

Special Selectboard Meeting

January 9th, 2013

Minutes

Selectboard Members Present: Tom Consolino, Jim Burke, Meg Streeter, Susan Haughwout, Diane Chapman

Others Present: Scott Murphy, Dawn Baxter, Ken March, Gretchen Havreluk, Robin Howe, John Howe, Randy Terk, Renee Galle, Jacob White, Lynne Matthews, Arlene Palmiter, Mike Eldred, Alice Greenspan, Janet Boyd, Jerry Osler, Sheila Osler, Andrea Berg, Joel Berg, Dale Doucette, Adam Grinold, John Redd, Kathryn Longbotham, Miller Longbotham, Shelley Park, Mary Wright, Todd Garreiss, Keith Herbert, Leonard Chapman, Bruce Mullen, Lisa Sullivan, Julie Lineberger

Consolino called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. for the purpose of reviewing and possibly voting on the FY 2014 budget

1. **Town Administrative Budget Review** – Haughwout questioned which line item extra staff to cover administrative absences was coming out of and Murphy answered that since staff members who needed extended leave time had no more vacation days to cover their absence, the extra staff were being paid out of the line item that would ordinarily pay for the permanent staff member. Listers supplies for permanent archival copy of Grand List was added to line #42 of Administrative Budget and Listers were informed.
2. **Deerfield Valley Community Cares allocation increase request from \$500 to \$1,000.**- Streeter moved and Chapman seconded to increase the amount to \$750. Consolino said that since Wilmington residents accounted for 33% of all the monies taken in by the DVCC that \$750 was woefully short of where we should be. Vote: 4 in favor with Consolino opposing
3. **Shall the Town purchase the Waste Water Department's trade-in vehicle for Fire Department use to tow Town owned equipment to fire calls and for other Town purposes?** – Fire Chief Ken March was on hand to comment and answer questions. The following points were made: The Fire Chief uses his personal vehicle to make rescue calls and his is often the only vehicle that is available to tow rescue equipment. If vehicle was purchased from the WW Department, it would be kept at fire station for use during emergencies and also could be used to plow dry hydrants. The trade-in value of the vehicle with plow during the winter months is much higher than it would be if the trade in were to be made during the summer months. The person operating the vehicle during a call would be covered under the Town's insurance. After a some discussion, it was resolved that no article is necessary because there is sufficient capital in fund to cover purchase and it is, therefore, the Town Manager and Fire Chief should reach a decision.
4. **Shall the Town add \$20,000 to the budget to repay Dover for the cost of their financial aid given during the recovery of last year's flood and for the cost of the Educational Lobbyist Group?** – It was resolved that this item will be an Article on the Town Meeting Warning
5. **Shall the Town contribute \$8,000 from the Option Tax Fund to the Designated Downtown Budget for FY 2014?** - passed over to be discussed in conjunction with Agenda Item #7

6. **Shall the Town approve the Library budget with roof replacement costs paid by the Library Endowment Funds and replenished over several years through the budget allocations?** - The Board determined that two articles must be added to the Warning at Town Meeting. The first to create the Capital Reserve Fund and the second to ask the voters to raise and appropriate \$8,000 to that fund.
7. (#5) The Downtown Designation application will be submitted by the end of February. "Wilmington Works" will be funded by both the Town and by private entities. Haughwout questioned if there was a reason for the funds should come out of the 1% instead of the Economic Development Line Item. There was discussion by the Board about whether to fund the contribution through the Option Tax or the Budget. There were several comments from the public supporting the Downtown Designation. Burke said that the Board needed time to research and study the Budget before making the decision on how to fund. It was resolved that the Board would set aside discussion until the next meeting.
8. **1% Local Option Tax Funds: Shall the Town use the 1% Option Tax Funds to reduce the Tax Rate or for another purpose such as economic development or capital improvements?** - There were many public comments including the following:
 - The money should go into its own account, not the General Fund.
 - These funds should be used for revitalization.
 - This money should be put to work for us.
 - We did not vote this in for a small decrease in taxes
 - Windham County is losing residents to other parts of Vermont. Create a reserve fund for Economic Development.
 - The discussion at last Town Meeting was about revitalization, not about saving money on taxes.
 - Designate the money for Economic Development or rescind at Town Meeting
 - Lack of a full time Economic Development Coordinator is one of the reasons why projects are not getting off the ground.
 - Property taxes will increase if we continue to lose residents
 - We haven't heard anyone tonight talk about how they want to use the money to reduce their taxes!

Town Attorney Bob Fisher came forward to explain that two articles are needed for the Town Warning. The first article would create a Reserve Account for the purpose of Economic Development and the second article would ask voters to fund the account with a specific amount of money. Without these articles, the funds from the Option Tax are simply revenue.

Burke clarified that the reason why this discussion was necessary was because in the course of researching how other towns use their Option Tax, it was discovered that in a few cases, it does get used to offset their tax rate.

The Board set aside a special meeting on Monday, 1/14 at 5:30 p.m. in addition to their regular meeting on 1/16 at 6:00 p.m.

Chapman made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Streeter. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Baxter

Approved by Wilmington Selectboard:

Thomas P. Consolino, Chair

Margaret L. Streeter, Vice Chair

Diane Chapman, Clerk

Susan Joy Haughwout

James R. Burke