

TOWN OF LAKEVILLE
Joint Selectmen's and Finance Committee Meeting
March 10, 2011 – 7:00 PM

On March 10, 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 of The Middleborough Gazette was recording the meeting

Meet with Department Heads to review their FY12 Budgets

Members of the Finance Committee present for the discussion were: Michael Petruzzo, Norman Orrall and Edward Bunn. Chairman Petruzzo called the Finance Committee Meeting to order at 7:04 PM.

Building Department - Robert Iafrate

Mr. Iafrate said that he had submitted a level funded budget. He removed the Municipal Hearings Officer from the Building Department's budget, which decreased the budget approximately \$2,500 from last year. The only change is the longevity for his clerk. He stated that he should be at or below target again this year for his budget figures. He has only left about \$5,000 in his expense line item for supplies in his office. Selectman Olivier asked if the total Building Department budget was \$107,542. Mr. Iafrate responded that it was.

Ms. Garbitt mentioned that Mr. Iafrate was going to need a Reserve Fund Transfer of funds for a house that needs to be demolished. Mr. Iafrate stated that there is a house located at 5 Hilltop Acres, which is a structure that is in Tax Title now and is in arrears in taxes. The house is actually falling down. It was tagged about a year ago, and the owner was asked to make it safe, but she does not have the means to do so. This was discussed with Town Counsel, and the matter was taken to Housing Court. The Town received an injunction to demolish the house. The court then removed the injunction and is trying to serve the owner with papers, but they cannot locate her. It will be posted in the paper that the injunction is moving forward and that the house will be demolished. The Town will have to bear the cost of taking the house down. At the present time, it is a public safety issue. Chair Yeatts stated that she would want a pay back for the Town if the Town pays to take the house down or would the Town now own the property. Mr. Iafrate responded that Town Counsel would like the Town to go back to court when this takes place to put a lien on the property. The property is a non conforming lot, someone could probably only put a seasonal home on it.

Chair Yeatts suggested that possibly it may be suitable for a pumping station for the shore front community down the road. Ms. Garbitt said that the lot contains 3,250 square feet. It is not known if the house contains asbestos or lead paint. There is an underground oil tank, and we don't know if there is oil in it. Mr. Iafrate will be having the house tested. Mr. Iafrate stated that a Board survey was done. No one from his office entered the building since it has been posted as

unsafe. He has sought out four (4) estimates to take the house down. The amount of \$7,200 is the cheapest. However, a surgical demolition will have to be done due to the unknown factors of the oil tank, asbestos and lead paint. If any of those factors are found, the costs may double to demolish the house. Chair Yeatts suggested approving up to \$10,000 to have the house demolished. Once it is determined if the house has hazardous materials in it, the Board can make further decisions on what to do. Mr. Iafrate stated that it is an old home of about 70-80 years old. The pipe joints, floor tiles, and mastic might contain asbestos. Once the house is demolished, the site could be filled with gravel and leveled off. Selectman Olivier agreed with approving an amount of \$10,000.

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

VOTED: To recommend to the Finance Committee up to a \$10,000 transfer from the Reserve Fund to demolish the house located at 5 Hilltop Acres.
Unanimous in favor.

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

VOTED: To approve the transfer of \$10,000 from the Reserve Fund to demolish the house located at 5 Hilltop Acres.
Unanimous in favor.

Ms. Garbitt stated that there is approximately \$18,000 remaining in the Reserve Account since the Selectmen approved \$10,000 for the tree removal. Mr. Iafrate informed the Board that there are approximately seven (7) more houses around Town that need to come down as well. The liability lies with the homeowner. However, if the Town is made aware of the condition of the building, then it is the Town's responsibility. There are also a few barns that fell down over the winter due to the amount of snow that was on the roofs. Mr. Iafrate has tried, unsuccessfully, to contact the home owners.

Treasurer/Tax Collector – Debra Kenney

Ms. Kenney took the floor to review her budget. The only change to her budget was that she put more money in postage and in the printing category. The bottom line is the same. \$32,600 is the total expense budget request.

Town Clerk – Janet Tracy

Ms. Tracy took the floor to review her budget. Under the Elections Budget, sub category, Education and Training, there is an increase of \$800. The Assistant Town Clerk is going to school this year to become a Certified Municipal Clerk. The past year, she paid for her schooling herself. She applied for a scholarship and it is not known if she will receive the scholarship or not. Generally, the scholarships are provided the first year, but not for the subsequent years after that. The increase is being asked for in order to allow the Assistant Town Clerk to attend educational and training courses to become certified.

