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Town of Danville
Board of Selectmen
December 3, 2019
7:00 PM

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Meeting is Video-Recorded

(This meeting was postponed from Dec. 2 due to inclement weather)

Selectmen Present: Shawn O'Neil, Vice Chair; Sheila Johannesen, David Knight, and David Cogswell
Scott Borucki, Chair- absent, excused

Others Present: Patty Shogren, Town Administrator; Wade Parsons, Police Chief; Justine Merced, Police Officer/LT; Chris Tracy, Town Clerk; Kim Burnham, Tax Collector; Allan Hess, Sharon Woodside, Dave Stewart, Dave Parry, Judi Cogswell, Theo Boyd, Camera Operator

Shawn called the meeting to order at 7:00 and opened the meeting with a moment of silence for the troops who put themselves in harm's way. All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance

I. Delegates

Shawn opens the Delegate session for the public to speak to the BOS. There being no delegates, he closes the Delegate session

II. Budgets

#4210 Police Department: Chief Wade Parsons and Officer/Lieutenant Justine Merced present #4210 Police Department budget for \$527,374. Chief Parsons begins by announcing and recognizing the promotions of Officer Merced to Lieutenant and Officer Jesse Hanlon to Sergeant. There is an appreciative round of applause from all in attendance.

Chief Parsons reviews the Salary line with the BOS. He notes that he used salary baselines from 2018 and added the FY2019 COLA of 2.7% and the FY2020 Cola of 1.5%. Other increases are due to promotions. He notes the FY2019 full-time position was originally funded for six months at entry-level, but had been filled by a local officer with 13 years of experience, and the salary was increased for that level of experience, also noting he had requested an additional increase in FY2020 to bring that officer up to the appropriate salary. He also explained the full-time position would be funded for a full year in FY2020 resulting in an increase of \$16.7% in that line.

Dave K. asks how long it would be before Chief Parsons would be able to fill a current opening. Chief Parsons explains he sent out 71 letters to participants of a previous testing and received only four (4) replies. There is a PT test scheduled for Dec. 14. Chief Parsons does not believe he will have that position filled before May 2020, noting the May Police Academy Class would be the first opportunity for a new recruit. Chief Parsons notes the department has become more competitive since it started using Great Bay College's salary recommendations. It was the reason that he was able to fill the full-time position with an experienced officer. Dave K. confirms with Chief Parsons that the salary line had been adjusted to reflect the 3-4 months the open position would not be filled.

Chief Parsons notes the Part-Time salary line decreased by 15%. When asked, he noted the part-time position was for 32 hours. Shawn clarifies that Part-Time can be an average of hours not to exceed 39 hours, giving Chief Parsons more flexibility for scheduling.

Chief Parsons notes a reduced cost in the Prosecution line is a result of most cases being pled out and not going to court as well as a change in Prosecution personnel. He notes several other changes:

- ✚ Overtime costs are down due to Lt. Merced's promotion as she will now be on salary.
- ✚ Professional Services increased due to new Prosecutor, but as noted earlier he is providing the Police Department with additional services.

Vehicle Maintenance: Chief Parsons notes the FY2019 budget is over-budget due to several large unexpected expenses. He notes the fleet is aging and is hoping there will be enough funds in the Trust account to purchase a new vehicle in 2020, as the 2012 Charger is now strictly a detail car. Sheila asks if he was planning to retire the 2008 truck. Chief Parsons notes they put a lot of money into that vehicle both for engine and body work. The truck still runs good and has low mileage. Shawn reminds Chief Parsons the Trust funds for a new vehicle are available and all he has to do is request it from the BOS. Patty notes the account balance is currently \$51,000, but she is still waiting on reimbursements from Special Details and the NHRS (New Hampshire Retirement System). Chief Parsons explains he is discontinuing the practice of transferring old equipment into the new vehicles as the older equipment is outdated and does not work well with the new vehicle systems.

Dave K. asks if Chief Parsons had given more thought to building up a force of detail officers, part-time officers who work only special details. Chief Parsons notes that Plaistow has gone that route with 6-7 officers- mostly retirees. He notes that Danville's officers have been able to fill detail requests both in and out of town and he prefers that way in order to build up the Trust account. Shawn confirms with Chief Parsons that the department is charging competitive rates for the details.

Chief Parsons summarizes his budget noting the bottom line is a 5.61% increase. He notes that department tenure over the last five years has increase 1.9% and the Operating budget remains the lowest Police operating budget in Rockingham County, yet he is still able to provide 24-hour service. Dave K. recaps the budget. Shawn thanks Chief Parsons for his thrift and value-added approach to the budget process. David C. motions to approve #4210 Police Department budget for \$527,374. Seconded by Sheila. Vote is unanimous.

