

**Minutes
Town of Greenfield
Greenfield Town Offices, 7 Sawmill Road Greenfield, NH
Selectboard's Minutes**

Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2017 – 5:30 PM

Selectboard: Chairwoman Margaret A. Charig Bliss, Selectman Stephen Atherton Jr., Selectman Robert Marshall

Staff: Aaron Patt, Town Administrator; David Hall Fire Chief; Budget Advisory Committee Members – Norm Nickerson Chair, Ken Paulsen, Jim Murphy; ConVal School Representative Myron Steere (also Greenfield Budget Advisory Committee Member)

Public: Karen Day

5:30 p.m. The meeting was opened by Chairwoman Charig Bliss.

Documents for Review/Approval

- A/P Check Register dated 1/24/2017 & 1/19/2017
- Payroll Check Register dated 1/27/2017
- Wastewater Check Register dated 1/24/2017
- Minutes of Selectboard Meeting
- 225th Anniversary Committee Letter to Selectboard
- Welfare Vouchers (3)

5:30 PM: Public Forum

At 5:30 pm the Chair noted that the meeting was open. The Board reviewed the Consent Agenda.

The Chair noted that Karen Day was in attendance; Karen Day stated she was in attendance to advocate for Music-on-the-Common and to provide a reminder that articles are due for the Greenfield Spirit, for which Ms. Day provides the layout. Next Bruce Dodge, Chair of the Library Trustees informed the Selectboard that the Stephenson Library has hired a new library director. The new director's start date is February 20th. Mr. Dodge then provided brief remarks on the library foundation-project's status.

5:45 PM: Selectboard Work Session – Consent Agenda

At 5:45 pm the Chair and Selectman Marshall reviewed the consent agenda items. At 5:50 Selectman Atherton arrived.

6:00 PM: Budget Advisory Committee report to the Selectboard

The Chair welcomed the Budget Advisory Committee to the meeting. She noted that Myron Steere, Greenfield's ConVal School Board Representative was present, and she invited Mr. Steere to provide an update on the ConVal School budget. Mr. Steere is the Chair of the School Board. He said that in 2006 the district had 3100 people in the system, and in 2017 the number is now 2100. Despite the decrease in student population there are still 11 school buildings that need attention. Mr. Steere stated that the buildings will require \$10M over the next five years, or \$2M a year, in order to address issues such as new roofs and other facility updates, including ADA compliance issues. He went on to explain that although the budget is reduced over last year by \$200,000, the State Aid to schools is less than it has been in previous years, so the district will not see a tax decrease as a result. The ConVal district has renegotiated a healthcare contract, which will provide savings. He thought that the amount of excess in fund balance was around \$725,000 (last year the district gave back \$1M to the surrounding towns). This number could change, but Greenfield's share of the district was 10% so the town should see that percentage being applied to the cost of the final budget. After some additional discussion, he concluded that the school board's review of the budget this year was based on providing quality education, safe schools, and to make the budget easier on the tax payers. Mr. Steere asked the Selectboard to take a vote in favor of the budget, and noted that the town of Greenfield has frequently voted against the ConVal budget so he was asking that the Board help send the right message on behalf of the School Board to the residents. Chair Charig Bliss thanked Mr. Steere for his review of the ConVal budget.

The Chair of the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) Norm Nickerson opened the budget conversation. The BAC met earlier in the afternoon and discussed several items. These included the wages for the Building and Grounds DPW Manager. Selectman Atherton explained that the wage for that position was set at the FLSA salaried-exempt requirement level, which had been updated and then due on December 1st, 2016. The Board had already completed the change before an injunction was placed on the FLSA requirements by the federal court system. Chair Charig Bliss explained that the current manager was hired mid-year in 2016 at a rate higher than the previous person. She stated that although it looks like a big jump in wages, it's actually a lot closer to the actual wage that was set during the hiring process (and not the wage that is on record from the 2016 budget report). Selectman Marshall said that the Board looked at the possibility of a 40-hour a week position with an amount for overtime instead of the salaried exempt position; the average work week hours translated into a cost at, or higher than, the FLSA based salary. The Board felt that the FLSA based wages protect the town from a lot of overtime that might occur in the case of emergencies. BAC Chair Nickerson stated that overtime was something that the town had to watch. He agreed that it sounded like the position's salary was understandable from that standpoint—even though it originally looked like a significant increase. Next the BAC asked about the DPW Roads Manager salary. The Chair explained that the town participated in a wage and salary survey that the town of Hancock was conducting. As a result of its participation Greenfield received the results of the survey, which included data from 15 towns. Several towns which were much larger in size and overall budget were dropped, and the Board was able to weigh salaries and wages for eight positions across eleven towns. The information provided the Selectboard with the ability to weigh Greenfield's current positions against a larger municipal job market of similar sized towns, or towns with similar activity levels. Selectman Marshall explained that the DPW wages in Greenfield were significantly below the market. He also noted that most of the positions in Greenfield were lower than the current and maximum averages found in other towns. As a result the Selectboard is addressing the 2017 wages, which is reflected in the budget. Several of the town's positions are addressed with market adjustments of 3% over 2016 wages, which would begin the process of bringing the town's wages into comparability with the surrounding area. The DPW Roads Manager was addressed with a market adjustment greater than 3% due to a significant difference from the rest of the market.