Chair Yeatts asked about the changes that have taken place in the total amount for the Assistant Town Clerk over the past few years since the amounts seem to have changed significantly. Ms. Tracy explained that the changes were due to the increase in the hours. The Assistant Town Clerk is presently working 37 hours and has increased a step. The hours began at 40, and then went down to 35, then back up to 37 hours a week. Selectman Maksy understood that education and training is needed, but the Town needs to see where it is at before allowing that expenditure to take place. He then asked why the money would stay in the line item for printing. The Ted Williams Commissary should be ready for voting to take place there. Ms. Tracy suggested that she would like to keep that money in there just to make sure that the Commissary is finished. The Presidential Primary will take place in March of 2012. If the building is not finished, the Town will not be able to have the primary in the small room that is presently being used. If she had to move the polls, then the money would be in the budget for the printing to do that. Selectman Maksy stated that he would not suggest keeping the money in there since the Town may need the \$3,000. If it does get to the time that the Commissary is needed, and it is not completed, then the Town will find the money elsewhere. That money should be taken out and money left in for education and training only. The Town Clerk's budget, under line item 11622-53440 Elections-Printing, was reduced to \$6,550 from \$9,500.

Police Chief – Frank Alvilhiera

Chief Alvilhiera then discussed his budget. As the result of restructuring, he was able to show a decrease in his budget. The Federal grant will be running out, so there is an increase at line item 12101-51203 Contract Wages Patrolmen. Under line item 12101-51203 Contract Wages-Career Incentive Pay, there is a decrease. The change in longevity is the Chief. Flexibility is needed to bring in part time Dispatchers. Right now the Department is on a reimbursement grant from 911 to pay the Head Dispatcher's salary. The Department has been able to receive that over the past few years. Selectman Maksy asked if two (2) or three (3) part time dispatchers were brought back, would the budget have to be increased. Chief Alvilhiera responded that it would not have to be. There is no clothing allowance for them, so that does not affect the budget. The Dispatchers are similar to an at-will employee when they are called in. There is still an applicant pool from the last time the position was available, however, it should be posted.

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

VOTED: To post for part time Dispatchers for the Police Department.
Unanimous in favor.

Chair Yeatts pointed out that Chief Alvilhiera is running pretty close with the gasoline line item. Ms. Garbitt stated that for several years that line item was at \$60,000 and it is now only at \$40,000. Chief Alvilhiera stated that the patrolmen shut their engines down if the car is sitting idling. The computer systems that are in the cars will not shut down when the car is turned off, unless someone logs off on the computer. The programmable thermostat has helped with decreasing the amount of heat used at the station. A window will soon be taken out in the dispatch area for security purposes, and it is hoped to do something with the duct work to provide air conditioning in there. Chair Yeatts noted that the line item for bullets in the amount

of \$8,200 seemed high. Chief Alvilhiera explained that training had been needed, and they also had to change to lead free bullets. Also, after the first of July the policemen will have to be qualified twice a year and more bullets and ammunition will be needed. Ammunition has not been ordered for a while. He hopes that the costs have not increased significantly. The Department seems to be doing ok with vests. There are two (2) officers that will need vests in the next two (2) months, but they will be covered under the grant.

Fire Chief – Dan Hopkins

Chair Yeatts said that the Fire Chief has requested the appointment of two (2) Call Firefighters.

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

VOTED: To appoint Danielle Poole as a Call Firefighter/EMT contingent upon a completion of a one year probationary period with a term expiration of July 30, 2011.

Unanimous in favor.

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

VOTED: To appoint Kathleen Denneen as a Call Firefighter/Paramedic contingent upon a completion of a one year probationary period and completion of a PAT test with a term expiration of July 30, 2011.

Unanimous in favor.

Chief Hopkins then went over his budget. He explained the incentive pay and longevity. Selectman Olivier asked if the clothing allowance can be taken out. This amount is \$2,000. The Town is looking for every dollar that it can find. Chief Hopkins stated that per the Wage and Personnel Plan, the clothing allowance is to be provided, and the Selectmen did vote on it. However, the Chief will remove the amount from the budget. Mr. Orrall suggested notifying the Wage and Personnel Board that this was taking place. Chief Hopkins explained that the Call Firefighters purchase their own uniforms, so that if they attend a call they will be in proper uniform. Chair Yeatts suggested leaving \$1 in that line item account. Chief Hopkins said that line 51213, Contract Wages-Holiday, Vacation & Leave coverage should be \$105,000, but this could be reduced by \$5,000, to \$85,978.00. Right now the increase to the Fire Department budget was noted to be 1.3%.

