



Town of Amherst, NH
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
Barbara Landry Meeting Room
2 Main Street
Monday, November 13, 2014 at 6:00 PM

I. Public Session

Chairman Dwight Brew called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. Attendees: Chairman Dwight Brew, Vice Chairman Mike Akillian, Selectmen John D'Angelo and Tom Grella. Also present: Town Administrator, Jim O'Mara, and Suzanne Beauchesne taking minutes. Selectman Brad Galinson was absent.

II. Pledge of Allegiance – Health Officer, Dr. Mary Katherine Lockwood, led the pledge.

III. Citizen Forum – No citizens came forward.

Selectman D'Angelo moved to recess the meeting. Seconded by Vice Chairman Akillian. Vote 4-0

IV. Board of Health - Waiver Request

At 6:06 p.m. Dr. Mary Katherine Lockwood, Amherst's Health Officer, presided and called to order the Board of Health meeting. Dawn Trombley, representing James Belanger and his wife, Elizabeth Comeau, waiver applicants and owners of the 21 Beaver Brook Circle property, were in attendance. The Belanger/Comeau property, PIN # 018-012-000, has an existing septic tank and conventional leaching system which is currently in poor condition.

The applicant proposes replacing the existing tank and leaching system with a new two-compartment tank and an innovative (Enviro-septic) leaching system. The proposed leaching system would be constructed 24" above the seasonal high water table and above impermeable material, where the Septic System Ordinance requires that the bed bottom of the leach field must be 60" above seasonal high water (Section 11.5.b) and 48" above impermeable material (Section 11.6).

Dr. Lockwood acknowledged that the property, being narrow and long, presents a number of challenges; but, setting a precedent is a concern. In an initial review of the proposed system, Building Inspector, Rick Keyes, commented that the seasonal high water table had not been established for either test pit location, and suggested that "if they can get to 8' or more without any indication of seasonal high water, they will have their 5' separation" and the waiver will not be necessary. In addition, Inspector Keyes suggested that raising the level at which the sewage pipe exits the property would allow the tank elevation to be raised and potentially move the location of the new system closer to the location of Test Pit #1 which indicates no seasonal high water to 84". If this location were to be excavated to 96" with no seasonal, the required 5' separation could be achieved and no waiver would be needed.

Dr. Lockwood pointed out that the waiver does not state why other systems were not considered and suggested that the waiver request be tightened up. Dawn Trombley stated that other systems had been considered and would not be appropriate, and that time is of the essence. Dr. Lockwood asked that the waiver application be amended to reflect the other systems considered and the reasons for their rejection. The applicant agreed to do so.

Chairman Brew moved to grant the waiver subject to amending the original application to reflect the reasons why a pump system is not feasible and to re-open test pit 2 in order to establish the high water mark and follow-up with a supplemental report. Selectman Grella seconded. Vote 5-0

Selectman D'Angelo moved to adjourn the Board of Health meeting at 6:40 p.m. Seconded by Vice Chairman Akillian. Vote 5-0

V. FY 16 Budget & Strategic Plan Discussions

Chairman Brew continued the Board of Selectmen meeting and opened discussion of the FY 16 proposed budget.

Library

Amy Lapointe, Library Director, introduced a number of Library Trustees in attendance, and presented the library's proposed FY15 budget totaling \$874,018, a 3.42% increase over the FY15 operating budget. Director Lapointe stated that the Strategic Plan guides the staff's work and not all changes have a financial impact. Much had been done on re-arranging the area for better use of the space and making it more user-efficient. Director Lapointe said that the library staff is constantly trying to assess what people would like. E-books are shared so it is difficult to answer the percentage mix of the collection between print and electronic media.

Fire Department

Acting Fire Chief, Matt Conley, presented the Fire Department budget showing an increase of 14.48% over the FY 15 budget accounting for pay incentives totaling \$75,000. Funds to be approved, or not, via FY 16 warrant articles are the second floor renovations to the fire station (\$60,000), and \$150,000 for apparatus replacement. It was agreed to leave in, for the time being, budget assumption figures and perhaps remove items as more information becomes available. In response to whether the renovations needed to be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant, Chief Conley stated that in accord with the State's Fire Marshal, the space would not have to comply because it is living space. Chief Conley is awaiting feedback from the Governor's Office on Disabilities as well. Selectman D'Angelo pointed out that funds will be required over the next ten years to renovate/rebuild the South Station. All await the results of the Municipal Resources, Inc. (MRI) study.

Community Development

Community Development Director, Colleen Mailloux, presented a FY16 proposed operating budget of \$299,635 which is a 4.15% increase over FY15. The FY16 proposed strategic initiatives total \$19,000 primarily for professional consultant expenses on various initiatives. The Board felt that the small investment made will garner big returns.

Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation Director, Craig Fraley's department budget showed a FY16 budget with assumptions at \$359,290, a slight increase over the FY15 budget of \$326,086. FY16 proposed budget initiatives totaling \$63,000 include \$35,000 for the Baboosic Lake Beach Raft and Fencing, \$12,000 for the Spaulding Retention Wall, and \$16,000 to replace the Gator (similar to a golf cart but longer) and Truck. Initiatives totaling \$11,400 include \$3,000 for Marketing PMEC (also done last year), \$300 to participate in community events, \$600 referral incentives, \$5,000 to develop a Field Maintenance Plan, and \$1,000 to enhance online registrations

In addition, the department budget listed a FY16 Warrant Article Initiative of \$100,000 for the repaving and fixing of the Amherst Middle School and Davis Lane tennis courts. A savings of \$40,000 can be realized if

the re-paving is done while contractors are working on Foundry Street. A FY16 non-budget initiative of \$80,000 includes \$30,000 from the revolving fund for a recreation bus and \$50,000 from private donations for the development of the Middle Street Park to meet the needs of all residents.

It was noted that the town does not own any tennis courts, but must maintain them in accord with a lease agreement with the schools. It was also mentioned that the truck currently being used by Parks and Recreation was inherited from the Department of Public Works (DPW) who need heavier trucks. Parks and Recreation prefer lighter trucks. It was suggested that the town utilize the lease/purchase financing option since it would be easier to manage going forward.

Public Works

Bruce Berry, DPW Director, provided budgets for his areas of responsibility as follows:

a) 4194 Government Buildings: The FY16 budget with initiatives totals \$314,567, a 1.6% increase. The increase of \$5,000 is to be used for routine maintenance such as shingle and elevator tile floor replacements.

b) 4195 Cemeteries: The FY16 proposed budget totals \$47,808 which is a 7.5% increase over FY15. Two thousand dollars (\$2,000) shows a wage line increase for cemetery maintenance [mowing] and \$250 for equipment maintenance. Chairman Brew suggested that revenue from burial fees be separated out.

c) 4311 Administration: The FY16 budget totals \$403,023 reflecting a 10.82% increase for a half time engineering position which will be essential given the upcoming Baboosic Lake Septic and Stormwater mandates. Further discussion is necessary regarding objectives and funding.

d) 4312 Public Works: The proposed FY16 budget with initiatives totals \$3,030,207. The initiatives include: Road Maintenance \$200,000 which will grow over time; Public Works Study \$40,000; Lease/Purchase \$49,905.61. The percent increase without warrant articles is 10.82 percent.

Warrant Articles include the sidewalk project totaling \$328,100 (80% of the funds are to be reimbursed via the federal Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) if approved by the State), and \$150,000 for bridge replacement. Director Berry reported that he expects to hear from the State on the sidewalk project in February. Bridge maintenance funding and the state timeline on reimbursement were discussed.

e) 4323 Souhegan Regional Landfill District: The FY 16 operating budget totals \$350,635, a 2.15% increase.

f) 4324 Landfill Department: The FY 16 budget shows a 15.4% increase (\$46,762) for a total of \$303,752. The increase reflects additional wages for increased operational hours. The plant is currently open 29 hours per week. Lines depend on seasons. There are always lines on Saturdays. The cardboard recycling has been a big success.

Town Administration

Town Administrator, Jim O'Mara, presented FY16 proposed budgets as follows:

a) Emergency Medical Services – \$692,757.

b) General Government – \$407,437. Initiatives include \$70,800 for a Human Resources professional and \$10,000 for professional development.

- c) Town Clerk - \$178,397. The budget shows a \$39,100 increase reflecting a change from a part time position to full time.
- d) Finance -- \$223,909. An increase of \$45,220 represents increasing the bookkeeper's hours to full time.
- e) Legal -- \$60,000.
- f) Personnel Administration -- \$187,568.
- g) Property/Liability Insurance -- \$106,371.
- h) Health Agencies -- \$45,000.
- i) Patriotic Purposes -- \$20,000 which comes from the Parks and Recreation Revolving Account with offsetting revenue.
- j) Heritage Commission -- \$11,420, the majority of which is for the Stone Walls initiative.
- k) Conservation Commission -- \$8,000.

The FY16 budget liaisons/assignments were determined as follows:

| DEPARTMENT | SELECTMEN | WAYS & MEANS MEMBERS |
|------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Administration, et al | Akillian/Galinson | Jensen/Ouellette/Post |
| Assessing/Taxes | Akillian/Galinson | Jensen/Ouellette/Post |
| DPW | D'Angelo/Grella | Thomas/Jensen/Lockwood |
| EMS | D'Angelo/Brew | Dinkel/Ouellette/Thomas |
| Fire | Grella/Brew | Dinkel/Ouellette/Thomas |
| Library | Akillian/Brew | Lynch/Jensen/Lockwood |
| OCD | D'Angelo/Galinson | Post/Troie/Lockwood |
| Police/Communications Center | D'Angelo/Brew | Post/Lynch/Rubery |
| Recreation | Akillian/Galinson | Lynch/Troie/Thomas |

VI. Old and New Business

Vice Chairman Akillian moved to hire Amber Ciarcia as Program Coordinator in the Parks and Recreation Department effective November 17, 2014. Seconded by Selectman D'Angelo. Vote 4-0.

Selectman Grella reported that the Rotary Club has offered to pay for the Zambini for the skating rink.

Selectman Grella suggested an invitation be extended to the Souhegan High School Boys Soccer Team, winners of the D2 State Championship, to attend an upcoming Board meeting and receive a proclamation from the Board.

VII. Non-Public Session (if necessary)

VIII. Adjourn

Vice Chairman Akillian moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Selectman D'Angelo. Vote 4-0

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.