BAC member Steere asked the Board if they were looking at any type of regionalization. There followed a discussion on regionalization of police, fire, and recycling departments. It was noted that for public safety programs, Greenfield has a significantly higher call volume than surrounding towns and that it may not be a good fit to try to partner with other towns.

Selectman Marshall asked the BAC if they would entertain a question posed by the Police Department. The Police Department is interested in keeping the old cruiser in order to reduce the amount of miles on the new cruiser and the remaining Crown Victoria cruiser. After discussion the BAC agreed that the town needs to space the purchase of police cruisers out so that they are not happening back-to-back in consecutive years. A potential benefit of continuing to run the older cruiser until its end of life is that it could help achieve a longer interval between the two police vehicles when it comes to purchasing. Selectman Marshall said that he was mindful of the possibility that retaining a third police vehicle could be viewed as 'creep' by residents. The BAC concluded the discussion by saying that the potential benefits outweigh the risks and that they were in agreement to keep the third vehicle.

At 7:30pm, Chair Charig Bliss ended the budget discussion and thanked the Budget Advisory Committee for their hard work and contribution. Selectman Marshall expressed his thanks and said that it was really helpful for the Board to have the BAC contribute their thoughts to the budget process. Selectman Marshall stated that he was really pleased to have received such thoughtful input from the Budget Advisory Committee.

There followed a discussion with Fire Chief Hall about the possibility of the town responding to a bid solicitation by a neighboring town for a newer 4-wheel drive ambulance. Chief Hall outlined the fire department's intent to bid on an ambulance in New Boston, and subsequently update several vehicles at the fire house. He explained that if Greenfield wins the bid for the ambulance, the current ambulance would be retrofitted and used as a utility vehicle and have the capability to hold five people, the current utility vehicle would have the town's brush truck bed transferred onto it and the old brush truck would be decommissioned and sent back to the State. Chief Hall said that he believes that he can upgrade three vehicles this way for the price of what the department was looking to spend on a brush truck alone, in 2016. The rationale for this upgrade program, beyond the eventual update of the badly needed brush truck, is that the current ambulance is used daily and New Boston's truck has been carefully maintained and is much better condition than Greenfield's ambulance. At the conclusion of the conversation, Chief Hall stated that he was wanted to have the Selectboard give him the go-ahead for the plan. The Selectboard and the BAC agreed that the plan sounded good.

The Chair made a motion to authorize the Fire Chief to inspect the New Boston ambulance and to find out the requirements for the bid so that the Town of Greenfield would have the opportunity to bid on the ambulance. Selectman Atherton seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.

Next Selectman Marshall made a motion to support the library foundation project and to include the library foundation warrant article in the 2017 budget. Chair Charig Bliss seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.

Selectman Atherton made a motion to support the 2017 ConVal budget as presented by School Board representative Steere. Selectman Marshall seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.

Lastly Selectman Marshall made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Chair Charig Bliss seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0 in favor.

Selectman Marshall asked if the Board would approve adding “Old Business” items to the Consent Agenda, similar to the way that old business items were tracked on the old agenda. The Board was in agreement (consensus) that old business items should be tracked on the consent agenda and asked Town Administrator Patt to make that available.

Adjournment

The time being 9:37 pm, Selectman Marshall moved to adjourn. The Chair seconded. All were in favor, and the motion carried 3-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:37 PM. The minutes are final when approved and signed by the Selectboard. A signed copy is on file in the Selectboard’s office.

Chair, Margaret Charig Bliss, Selectman, Stephen Atherton Jr. Selectman, Robert Marshall