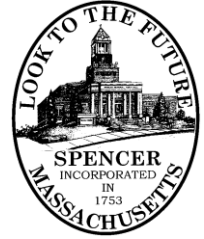


Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen



Date: Monday, March 10, 2014
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: McCourt Social Hall Memorial Town Hall, Spencer, MA
Present: Chair Woodbury, Vice Chair Berthiaume, Clerk Stevens, Members Fritze and Pepe and Administrator Gaudette

At 6:04 p.m. Chairman Woodbury called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the Business Meeting of February 10, 2014, Workshop Meeting of February 19, 2014, and Business Meeting and Executive Session of February 24, 2014 (Pepe/Berthiaume) passed 5/0.

Citizen Input

Kurt Nordquist, 8 Gale Dr. offered his thanks to the Highway Department for a job well done with keeping the roads clean, despite numerous snow storms this winter.

Mr. Nordquist also made a recommendation to close the Transfer Station on Thursdays and raise bag fees.

Communications

State Senate Candidate Mike Valanzola – Request to Introduce Himself

Mike Valanzola introduced himself as a candidate for State Senator; his focus will be on economy, education, & community. Selectmen Berthiaume noted that local aid is a major issue for Spencer.

Comments from the Board

Chairman Woodbury read a letter of thanks from the New Braintree Board of Selectmen to Chief Parsons, thanking the Chief and the Fire Department for the mutual aid assistance.

Selectmen Pepe thanked the Fire Department for their efforts on Lake Ave during a house fire last week. Their hard work prevented the fire from spreading to neighboring homes.

New Business

Action Item: Approve One Day Alcohol License for Mary Queen of the Rosary

Sandra Fritze, representing Mary Queen of the Rosary, is requesting a one day alcohol license for the annual St. Patrick's Day dinner. The dinner will be held on March 15th from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.

A motion to approve a one day license for Mary Queen of the Rosary St. Patrick's Day dinner (Pepe/Berthiaume) passed 5/0.

Action Item: Review/Approve Common Victualler's License for Maxwell Cavert for Food Trailer at 6 West Main Street

Maxwell Cavert submitted an application for a Common Victualler's license for a food trailer at 6 West Main St., which is in the Spencer Furniture parking lot.

A motion to approve a Common Victualler's license for Maxwell Cavert d/b/a Maxi's Fun Food, at 6 West Main Street, Spencer Furniture (Berthiaume/Pepe) passed 5/0.

Old Business

Action Item: Reappoint Eleanor O'Connor, Board of Registrars

Administrator Gaudette informed the Board that the Democratic Town Committee and the Town Clerk recommend reappointing Eleanor O'Connor to the Board of Registrars.

A motion to reappoint Eleanor O'Connor to the Board of Registrars (Berthiaume/Pepe) passed 5/0.

Ms. O'Connor reminded the public to return their census forms; if they are not returned, the individuals will be removed from the voting lists.

Town Administrator Report

Discussion: FY2015 Budget Development Update

Administrator Gaudette noted that the development of the FY15 budget began in November with a level service budget using the May FY14 numbers before reductions resulting from the SEBRSD budget crisis. Each department submitted their individual budgets and capital requests, which will be reviewed in detail. He went over the budget calendar of events, all leading up to the May 1st Annual Town Meeting and the May 13th Annual Town Election. This draft budget also includes a 1.3 % increase for Personnel Bylaw employees, 10.57% for WCRR, 3.57% for MIIA Health Insurance and restores the FY14 budget. It does not include numbers for the four collective bargaining units, general liability insurance rates, or increases in public education above the minimum local contribution for the SEBRSD.

**Public Hearing: Municipal Services Review with Staff
Adam Gaudette - Town Administrator: Purpose and Procedures**

The Administrator explained that the Municipal Services Review is being held to evaluate each line item in the budget and to allow for feedback from the public. The estimated budget

increase is 5.74% over last year and includes \$811,183 in additional expenses, which represent \$480,436 in operating expenses, restoration of FY14 cuts, plus additional education expenses, resulting in an \$885,354 deficit at this time. It is possible that number could increase to \$1.3 million with modest increases for collective bargaining units, liability insurance rates and additional education expenses.

