

TOWN OF LAKEVILLE
Joint Selectmen's and Finance Committee Meeting
March 8, 2011 - 7:00 PM

On March 8, 2011, the Board of Selectmen held a meeting at 7:00 PM at the Town Office Building in Lakeville. The meeting was called to order by Chair Yeatts at 7:03 PM. Selectmen present were: Selectman Yeatts, Selectman Maksy and Selectman Olivier. Also present were Rita Garbitt, Town Administrator, Cynthia McRae, Town Accountant, and Christine Weston, Recording Secretary. Cindy Dow was recording the meeting as representative of the Middleboro Gazette.

Ms. Garbitt explained that she had recently met with officials from the MBTA regarding the railroad tie replacement. At that meeting it was conveyed that at the end of March, Lakeville commuters will be bussed to Bridgewater for transport to the train. We found out today that this will actually begin on Monday, March 14th. This information has been posted on the Town's website and will also be in The Middleboro Gazette. The estimated time of completion for this project is the summer of 2012. There will not be any alternate transportation during the weekends, only during the week. Lakeville is not affected by any grade crossings.

Meet with Department Heads to review their FY12 Budgets

The Finance Committee was present for the discussion. Members present included: Donald Healy, Norman Orrall, Michael Petruzzo, Melissa Hopkins, and Edward Bunn. Mr. Petruzzo called the Finance Committee to order at 7:03 PM.

Board of Health – Robert Poillucci

Chair Yeatts asked about the increase in hourly wages for Clerks. Ms. Garbitt said this was an increase due to a step for the new clerk. Chair Yeatts asked about the increased amount in the Training Line. Mr. Poillucci explained that the new clerk has been in the position for about a year and a half and needs to go to more classes for training since the Office Supervisor will be retiring soon. Also, William Garvey has indicated that he will be leaving soon, so Mr. Poillucci needs to take some additional training classes. Chair Yeatts understood the postage increase. Mr. Poillucci explained that next year the amount for postage should be coming down since they are changing the way they handle the dumpster permits. Chair Yeatts asked about the advertising costs. Wouldn't the applicants be responsible for these costs? Mr. Poillucci explained that when the Board of Health changes a regulation or a fee, a legal advertisement needs to be put in the paper. Chair Yeatts noted that printing costs are up also. Mr. Poillucci explained that the printing costs are for letterheads and forms. Chair Yeatts noted that the costs are up in the Office and Professional Supplies category. Mr. Poillucci explained that the office has been trying to hold these costs down. The major cost is a toner cartridge for one (1) of the printers, which cost \$500. The office has been working with supplies from the previous year; however, this ink cartridge is needed. Ms. Garbitt explained that she had spoken with the Board of Health personnel about using the network copier more often and to only use the laser printer for letters.

Mr. Bunn stated that they had a 4% increase in their budget. Discussion then took place on the step increase and why it was so high. The reason was the employee was told when she was hired in January of 2010, she was told she would receive a step increase as of July 1, 2010. She did not. She is due for another step increase of 43 cents per hour on July 1, 2011. This position was a 40 hour position, but was reduced to a 30 hour position. Chair Yeatts explained that the Assessors' Office and the Town Clerk's Office are still short hours. If hours are coming back to a position, then they will probably go to the places where the Town needs to take the money in. Mr. Poillucci stated that Jean Spaulding, Middleborough Board of Health, knows that her department does not cost the Town anything. She sets the fees to make sure of that. Maybe that is what the Board of Health should be doing here as well. Chair Yeatts explained that the Town has raised the fees, then the State raised the fees, then there are taxes on everything. Mr. Bunn stated that if there is a way to increase a revenue source, then the Finance Committee would like to hear any recommendations that Mr. Poillucci may have. Chair Yeatts asked if Ms. McRae could run a revenue and fee report. Ms. McRae responded that she would. Ms. Dow stated that if she is paying taxes to have these services, and then has to pay fees to use the services, then she is paying twice so why pay real estate taxes?

Selectman Maksy asked about the regionalization efforts being led by the Town of Middleborough. Mr. Poillucci responded that if that works out there may be a lot of savings there for the Town. Lakeville should receive money for the grant to be written, but then the Town still has to be picked from the grant pool. Ultimately, there will be a lot of overlapping between the Towns and various aspects can be taken out of the budget or reduced. Chair Yeatts stated that Lakeville is already realizing some savings utilizing the nursing services from Middleborough.

