each month which is excellent.

Chairman Smith joined the meeting at 6:41PM.

Tom reviewed the management letter with the Board to highlight his recommendations. He noted that the next OPEB study will be in accordance with GASB Number 74. It is recommend that the School Department track revenues for the lunch program in addition to the tracking that is conducted by the Town Accountant. This would give the School a better control on the School Lunch program, noting that the program ended FY2016 with a deficit. **Selectman Bastarache** discussed his understanding that the School was part of a statewide program and is receiving reimbursements. Deb Mero, Accountant, stated that the School Department is now tracking payroll and expenses related to the School Lunch program. Additionally, it is recommended that the Treasurer and Collector bonds be increased to \$150,000 and \$120,000 respectively. Finally, Tom recommends working towards reconciliation of the health insurance withholding accounts. Julie Wonkka, Treasurer, stated that her office is in the process of working on reconciliation of the health insurance withholding accounts currently.

Review Special Town Meeting Draft Warrant Requests

Chairman Smith provided an update regarding the FY2018 budget, explaining that FY2017 actual cash receipts had been finalized and as a result the increase over the estimated receipts was sufficient enough to cover the increase in State charges for FY2018. The FY2018 budget is again balanced.

Chairman Smith explained that an appeal was sent to all departments for non-funding related article requests and none were received. The Selectman's Office is aware of two (2) issues that will require future action at Town Meeting. The Town needs to address the outstanding balance of approximately

\$204,000 for Riverfront Park project. Also the Attorney General's office has approved the Snow, Ice, Sleet and Parking Bylaw but has informed the Town that the 1st offense of "up to \$25.00" is not specific and therefore cannot be enforced. The Office has recommended that the Town have this section of the bylaw amended to specify an amount. The Board agreed that there is no need to schedule a Special Town Meeting in the immediate future.

Cemetery Deeds # 422, 423, 424 & 425

The Board reviewed the following cemetery deeds issued to Leslie Sliva for lots in the Erving Center Cemetery: deed #422 for lot 1827, deed #423 for lot 1828, deed #424 for lot 1829, and deed #425 for lot 1830. **Chairman Smith** made a motion to issue cemetery deeds 422, 423, 424 and 425 to Leslie Sliva. **Selectman Bastarache** seconded. Unanimously approved.

FY2018 Tax Classification Hearing

At 7:00 PM **Chairman Smith** opened the FY2018 Tax Classification hearing to order and the Board of Assessors joined the Board of Selectmen. Mark Burnett, Assessor, reviewed the FY2018 tax information for the Board and discussed a single tax rate in comparison to a split tax rate. The Board of Assessors recommended the adoption of a 65% shift to the industrial, commercial, and personal property classifications. With a 65% shift, the residential and open space tax rate would be \$7.15 and the commercial, industrial, and personal property tax rate would be \$11.63. Jacquelyn Boyden, Assistant Assessor, explained that the Small Commercial Exemption is still being processed by the State and the numbers could shift insignificantly. **Chairman Smith** made a motion for the Town to adopt a 65% shift for FY2018. **Selectman Bembury** seconded. Unanimously approved.

Erving Center Safety Concerns

Bryan Smith, Administrative Coordinator, provided the Board with an update regarding a meeting with Mass DOT traffic engineers and FRCOG Transportation Planners. The Board reviewed three (3) proposed traffic patterns for the intersection of Church and North Streets that Mass DOT had created. The Board discussed the elements of each proposal and **Selectman Bastarache** raised the concern of diverting the problem of traffic to either street. Peter Mallet raised the concern about the speed and traffic on North Street. Peter did note that he had noticed that the addition of the yield paintings on Church Street had encouraged more drivers to slow down at the yield on Church Street. **Selectman Bastarache** discussed the need to continue to research the suggestion of "speed humps" with the raised crosswalk. Rebecca Hubbard discussed the fact that only one side of Church Street has a sidewalk and raised the concern with pedestrian safety. Peter suggested painting speed limits in the travel lane. **Selectman Bembury** and **Selectman Bastarache** discussed support for proposed traffic pattern B that would narrow the travel lanes on North Street with line painting and the development of a stop on Church Street in place of the current yield. **Selectman Bembury** discussed his support for continuing to discuss the installation of "speed humps." Carole Lyman explained her concerns with speed on North Street and the danger it poses to the use of the crosswalk concerns. **Chairman Smith** explained that the Town will need to address the issue of establishing a stop sign for Church Street at a Town Meeting. The Board agreed to work on traffic pattern B and to work on the idea of requesting a truck exclusion with the Town of Northfield. Bryan Smith, Administrative Coordinator, will communicate with Northfield to discuss the truck exclusion on Church and North Streets in Erving and Gulf Road in Northfield. The Board also agreed to ask the School Department to review the location of bus stops.

Chairman Smith explained that pedestrian concerns are being looked at throughout town.

The Board discussed the concern about the noise generated by trucks with J brakes. **Chairman Smith** explained that there may be a correlation between having trucks reduce speed and the increase in observed noise from the braking systems. Jeanie Schermesser asked for a bigger conversation with state representatives with J braking and spoke to her experience in Farley with the truck traffic on Route 2. **Selectman Bembury** expressed his support for writing a letter to our representatives about this topic.

Adjournment

At 8:10 PM **Chairman Smith** made a motion to adjourn. **Selectman Bastarache** seconded. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bryan Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bryan Smith
Administrative Coordinator