✚ **#4210 Police Department- approved for \$527,374**

#4140.20- Voter Registration: Chris Tracy, Town Clerk presents #4140.20 Voter Registration budget for \$22,485. She notes the increase in the amount of elections in 2020, which also results in an increase in postage for absentee ballots. Dave K. notes that voting hours have changed to 7:00AM to 7:00PM. Mr. Hantman notes this is due to the amount of national and state primaries and elections. Shawn questions the over-budget expenses in the printing and supplies line. Ms. Tracy reminds him the Town had to pay for a double printing of the FY2019 ballots due to a misprint. Dave K. confirms with Ms. Tracy that she did not add the 1.5% COLA to the Ballot Clerks stipends. Dave K. motions to approve #4140.20 Voter Registration budget for \$22,485. Seconded by Sheila. Vote is unanimous.

#4140.10 Town Clerk: Chris Tracy, Town Clerk presents #4140.10 Town Clerk budget for \$101,251. She notes that she has increased her salary line by 6% and the 1.5% COLA. She notes this is to bring her salary up comparable salaries of other local Town Clerks. She notes that she is the most experienced Town Clerk among those compared; but is the lowest paid and has no benefits. She reviews the Training budget increase noting that other town send both the Town Clerks and the Deputy Clerks and she would like to be able to bring her Deputy Clerk as these conferences provide a huge educational benefit. There is discussion regarding line #820 Town Clerk "refund". Ms. Tracy explains this is for any overpayment of bills. After some discussion regarding the accounting process, Shawn motions to eliminate line #820 from the Town Clerk's budget. Seconded by David C. Vote is 3-yes. Sheila did not vote by voice or hand.

Dave K. asks if the Assistants / Deputies attend election training. Ms. Tracy states they do not, only Town Clerks attend. She notes that Mr. Hantman and Sue will need to complete online training before the elections. Mr. Hantman explains that Carsten Springer has agreed to be his backup Deputy Clerk and has completed the training. Ms. Tracy notes there is also online training available for Selectmen.

Dave K. expresses concern with the requested Town Clerk salary increase and suggests staying within the 1.5% COLA increase. Sheila asks how many hours is the Town Clerk open. Ms. Tracy states the office is open 32 hours a week, but she often stays late or goes in for “emergency” requests during closed hours. She notes her average workweek is 35-36 hours. David C. notes that he has no issue with the requested increase. Sheila notes that everyone else is just getting the 1.5% COLA.

Shawn expresses his issue with the recent closing of the Town Clerk’s office due to the snowstorm, noting that other Town Hall staff had made it to work. He notes his concern that such a closing should not be a “free” vacation day, and that Ms. Tracy should use one of her “vacation” days or not get paid for that day; noting again that such action was unfair to the staff that did come to work. Ms. Tracy expressed her belief that the other offices in Town Hall function independently and she made the decision for her office and staff. She also expressed her belief that historically there are no customers on bad days. Shawn notes that the last increase in the Town Clerk’s salary resulted in expanded hours. He expresses his opinion that he feels Ms. Tracy is acting both like an elected official—setting her own hours, and like an employee, expecting employee benefits. Ms. Tracy responds that she often goes out of her way to help townspeople by staying late or going in on the weekends for special requests, time that she is not “officially” paid for. Mr. Hantman suggests that perhaps the Employee Manual could be updated to address closings for inclement weather for Town Employees with the exception of essential personnel. Dave K. notes that technically the BOS can close Town Hall, but he wants to be careful not to infringe on the RSA differences between elected officials and town employees. He reiterates Shawn’s concern that elected officials can set their own hours, but if they want to be paid like an employee, they need to act like an employee (i: e: and not arbitrarily close their office).

Dave K. notes that in a prior conversation with Scott he learned that industry was expecting to increase salaries 3% in FY2020. He offers Ms. Tracy a compromise on her salary request at 3% including the COLA. He does some quick calculations that are corrected by Patty to a salary of \$50,069. Dave K. notes that he understands Ms. Tracy’s frustration regarding the lack of benefits for elected officials, but notes the Town has made it clear they do not want to pay for benefits for elected officials. Dave K. motions to adjust the Town Clerk salary to \$50,069 and to approve #4140.10 Town Clerk budget for the adjusted amount of \$99,019. Seconded by David C. Vote is unanimous.

 **#4140.10 Town Clerk- approved for \$99,019**

#4150.40- Tax Collector: Kimberly Burnham presented #4150.40 Tax Collector budget for \$60,423. Ms. Burnham began her presentation following up on the previous conversation regarding closing for inclement weather. She explains that the Town Hall staff helps each other out answering questions, taking calls, etc. She specifically asked Shawn why the BOS did not close Town Hall during the Dec. 2 snowstorm. Shawn explains that his expectation was that staff would take the necessary time to get into work safely. He stated that he respects staff choices regarding coming in to work or not, but notes they should not be paid for that time unless they are using vacation or sick time. Ms. Burnham reminds Shawn that elected officials do not get “paid” vacation, sick time, or holidays. They take the time, but are paid as part of their salary.

Ms. Burnham reviews the salary line of her budget. She has budgeted for the 1.5% COLA increase for her assistant. For her salary she has added the 1.5% COLA and an additional \$2400. Ms. Burnham quickly reviews the remaining lines of her budget, noting that most of those numbers are dictated by the State. She notes the increase in the supply line is in direct relation to the increase in the Town’s population, and that mandatory training costs increased. She notes her bottom line is an increase of 5.2%.

