

TOWN OF HEBRON  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
SPECIAL MEETING – BUDGET WORKSHOP  
DOUGLAS LIBRARY – COMMUNITY ROOM  
MARCH 24, 2009

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Ann E. Thayer  
HEBRON TOWN CLERK

**Members Present:** Brian O'Connell, Jeff Watt, Gayle Mulligan, William Moorcroft, Mark Stuart

**Staff Present:** Donna Lanza, E. Griffin, James Day, S. Hushin

**Guests:** Michael Hazel, Donna Ferree, Daniel Larson

The meeting was called to order at 7:39pm by Jeff Watt

**Comments from the Public:**

D. Rose spoke about his concerns that a 0% BOE budget will result in teachers' dismissal; decrease in quality of education and decrease in property values. He would like the Board to consider these issues.

T. Howard spoke about his concerned regarding cutting the library hours in these economic conditions; as well as cutting the BOE budget.

M. Hazel (Board of Finance Chairman) clarified the Boards' position regarding a 0% tax increase over a 0% budget increase and that no decisions had been made at this time; but the Boards brought a resolution before the Board of Education to begin a dialog.

J. Watt added more clarification stating that no decisions had been made as yet and that they were looking for ideas on how to be fair to all groups in order to maintain the budget.

A. D'Amaddio spoke about her concerns regarding the cuts being made and had some suggestions.

M. Stuart arrived at 7:45pm

**Budget Presentations:**

**Library Department:**

Mary Ellen Beck, Library Director spoke about the library's budget. She stated that she has brought forth a barebones budget. She presented handouts outlining that the library is opened less hours that other area libraries and that the average salary for no degree part-time staff is less than the average for other comparable libraries. She stated that furloughs would impact the library hours and would be a security issue as well. She stated that the staff is in favor of no salary increase rather than furloughs or decreased hours of operation.

She commented that the library has increased circulation, increased use of the library's website and use of the computers at the library by the general public.

Gayle Mulligan asked about the collaboration with RHAM regarding the summer reading program and how that would work this year. M. Beck stated that they have worked out the issues in that RHAM will be getting the list to the library earlier so proper materials can be purchased.

M. Beck talked about increases in building maintenance due to the operation of the building being costly each year. She stated that the library had stopped purchasing materials in order to give back \$3,100 as directed by the Town Manager. She stated that the full-time staff will not be attending a conference this year and will be reducing training for next year.

There was continued discussion regarding the RHAM Summer Reading program and if that would be funded properly due to budget constraints. Donna Ferrec (BOF member) asked if the other member towns were purchasing materials for their libraries. M. Beck stated that she believe they were to the extent available in their budgets. M. Beck stated that they have reserved funds from the materials budget to cover the cost for Hebron.

J. Watt agreed that the hours of the library were necessary for the public use and stated that the efforts of the staff were much appreciated. The Board thanked the staff and commented on the good job all of them were doing.

J. Watt called a short break at 8:10 before the CIP presentation.

J. Watt reconvened the meeting at 8:22

#### **CIP Committee:**

Mark Stuart gave a presentation on the CIP Committee's budget. He began with general background on the Committee, its purpose and its members. He stated that the Committee was challenged this year to hold funding neutral with no impact on taxes.

He stated that they audited prior projects and were able to return unspent monies in the amount of \$125,000. The total request was \$1,481,854; with a final recommended amount of \$875,936. There were decreases made in all departments with some projects being put off or reduced. M. Stuart identified two areas where more reductions can be taken in the amount of \$25,000 from Storm Water project closeout and the Facilities Study can be reduced by \$35,000 due to cost sharing. He recommended that the Board reallocate this additional money.

M. Stuart stated that the Committee recommended revising the CIP procedures and policies; changing the cost limits for CIP projects and formalizing the Committee with the adoption of ordinances. He stated that educating the community regarding these projects should be done as well.

General discussion ensued regarding various items, declining condition of equipment, and the history of some CIP projects.

#### **Fire Department/EMS Department:**

Paul Burton, Fire Chief, began his presentation stating the goals and mandates of the department and staff. P. Burton stated that the part-time staff salaries would not increase for the next year. He discussed his budget at length indicating where reductions were made and where increases were necessary in certain areas. His overall changes brought his department's budget to a 3.5% increase.

There was general discussion regarding specific items; turn out gear; grant projects and building maintenance.

M. Stuart spoke about grant opportunities and how the money is used suggesting that a better system should be in place to handle grant projects.

P. Burton spoke about how the department is researching ways to save energy costs overall.

There was general discussion regarding the Capital Outlay account and where that dollar amount came from. P. Burton stated that he met with the Town Manager to come up with a priority list.

There was continued discussion regarding what standards are used for mandates, either OSHA or NFPA. Connecticut is an OSHA state; the Fire Department uses NFPA guidelines as the standard.

P. Burton discussed the EMS department budget stating that the increases are due to the additional ambulance and the supplies needed to equip it. He also stated that the part-time stipend position of Rescue Captain has been eliminated with volunteers filling the position for now.

P. Burton also stated that his department does not support the Fire Marshal's position being cut. He stated that the current Fire Marshal is highly regarded by the department and it would be a huge loss to the community.

B. O'Connell discussed the Fire Marshal vehicle replacement and perhaps cost sharing or using State surplus vehicles. P. Burton stated that this was a possibility; however, State surplus vehicles tend to be older with high mileage.

The Board thanked P. Burton for his presentation.

J. Watt discussed the Summary of Recommended 2009-2010 Budget handout showing the budget projections. He stated that he wanted to discuss expenditures during the next meeting on Thursday, March 26. The Board discussed the various handouts regarding cuts to various budget items.

There was also discussion regarding the State Trooper percentage issue and its impact on the Town.

J. Watt adjourned the meeting at 10:26 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Hushin