Selectman Olivier explained that the Departments were asked for a budget with no increase in wages, but we did not say anything about steps. If the budget is level funded, then the Department needs to compensate elsewhere in their budget. The reality is that there is no money to go around. Mr. Bunn added that the pot of money has shrunk. Chair Yeatts stated that the Town might have to lay people off. Selectman Maksy explained that basically the Board is only concerned about the bottom line, what each Department does inside it is their concern.

Superintendent of Streets – Christopher Peck

Chair Yeatts noted that Mr. Peck's budget was decreasing under the Wages category. Ms. Garbitt stated that it was figured incorrectly at the Annual Town Meeting. It really has only decreased by about \$1,000. Mr. Peck explained that overtime is anything that happens outside of Snow and Ice; anything that takes place after 3:30 PM or on a Saturday or Sunday. Also, Police details are included in there for when a detail is needed, but sometimes he is able to bill this to another party. Under Wages and Personnel, the additional costs came out of the Snow and Ice line, since it was for an emergency employee for use during snowstorms.

Mr. Peck noted that line painting for the streets have not been done in a while. Technically, it should be part of the Highway budget since it needs to be done each year. In the past, Chapter 90 funds paid for it. The State has changed their regulations and the burden has been placed on

the Towns. They did the same with catch basin cleaning. The budget includes cleaning the catch basins twice a year. The \$34,000 should cover the line painting and cleaning the catch basins twice. Chair Yeatts asked why there was a cost of \$1,000 for the annual maintenance of the oil burner. Mr. Peck explained that they burn waste oil at the Highway Barn and have to service the burner once a year. They also use wood so they do not pay for any fuel. With the new EPA/MS4 permit coming up, (Stormwater Permit), the Town will be required to clean the catch basins twice each year, perform water testing, and other items. This includes all of the basins and outlets, street sweeping, etc. The Town needs to plan for it to be proactive. Mr. Peck explained that the telephone bill was higher and that is due to the cell phones. The Department still has a laundry service that maintains the employee's clothes. Selectman Maksy stated that was a nice perk to have, however, this is something that needs to be looked at. Mr. Bunn asked if there was a better deal for the cell phones. Mr. Peck explained that right now, the Department uses Nextel and it is \$25 per phone. This is the cheapest service at this time. There are eight (8) phones on the plan.

Chair Yeatts noted that Office and Professional Supplies went up, however, Grounds keeping Supplies went down. She asked about the Gasoline line item; that may not be enough to get through the year. Mr. Peck stated that he has 14% left in the budget for this year's gasoline and that may not be enough. He will be in deficit and he has not even started the mowing yet. The \$35,000 budgeted for next year is probably not enough. Selectman Maksy stated that the Highway Budget has a 7.6% increase. The Town does not have the funds to sustain that and will most likely be coming back to ask that cuts be made within the budget. Mr. Peck explained that the majority of the budget is the line painting and catch basins. If the Town does not do the line painting, that can be a huge safety issue. If the catch basins are not cleaned out on a regular basis, that will also end up being an immense project. Mr. Peck stated that his budget is bare bones, and he cannot cut anymore.

Regarding the Snow and Ice costs for this season, the Town is going to exceed \$200,000. The brand new truck had a lot of electrical problems that the Highway employee cannot decipher. It has to be serviced at SAV in Wareham. It broke down in February and cost \$1,200 to fix (fuel injector sensors), and then two (2) weeks later the same thing happened. The Fire Department has the same truck and uses the same fuel, so it is not clear what is going on with this truck. It only has 15,000 miles on it. Mr. Peck has spoken with the International Dealer about any of the work being covered under the warranty, and they would not allow it. Discussion then took place about sending a letter to the dealer, c.c. to the Attorney General regarding the facts of the vehicle, etc. Selectman Maksy suggested to get a narrative of what has taken place with the vehicle and to have Town Counsel take a look at it. Selectman Olivier asked about the money received for damage from the flood. Mr. Peck explained that it went towards the replacement of a culvert and fixing the ditch on Pierce Avenue. The culvert required a lot of engineering and Conservation work. The swale will be done this spring. The intent is to rip rap the swale.