Chairman Woodbury opened public hearing at 6:32 p.m.

Chief Darrin – Police Department

Police Chief David Darrin presented his written narrative; attached as part of this record (to original minutes). Chief Darrin has been a Police Officer for thirty-two years and has served as Chief of Police for Spencer for the past sixteen years. He presented a level service budget with a 1% increase over last year.

Selectmen Pepe asked what the impact would be if the Dispatchers were reduced by one position. Chief Darrin said it is not possible since there are currently four dispatchers covering four shifts. He also asked if overtime could be reduced. Chief Darrin explained that coverage is needed during vacations, sick leave, or if an officer is out with an injury. He acknowledged if a cut were necessary, that is where he would make it, however is reluctant to do so with many variables involved.

Selectmen Stevens asked about regionalizing dispatch services. Administrator Gaudette pointed out that with the current 24/7 coverage, Spencer takes in prisoners from other towns and dispatchers watch prisoners when the police are not available. Chief Darrin said the Town received \$6500 in revenue in 2013 for taking in prisoners from surrounding communities. Mr. Stevens also asked whether office equipment is purchased for the entire Town to take advantage of cost savings. Mr. Gaudette said the Town currently uses the State bid list and looks for the best price.

Chairman Woodbury asked if new cruisers come with a warranty. Chief Darrin said there is a warranty available for \$1,400 for extended coverage, which he noted is well worth it.

Selectmen Berthiaume asked about the cost to hire an additional officer to restore deficiencies in community outreach and alleviate over time. Given the option to hire an additional officer, Chief Darrin said he would prefer to add a supervisor and/or a second shift detective to cover operational deficiencies.

Chief Parsons – Fire Department & Emergency Services

Fire Chief Robert Parsons presented his written narrative; attached as part of this record (to original minutes). He pointed out that the Department is fortunate to be the beneficiary of a large amount of volunteer hours. He has also applied for and received numerous grants.

Selectmen Pepe asked about cost savings through closing the Fire Department to the public. Administrator Gaudette said it was discussed during the FY14 budget review of possible reductions. There would be some loss of revenue collected from certain fees.

Mr. Pepe noted the FY14 budget saw a \$5,000 reduction in salary and asked if it could be done again. Chief Parsons pointed out the many variables with calls, making it likely he would be coming back to ask for the \$5,000 back, and possibly even more.

Selectmen Stevens asked how the type of equipment needed is determined and how Spencer compares with other communities. Chief Parsons said with the amount of road miles and the population in Spencer, the amount of equipment is low compared with the Brookfield's. If there were a reduction in any of the equipment, then the ability to get the job done is lost. It would be necessary to rely on mutual aid, if available at the time. He mentioned that the greatest need is with daytime staffing. In the event Ambulance Service moves to the Fire Department, full time staffing would be needed.

Selectmen Berthiaume asked about night staffing and training. Chief Parsons said currently training is only taking place once per month. This is not enough. An additional \$30,000 is needed in order to add one extra session per month.

Selectmen Fritze noted the sewer and water expense is \$4200 for Fire Department and only \$200 for the Police Department. He is working to get this resolved.

Bob Cirba, 23 Summit St. asked about the \$150,000 budget for Spencer Rescue Squad. Mr. Gaudette said a line item was added that makes it part of the Fire Department budget.

Lee Jarvis – ODIS and Board of Health

Interim Director of Inspectional Services and Board of Health Agent Lee Jarvis presented his written narratives for ODIS and the Board of Health; attached as part of this record.

Mr. Jarvis reviewed hours, job tasks, and budget numbers for the following:

- Board of Health
- Town Planner
- Building Inspector/Zoning Enforcement Officer
- Wetland Soils Scientist & Conservation agent
- Senior Clerk
- Junior clerk
- Gas, Plumbing, & Electrical Inspectors and Sealer of Weights & Measures

Mr. Pepe asked if fees are generated by the Clerks. Mr. Jarvis said they are not, however the Clerks process documentation for all permits which are mandated by State.

Mr. Stevens asked about the availability of grants. Mr. Jarvis said the Board of Health has benefited from grants for emergency equipment, defibrillators, and a variety of other equipment.

