

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT BOS MEETING

TOWN OF WESTBROOK  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
SPECIAL MEETING  
Thursday, January 09, 2020  
Mulvey Municipal Center  
Room A

CALL TO ORDER

First Selectman Bishop called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. In attendance included: First Selectman Bishop, Selectman Hall, Selectman Fuchs, Paul Connelly, BOF Chairman, Donna Castracane, Director of Finance, Carol Mullaney, VNA Director, Harry Ruppenicker, Zoning, Carol Hess, Asst. Finance Director, Tony Cozza, BOF member, Chris Ehlert, Energy Chair, BOF member, Ken Butterworth, IT, Jane Butterworth, Treasurer, Pam Fogarty, Assessor, John Rie, Harbor Commission Chair, Marty Marx, Conservation Commission Chair, Heidi Wallace, IWWC, Bonnie Hall, ZBA Chair, Eric Knapp, Planning, Zoning and Development Coordinator, Marilyn Ozols, Planning Chair, Mike Oryl, PA/TA Chair, Jim Crawford, Registrar, and Terri Aliamo, Registrar.

Mr. Bishop commended Ms. Castracane and her staff for their development of the budget.

PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED 20/21 REQUESTED OPERATING BUDGET

Ms. Castracane, Director of Finance, provided an overview of the requested 20/21 operating budget as submitted by Department Heads. Budget requests total \$12,877,387.00 or a 3.1% increase. Budget drivers in the proposed budget include several requests for additional staff, increases to the Town's facilities line due to the Library items being transferred into it, the addition last year of a full-time Constable and Maintainer in the Public Works Dept. Much of the proposed increase is due to contractually agreed upon items (municipal employee Union Contract). It appears that Revenue will remain relatively flat (note increases in Senior Center revenue).

Mr. Bishop reported that at the 10/8/19 BOS meeting, the following motion was made relative to fixed costs related to the Municipal Employee Union Contract.

"Mr. Hall made a motion to ratify the Municipal Contract dated 7/1/19 – 6/30/22 and to authorize First Selectman Bishop to sign the contract, retro-active to 7/1/19. Ms. Labbadia seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hall made a motion to extend the same benefits for health insurance, wages, and longevity as specified in the Union Contract to all Non-Union, elected officials and recording clerks effective 7/1/19 – 6/30/22, retro-active to 7/1/19. Ms. Labbadia seconded the motion. Discussion followed:

The motion passed unanimously."

Details of the Union Contract include a 3% wage increase in year one and a 2.8% increase in years two and three.

Mr. Bishop reported that in prior year budget presentations to the BOS, the BOS voted after each department budget was presented and reserved the right to re-visit individual department budgets after all department budgets are presented to the BOS. Department heads were notified if the BOS reduced their budget.

For this year's budget, the BOS determined that no votes will be taken relative to individual departments until all department budgets have been presented to the BOS. If necessary, the BOS will invite Department Heads back to discuss potential cuts to the budget.

INDIVIDUAL DEPARTMENT BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

The BOS reviewed the following budget submittals: Treasurer, BAA, Assessor, Energy, Registrar, Harbor Commission, Conservation, Inland Wetland, Nursing Dept., IT, ZBA, Planning & Zoning, Town Center, Economic Development Committee, Finance, First Selectman, HR, Engineering and Legal.

Representatives from the various departments, boards/commissions were available to address questions posed by the BOS.

Of note:

Conservation Commission –

Mr. Bishop reported that the Town was recently awarded an Open Space Grant in the amount of \$315,000 for the Toby Hill Purchase. Ms. Wallace was instrumental in facilitating the grant application and is pursuing additional avenues for funding the remainder of purchase price (\$650,000). The Finance Director is confirming the Open Space funds available (approximately \$140,000). A Town Meeting is required to authorize additional funding. Mr. Bishop commended Ms. Wallace for her work on the Open Space Grant.

Registrar

Additional payroll funds necessary due to upcoming Presidential Primary and Election.

IT

Mr. Butterworth provided an extensive update on the IT request and inventory and status of current hardware and software. The BOS discussed staffing needs of the IT Dept.

Planning & Zoning

Recent reorganization of staffing in the Land Use Department has been reflected in the budget request. At the 1/14/20 BOS meeting, Mr. Knapp will request additional staff hours for the Administrative Assistant I to accommodate the needs of the department. Funding for CAZIO training for staff in Land Use was briefly discussed. It was suggested that only 2 staff members attend the training.

Town Center

The status of the Town Center Parking lot was discussed. The Town Center budget includes \$7,500 for maintenance of the parking lot with the expectation that the figure will be reduced to \$5,000 in future years. Vacuuming of the parking lot was discussed. If funding for the vacuuming is not currently in the Public Works budget, funds should be placed in the Town Center budget.

Mr. Hall commented that several residents expressed concern about the unattractiveness of the Town Center Parking lot and why was it necessary for us to expend monies for this project.

First Selectman

A copy of the Grant Log, developed by Mrs. Helchowski who has added responsibilities as Grant Coordinator was distributed to BOS members. Grants are tracked on a regular basis.

Engineering

All engineering will be reflected in the “General Engineering” line. The part-time engineer line will be eliminated.

Legal

Mr. Bishop reported that Attorney Wells has retired. The Town received 3 responses to an RFP for legal services. Candidates will be interviewed at the 1/21/20 BOS meeting. In the interim, the offices of Halloran and Sage have been providing limited legal services.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Bishop made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 p.m. Mr. Hall seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Attest,

Suzanne Helchowski  
Administrative Assistant

Noel Bishop  
First Selectman