Mr. Peck stated that the bad news is that he will be looking for a one (1) ton dump truck, which has been on the Capital Plan for several years. Also, the Town will be mandated to upgrade all the signs in Town to make sure that they are of a certain size and reflectivity. The Town has a year to come up with a plan, and it could be \$10,000 to \$25,000 just to do that.

Inventory needs to be done of all the signs within the Town. By January 2015, the Town will need to replace all stop signs, regulatory signs, etc., then street and overhead signs have to be replaced and in compliance by 2018. It may cost about \$50,000 to \$55,000 to replace all the signs and they have to be breakaway signs. Mr. Peck is presently trying to upgrade all the signs as they become broken or stolen. Mr. Peck will be submitting a Project Needs Form to the State to try and qualify for money for the sign change over. For the Capital Plan, he had put together a pavement management plan for this year. He tries to maintain the crack sealing plan of three to four (3-4) roads a year, which is a cheap repair and increases the lifespan of the road. Precinct Street needs to be leveled prior to the water project. The plan was to do the remainder where the water main is not going, but now the plan is to put it in Bridge Street, Rhode Island Road and Precinct Street. The cost is \$581,000. Any engineering that needs to be done, like for Rhode Island Road, the Town will have to pay for the design out of Chapter 90. He is requesting some local funds for the paving, which will probably get denied. Brook Stone Drive and Carriage House Drive both need to be paved at a cost of \$178,000 to do both roads.

Mr. Peck spoke about the Transfer Station. The only increase is with the Laundry Line and the Highway Department is in a contract with them, so it would cost a certain amount to get out of the contract. There is really nothing to cut. Ms. Garbitt stated that she reviewed the monitoring with Mr. Peck and felt comfortable in reducing it from \$20,000 to \$15,000. Mr. Peck stated that he was able to decrease SEMASS costs by \$3,000 and they are open to renegotiate the contract, however that discussion took place some time ago. With a change in law, there were two (2) options regarding the Clean Air Act, which will be coming into play. The remaining term of the contract is nine (9) years and the first option is better with a \$350 difference. This is based on 1,250 tons going to SEMASS. However, recyclables are up. Stickers are also doing well. Selectman Maksy asked what is left in the retained earnings. Ms. Garbitt stated that she did not know the figure at this time. If the Transfer Station brings in more revenue, then they do not have to use as much of that.

Assessors – Paul Meleedy and Dana Lucas

Mr. Lucas went over the Assessors budget with the Boards. The stipends for the Board of Assessors are the same. The \$16,000 increase is for RRC to maintain the data base. It is a revenue producing tool for personal property. The re-evaluation is typically every three (3) years; this time it is four (4) years out. That expense is budgeted at the Town level. In the interim years, it is budgeted at the Assessors level. The Assessors' Office needs some help in tooling up on defining its commercial values. The Vision Commercial Measure & List is \$5,000 for licensing fees. C&C is the map upgrade service that is done every year contractually. The office will be hiring a service to bring in a third party to help in the commercial area. Mr. Meleedy explained that they look at all the houses and help apply value on the houses in Town. The Assessors would like to utilize their expertise on the commercial end as well. Mr. Lucas added that there is also education to keep the staffing up to date.

Chair Yeatts asked where they are on the eight (8) inspections per day. Mr. Lucas responded that they are not doing well since it is abatement season. The person that does the inspections is doing the abatements right now. Chair Yeatts asked how far behind they were in the inspections? She expressed concern since back in January, they were to begin performing eight

(8) inspections a day. Mr. Lucas stated that they are concerned as well. They have been calling other towns to see if they have retired employees that could help out. Selectman Olivier asked what the issue was. The Board offered them help over a year ago. If they cannot complete the eight (8) inspections a day, that is a big problem. Mr. Lucas then explained that the senior person in their office just resigned and that they would gladly take any help that could be offered. Selectman Olivier stated that he would like to see weekly reports in order to see how they are moving along with the inspections. He inquired what is taking place with the applicants and interviewing for the position. Chair Yeatts suggested that the office seriously consider regionalizing, then they could share staff and expenses with another town. Ms. Garbitt stated that Richard LaCamera has a person in Rochester that handles all the appraisal, evaluations and updates and could provide help to the Assessors.

The Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee restated their concerns on the lack of progress that has been taking place in the Assessors' Office and all of the support that had been offered to them for over a year. Also, they were concerned that the Assessors did not inform the Selectmen that they were not able to meet the eight (8) inspections a day. Mr. Lucas explained that they would welcome help at this time. Selectman Olivier stated that there must be some help available from the State regarding getting the work caught up for the Assessors before fines come into play since timelines are not being met. He suggested that possibly a summer intern be brought in for training and that would be an additional benefit. Further discussion took place regarding specific accounts in their budget with clarification from Ms. Garbitt. Ms. Garbitt and Chair Yeatts will have the person working with the Town of Rochester contact the Assessors regarding providing some additional support. When the Treasurer's Office catches up, a person can be sent over to help providing an additional five (5) hours a week. Cross training within Town Departments is critical in the present economy.

COA Director/Veterans Agent – Marilyn Mansfield

Ms. Mansfield went over the budget for the Council on Aging. There were no major problems or concerns with the budget.

Veterans Benefits

Ms. Mansfield explained how assisting people into the Veteran's Administration system helps reduce the money coming from the Town. 75% of the Veterans money does come back to the Town, but it takes approximately a year to be reimbursed. There were no specific problems or concerns with the budget.

Library Trustees – Nancy LaFave, Olivia Melo, Ruth Gross, and Elizabeth Walters

Ms. Melo reviewed the budget for the Library. The budget that was submitted was to restore the hours of the staff since the Library has to be open 40 hours a week. The money was not allotted in the budget; that was done through State Aid funds. To get closer to full status with the State, the Library has to be kept open a minimum of 40 hours a week. The clerks are working 30 hours and the Library has been open 40 hours since September 13, 2010. A schedule was provided to Chair Yeatts regarding the hours that the clerks work. The Library was not able to

sustain 40 hours a week in July and August. The Library was only open 32 hours a week during those months, so the hours are skewed a little from July 1 through June 30 of this year. Minor discussion took place on the Library budget for explanation and clarification purposes of what has been transpiring over the past few years regarding its certification status and applying for waivers with the State.

Ms. Melo explained that they can keep the summer schedule up through Labor Day; however, they need to change it once the school year starts, as required by the State. The Library had always been closed on Mondays, but a survey showed that people wanted it open on Mondays and another night during the week. The slowest day at the library is Friday, so the Library is closed on Fridays, which works out well since the Town Offices are closed on Friday. The decision was then made to open the Library on Mondays and to open Monday evenings as well. The two (2) 26 hour employees were restored back to 34 hours. This allows another night for various Town clubs and organizations that utilize the Library Meeting Rooms. Ms. Melo said the Fuel expense cannot be anticipated. The Library did well last year with the heating fuel, and it is felt that the company has done well to regulate the heat. The cost may be more than \$9,000 this year. Money was saved in electricity last year since the air conditioning system was not working.

Selectman Maksy asked about the Library tying into the Ted Williams well for water. They may be able to save money there. Ms. Melo responded that she would contact the Park Commission since the water costs seem to have increased quite a bit. The sprinklers are being run on a conservative level, however, it was asked to have them on a little more. They have sensors so that if it rains they do not come on. An increase was requested in the Repair and Maintenance Account since there has been quite a few problems with the HVAC. By August, the cost allotted had already been exceeded. They are working with Bay State Cooling to determine what the problem is. It seems that the wiring is faulty and that is from how the Library was wired originally. It almost seems that the entire Library needs to be completely rewired. It is now known why the compressor in the Meeting Room blew. It had been running constantly for five (5) years. Ms. Garbitt explained that the company that did the wiring for the Library was the low bidder. The Town did not want them to do the work and even approached the State about the company; however, the Town had to take them on as low bidder. The company is now out of business.