Steven Tyler – Highway, Snow & Ice, Utilities & Facilities, and Tree Warden

Utilities & Facilities Superintendent Steven Tyler presented his written narrative; attached as part of this record (to original minutes). Steven Tyler is a Professional Engineer,

overseeing the Highway Department, Water Department, Transfer Station, Town Buildings, Street Lighting, and Traffic Lighting.

Mr. Tyler reviewed his responsibilities, those of the Highway Department, and the budget numbers. He pointed out that the Highway provides “value added” roadway, drainage, and culvert improvement projects, which saves money for the Town. Roadway infrastructure is a benefit to the Town and must be maintained. Otherwise the result is greater cost. In his opinion this budget needs to be increased, not reduced.

Selectmen Woodbury asked about utilizing students to help get projects accomplished. Mr. Tyler said they do benefit from services by students.

Selectmen Pepe noted that the only area to reduce in this budget is in the salary area. Mr. Tyler said that would have an impact on road repair and in other areas. All employees are cross trained and the elimination of any one of them would be detrimental to public services.

Selectmen Fritze said at one time the Highway Department had nineteen full time workers; when one left or retired, they were never replaced. At this time there are a total of ten employees.

The Utilities & Facilities and Snow & Ice budgets were reviewed. Mr. Gaudette noted this budget has been historically underfunded. There is a proposed increase of \$5,000 over last year.

The Tree Warden budget was reviewed. Ray Holmes holds the position of Tree Warden, which is an elected position. He deals with issues arising from public shade trees and includes problems caused by storm damage. He works on a \$10,000 budget and explained he prioritizes according to worst cases first. He continues to address problems until he runs out of funds.

Discussion: Steven Tyler – Transfer Station follow-up

Mr. Tyler reported on the Transfer Station. The total current budget is \$395,000; this can be reduced to \$331,000 by closing one day per week. He recommends increasing the annual sticker fees from \$30 to \$50 for the first sticker and \$10 to \$25 for a second one; and increasing bag fees from \$1 to \$1.25 for small bags and from \$1.50 to \$2.50 for large bags. He estimates that this change will balance the budget and add a \$9,000 surplus.

Mr. Berthiaume said the increase in bag fees is too much and suggests increasing sticker fees only. Mr. Tyler noted the goal is to get people to recycle, therefore increasing bag fees is advised. Mr. Woodbury pointed out this is an ongoing problem and that doing nothing is not an option.

A motion to increase the sticker fee from \$30 to \$50 for the first sticker and \$10 to \$25 for a second one; and increase bag fees from \$1 to \$1.25 for small bags and from \$1.50 to \$2.50 for large bags, per Mr. Tyler’s recommendation (Pepe/Berthiaume) passed 5/0.

Landfill cap costs will be addressed in the future.

Mr. Tyler asked the Board to adopt the 2014 Transfer Station Rules & Regulations and 2014 Demolition Debris Fees.

A motion to adopt as presented (Berthiaume/Pepe) passed 5/0.

Board Liaison Reports

None

Citizen input

None

Board Member and Staff Comments

None

Request for Executive Session under Mass General Laws, Chapter 30A, § 21 (a), ¶ 2, for the purposes of discussing strategy in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel and ¶ 3, for the purposes of discussing collective bargaining.

At 11:45 p.m. a motion to meet in Executive Session (Pepe/Berthiaume) in accordance with MGL Chapter 30A, § 21 (a), ¶ 2, for the purposes of discussing strategy in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel and ¶ 3, for the purposes of discussing collective bargaining passed with a roll call vote: Woodbury-yes, Berthiaume-yes, Fritze-yes, Stevens-yes, Pepe-yes.

A motion to adjourn at 12:02 p.m. (Pepe/Fritze) passed with a roll call vote: Berthiaume-yes, Woodbury-yes, Fritze-yes, Stevens-yes, Pepe-yes.

The meeting adjourned at 12:02 p.m. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Savoie
Administrative Assistant

Referenced Materials:

Mary Queen of Rosary Alcohol License
Maxi's Fun Food Common Victualler's Licenses
FY15 Draft Budget & Calendar
Municipal Services Review Narratives for Police Fire; ODIS; Board of Health; Utilities & Facilities; Tree Warden