Sheila asks if there will be a correlating increase in the Tax Collector hours with the requested salary increase. Ms. Burnham responds that she does not intend to increase those hours, but notes there are many hours she is required to work behind the scenes (e:g: time spent in Court, late nights to meet report deadlines, etc.) She notes that she needs to work as long as it takes in order for her to get her work done, regardless of the fact those hours are not accounted for. Upon further questioning, Ms. Burnham notes she averages 21 hours per week.

Dave K. suggests the BOS make the same compromise as for the Town Clerk with an increase of 3%. Patty notes this will change the Tax Collector salary to \$37,802 and the bottom line of the budget to \$58,573. Dave K. motions to approve the change in the Tax Collector salary to \$37,802 and to approve #4150.40 Tax Collector budget for \$58,573. Seconded by Sheila. Dave K. adds a final comment that the salaries of the Town Clerk, Tax Collector, and Road Agent are not reflective of the value those people bring to the Town; but the Town will not pay for their value. Shawn called the motion. Vote is unanimous.

Patty reads the Town Announcements listed below.

Shawn notes the Deliberative Session for the School will be Thursday, February 6, 2020.

Warrant Articles: Shawn reviews a proposed Warrant Article that will bring the Town into compliance with NH RSA 32:5 V-b. If approved, this would allow the BOS to attach the tax impact (cost) to all Warrant Articles that request an expenditure on the actual ballot. Currently the BOS sends out mailers to the Townspeople with this information, but cannot put it on the ballot itself. Dave K. motions to move forward with the proposed Warrant Article. Seconded by Sheila. Vote is unanimous. Dave K. notes his concern that voters will approve those Warrant Articles with small dollar costs without being aware of how quickly those small amounts will increase the tax rate. Shawn expresses his belief this will add more transparency to the voting process.

Shawn asks about a pending Warrant Article for an added property tax exemption. Patty reminds the BOS that was included in the Warrant Article packet from last week they had tabled for review. Dave K. confirms the BOS had not yet moved any of those Warrant Articles forward. He notes that he would recommend the BOS change the Warrant Articles for the additional bulk pick-up. Shawn notes the BOS could exclude that particular Warrant Article from the vote.

Patty informs the BOS she has updated the amount in the expendable Trust for Mosquito Control. She notes the Town used a new vendor this year that sprayed for Old Home Days and kept the soccer fields sprayed until the end of playing season and charged the Town only \$675.

Sheila suggests leaving out the Police Department Warrant Article until the BOS puts the Bond issue forward.

Shawn suggests that Patty use individual letters such as "AA", "BB" as placeholders in the Warrant Articles until the process is complete. This would make it easier to reference them during discussion. Patty agrees with the suggestion and will make those changes. She notes the Warrant Articles are currently arranged according to cost. Patty also noted the Library had increased their Facility Warrant Article to \$10,000.



After further discussion, the consensus of the BOS was to table voting on the Warrant Articles until the full Board was present.

Minutes: The BOS reviewed the Non-Public Minutes for November 25. There is one correction noted for capitalization of "O". Dave K. motions to accept the Non-Public minutes as corrected and to unseal those minutes. Seconded by Sheila. Roll Call Vote: Scott- absent, Shawn-yes, Sheila-yes, Dave K. - yes, David C. - yes. Non-Public minutes are approved and unsealed.

Trash Contract: Dave K. asks Shawn regarding the progress of the trash contract. Shawn notes he is still playing phone tag, but is pushing to address the issue before the next BOS meeting. Dave K. notes that he would like to pull out both bulk pick-ups from the contract and put both of them in a Warrant Article, explaining that he wants the Townspeople to know they are adding \$50,000 to the budget that he feels could be spent in better ways. Dave K. also explains that he has some ideas regarding selling the new Police Station.

III. Town Announcements

Open Committee Seats:

-  Heritage Commission- 1 open position and 2 alternate position
-  Budget Committee- 3 open positions

The Giving Tree: in the Town Hall Lobby. There is a tree for children and a tree for seniors. The BOS encourages the Townspeople to participate.

NH State Primary Election day has been set for **Tuesday, February 11, 2020**. The BOS will discuss voting hours at a future meeting.

Danville Deliberative Session (Town Budget) February **8, 2020 at 10:00AM at the Community Center**.

If there is EXTREME weather with a state emergency, the Snow Date is Sunday, February 9.

Danville School Deliberative Session: Thursday, February 6, 2020. Time to be announced.

Rabies Clinic: Saturday, April 4, 2020. Details will be announced later

Recreation Committee

- ✚ Senior Coffee Hour: Thursday Dec. 19 from 10:00AM-12:00PM at the Community Center. The guest speakers will be a Firefighter/EMT discussing Home Fire Safety. Please note there is no Senior Coffee hour in November due to the Senior Luncheon.

There being no further items to discuss. Dave K. motions to adjourn. Seconded by David C. Vote is unanimous.

Meeting is adjourned at 8:30PM

Minutes derived by video provided on the Town of Danville website.

Respectfully Submitted
Deborah A. Christie