Ms. Melo explained what has taken place in order to bring the Library up to the level it needs to be in terms of materials to keep within the State guidelines and to also remain with the Sails Library Network. She explained that the State granted waivers to 121 municipalities. Selectman Olivier stated that he appreciated what was done by Ms. Melo in the budget, however, the current situation with the budget is very critical and the present Library budget shows a 6.3% increase. Selectman Maksy asked if she could provide the Board with a break down regarding the funding from the State. Ms. Melo explained that the Library has to be under the 10% to get a waiver. A self check station was recently purchased for the Children's Room and that should help with some of the business in that area. That helps with one (1) less staff person. Now she is looking to install a similar station in the front. With the increased usage at the Library, more fees are also collected. We are looking at applying for grants through the State, so the Library has to

be in certain programs in order to do that. The Library needs to grow its services to continue to be part of the State program.

Town Accountant – Cynthia McRae

Chair Yeatts stated that it would be good to have someone else to be able to do Ms. McRae's job when she is away. At this time, no bills or payrolls can get paid if she is not at the office. It would be nice to have an Assistant Town Accountant. In absence of that, maybe a stipend could be entertained so that in her absence it would be paid out to the person who is filling for Ms. McRae while she is away. It was noticed that longevity was in the budget twice and Ms. Garbitt will revise this line item. \$38,347 should be the figure.

Ms. McRae explained that the Town is required, due to the Federal monies it has been receiving, to have a Federal audit. The normal audit is \$20,000 a year. That is why there is an increase in her budget for a Federal audit. What takes place is that auditors come in and perform a single audit. They would be looking at the projects that the Federal monies are going towards such as the State Revolving Fund, FEMA, etc. They scrutinize all the expenditures and how they all have been classified. A Federal audit is required when a Town receives over \$200,000 a year in Federal money. Police and Fire Grants are also Federal grants, along with grants to the Schools.

Further information was provided by Ms. McRae about the water billing that will be taking place. Some of the increases are included in her budget so that she can be trained on the computer software that will be necessary to produce the bills for the water. Chair Yeatts stated that a lot of that funding will be coming out of the Water Budget that has been set aside. Another option for the Town to collect revenue is that the Town might be able to solicit people/businesses who would like to put antennae's on the Water Tower for their reception. This would be a good revenue source for the Town. The first couple of loan payments for the Water Tower will come from the Water Enterprise Fund. The other plus is, when the pumping station came in with the master meter, it was found that it meets all of the requirement that Taunton needs for its paperwork/billing.

New Business

Ms. Garbitt asked about the Regional Budget Finance Committee meeting that will be taking place on March 9th. Selectman Olivier stated that he felt that the Board should meet with the Freetown Board of Selectmen. He has provided them with the Town's budget, and the Region also has a copy of the budget. This will help everyone get on the same page to know the amount of funding the Lakeville has available.

Ms. Garbitt stated that the Town needs to put a freeze on any unnecessary spending at this point in the fiscal year. Ms. Garbitt will send each of the Town Departments a letter explaining this.

Upon a motion made by Selectman Maksy; seconded by Selectman Olivier it was:

VOTED: To put a freeze on any unnecessary spending from any Town Department and that any expenses need to go before Ms. Garbitt prior to purchase.
Unanimous in favor.

Ms. Garbitt then handed out updated pages of the budget for the members to replace in their budget books. She also distributed the audit for the School Department.

Chair Yeatts stated that she had had a pretty heated discussion earlier in the day with Jack Healey, Freetown Town Manager, about the levels of the ponds. Mr. Healey wants Lakeville to join him to get the water levels down lower, to have the water pumped out of Long Pond into the Acushnet River, etc. However, right now Lakeville is negotiating a new Intermunicipal Agreement with the City of Taunton. Work is being done to keep the water levels down. Systems are in place of collecting data on the levels of the pond for the past 25 years, each and every day. Even with all the snow that has melted, the levels of the pond are still down a foot. At this time, the pond could take a major event. The recent rain only brought the water level up .25%. Dr. Fennessey has been keeping track of this for years and he also helps other Towns that have ponds issues. It was suggested that Selectman Olivier speak with Larry Ashley regarding keeping the matter un-agitated if he has the opportunity to speak with him prior or subsequent to the meeting tomorrow night.

Adjournment

Upon a motion made by Mrs. Hopkins; seconded by Mr. Orrall it was:

VOTED: To adjourn the Finance Committee Meeting at 10:30 PM.
Unanimous in favor.

Upon a motion made by Selectman Maksy; seconded by Selectman Olivier it was:

VOTED: To adjourn the Board of Selectmen's Meeting at 10:30 PM.
Unanimous in favor.