

R I C H M O N D S E L E C T B O A R D
S P E C I A L M E E T I N G
D e c e m b e r 1 2 , 2 0 1 6 M I N U T E S

Members Present: Ellen Kane; Bard Hill; Lincoln Bressor; David Sander; Steve May

Absent: None

Others Present: Geoffrey Urbanik, Town Manager; Connie Bona, Finance Assistant; Police Chief Alan Buck; Fire Chief Dennis Gile; Assistant Fire Chief Gerry Levesque; Kendall Chamberlin, Water Resources Superintendent; Peter Gosselin, Highway Foreman; Mary Houle; Maureen Kangley; and the meeting was not taped or televised.

Ellen Kane called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

1. Welcome and Public Comment

Ms. Kane asked if there were any comments from the public.

Mary Houle welcomed the new restaurant, “One Radish Eatery” to town. She noted that Stargazer Gifts was closing, which was sad, and encouraged everyone to shop there while they could.

2. Budget Discussions

The Selectboard reviewed the FY2018 budget department by department. The Manager had provided some suggestions for cuts to various expenditure lines and a couple of revenue changes. The Selectboard sought a maximum two-cent increase on the tax rate and the current budget version held a 3.69 cent increase, which represented about \$77,000 over the target. Additional taxation was \$167,221 over the previous year.

A base 2% Cost of Living Adjustment for all departments (except Library) was included and health insurance is up by 8% as well – although individual enrollments can change over the 18 month period of the budget cycle, changing costs dramatically.

In this budget draft, the **significant spending changes** were:

Administration

- VLCT/PACIF = Up \$17,200 per their anticipated annual increase
- Fire Protection = Up by \$18,226 per Water Resources Budget request

Planning/Zoning

- Training/Education = Up by \$2,500 to provide training for PC and DRB board members
- Contracts = Up by \$2,900 for additional match for grants to provide for zoning rewrites

Police

- Salaries = While this is up 2%, the pending contract may require additional funds. Unfortunately at this time we are not in a position to preemptively increase more than this.
- School Resource officer = This has been decreased by almost \$23,000 due to CESU reducing their SRO time.
- Municipal Retirement = Up by \$4,800; with higher paid employees and a full contingent, the requirement for this line has increased.
- Police Cruiser Equipment = Up by \$15,000; this includes purchase of a variety of equipment for the cruisers, including new radars.
- Police Cruiser Lease = Up by \$7,000 to account for additional lease payments as we roll into the second year of vehicle turnover in this program.
- CUSI = Up by \$1,383 per request.

Library

- Health Insurance = Up by \$25,400 to reflect additional health insurance for anticipated new full-time employee
- Books = Up by \$2,000 to purchase additional books and subscriptions.

Fire

- Salaries = Up by \$5,000 to cover higher minimum wage and expected higher participation among volunteers.
- Maintenance = Up by \$4,000 – this covers station maintenance and repairs and the needs are many.
- Pump Testing = Up by \$2,000 which will cover pump testing for all vehicles annually.
- Turnout Gear = New line, additional \$16,000. Most gear is more than the recommended 10 year lifespan; can cost over \$3,000 to outfit one firefighter. A grant has been applied for, but we won't know the outcome prior to this budget cycle. 7 sets of new gear purchased in current budget cycle, likely 10-12 additional sets need replacement.
- Air Packs = New line, additional \$24,000. This had been on a rotating schedule utilizing Fire Capital Reserve Funds. Fire Company now wants separate line.

Recreation

- Park Maintenance = Up by \$5,000 to purchase or replace new equipment or fixtures in Volunteers Green.
- Special Events = Up by \$9,500 to appropriate \$10,000 as stipends for organizers to develop a variety of special events; rather than hire a part-time rec director we utilize stipends to people who have a vision for an event, and allow for different people with different ideas to experiment with events as the opportunity arises.

Highway

- Diesel Fuel = Down by \$20,000 due to low fuel prices and anticipated less-intensive gravel program.
- Gravel = Down by \$75,000 which transfers to Storm Water repair

- 1 • Storm Drains = Up by \$127,000 for replacement of 600 feet of storm drain from Four Corners
- 2 to the railroad.
- 3 • Park Mower Principle & interest = the new one-year note on the Ventrac.

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6 Overall spending was up by \$135,803 but non-tax revenues have been decreased – yielding a tax
7 increase of \$167,221 or 3.69 cents (5.54%) increase.

8 The Selectboard spend considerable time going through each department’s budget and reviewing
9 suggested cuts. The Selectboard agreed to keep the Fire Protection line at the proposed \$32,796 as a
10 general town contribution to the debt on the water storage tank, which was sized appropriately for that
11 reason.

12 The Selectboarda greed to an additional cut to mobile data computers for the Police Cruisers, opting
13 for a phased replacement cycle instead of all at once.

14 The Selectboard also discussed a \$2,000 stipend or training reimbursement for the Constable. Chief
15 Buck explained the new certifications for the Constable and what duties the Constable could perform
16 under statute. The Selectboard reduced this to a training reimbursement only of \$500 and asked that
17 the Constable attend the January 3rd meeting.

18 There was considerable discussion about the Library’s increased benefits and books lines. The
19 Selectboard agreed to reduce the books line to level-funded from the current year and reduce the office
20 supplies line by \$400. They requested additional justification on the personnel changes from the
21 Library Trustees for the January 3, 2017 meeting.

22 The Selectboard also reduced outlay spending on the new Turnout Gear and Air Pack replacement
23 lines proposed by the Fire Chief, suggesting that the \$28,500 reserve line be used to supplement
24 equipment replacement. It was acknowledged that the gear replacement cycle was significantly
25 overdue and new equipment was badly needed.

26 Cuts in the Planning Department to training and contract services were made, and the suggestion for
27 stipends for community events in the Recreation budget were significantly reduced. Two new
28 charitable donations were removed, and with some other amendments, the proposed tax increase was
29 now 2.3 cents, or around \$10,000 over the target. The Manager was directed to make these changes
30 and additional discussion on the budget would wait until January 3rd. The Selectboard agreed to hold
31 the public hearing on the Fy2018 budget on January 17, 2017, at 7:00 PM in the main meeting room of
32 Town Center.

33 34 **3. Adjourn**

35 Motion by Mr. Bressor to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Sander. So voted.