On Page 30, Chair Yeatts noted that the gas account is being exceeded this year. Chief Hopkins responded that it was, but he only increased this line item by \$2,000 for next year. Chair Yeatts asked what the Fire Department needed for supplies and fire equipment. Chief Hopkins responded that that category purchases any equipment that is needed such as hoses and pumps. Anything that does not fit into any other category goes into that category. Chair Yeatts asked about the software. Chief Hopkins responded that the new software for Firehouse Mobile on the ambulances is going to a wireless computer. The Department will need a license to set it up; it runs quicker to Comstar. Chief Hopkins stated that he needs to replace the two (2)

pumpers. He is asking for \$50,000 in his Equipment line item category, but that will not be seen in the vehicle list. The 1987 pumper should be replaced before the 1983 pumper. The boat works fine and the Town does not have to put a plate on it. Discussion then took place on the changes needed for the salary accounts and how the matching grant money now needs to be taken back out due to changes in how the State looks at that category. Chief Hopkins spoke on the matching grant that needs to be expended by September. Selectman Maksy pointed out that the Department has to spend \$4,000 to get \$4,000. Chief Hopkins explained that the Department is buying emergency management items. Items that can be used if there are floods again or a snow storm. There is also a criteria with a list of what the Department can spend the money on. With Emergency Management, the Department can use it for just about anything that you can imagine, except for a fire. It has to be for emergency management. It was pointed out that the Town may not be able to spend that amount of money. Chair Yeatts stated for the record, that emergency management and public safety are both important.

Park Commission – Dan Hopkins & Darryl Bernier

Mr. Hopkins said the Park Department will open up Clear Pond with one (1) life guard and the maintenance staff. The maintenance staff will be the directors. Clear Pond will be open 40 hours a week. Selectman Olivier asked what the capital improvements were. Mr. Hopkins responded that it was for the supplies, since the ground keeping expenses increased for fertilizing and putting down grub control. Darryl Bernier added that the new bathrooms also have to be maintained. Selectman Maksy asked if the revenue of \$103,000 will be a wash. Mr. Hopkins responded that it has to be. They have to wait until Retained Earnings are certified though. Mr. Hopkins stated that there is FEMA money to get it up and running. An electrician is needed to look at the water pump. The water at Clear Pond will be tested. It is tested every week in the summer. It was not tested last year since Clear Pond did not open. The well water also has to be tested. Mr. Bernier explained that there is an Eagle Scout with Troop 4 that will oversee all the clean up that is needed at Clear Pond.

Selectman Olivier asked where the money for the earth removal project at Ted Williams Camp will be going. Ms. Garbitt responded that it has to be appropriated. She then located the warrant article to explain how this is done. The money is to be used to expand recreational facilities and to repair facilities. Slips will be turned in by the truck drivers each day when the gravel is being taken out. There will be someone on the Park staff to watch the trucks. Ms. Garbitt stated that a short term BAN may be needed. Mr. Hopkins stated that the proceeds from the gravel removal will directly pay the note off. This was just voted Tuesday night at the Park Commission meeting and just submitted today to Ms. Garbitt. Mr. Hopkins stated that the Lakeville Development Corporation (LDC) is running out of funds. There is a lot of work that everyone would like to do, so that by next year everything will be complete. The permit from Natural Heritage has not come in as of yet. Natural Heritage has not heard from Audubon, however, they will not hold the permit up and will write a contingency in the plan. Ms. Garbitt said a BAN will be needed to finish the project. The Town can pay the ban off ahead of time if the money from the earth removal starts coming in. Town Meeting needs to transfer the funds into the Park Commission budget to do the project. The Town will have to borrow the money for the year and use Free Cash to pay off the BAN while waiting to have the Free Cash certified. Mr. Bernier stated that the Town does not want to lose the Old Colony students who are working

on the Commissary building since they are accomplishing a lot. Chair Yeatts stated that when the Commissary is done, it will be revenue generating.

Mr. Hopkins stated that during the winter the pipes on the heater at the Commissary burst. An emergency heating system had to be installed. The building had to have heat so that none of the other pipes burst. The system was \$25,000. The LDC will pay half and the Park Commission will pay half. Twelve (12) lights and two emergency exit lights are needed. A representative from Granite City will be coming out to explain what the best lights will be for the inside and outside of the building. The LDC money is running low fast and the price for the lights is not known. There is enough money to do the heat, but not the lights. All the electricity is there, the labor is free with the students from Old Colony. The flooring will not be ready for Elections. A committee meeting needs to take place to decide what will be done for the flooring. Money is just needed for the light fixtures. Ms. Garbitt stated that there is about \$8,000 left in the Reserve Fund. Chair Yeatts asked if \$2,400 would be enough. Ms. Garbitt stated that if the amount for the lights is over \$3,000 then she would want three (3) bids. Mr. Hopkins stated that he would solicit three (3) bids.

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

VOTED: To allow the Park Commission to have up to \$3,000 from the Reserve Fund for the lights for the Commissary building and that when the money is available it will be paid back to the Town.
Unanimous in favor.

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

VOTED: To approve the transfer of \$3,000 from the Reserve Fund to the Park Commission for lights which will be reimbursed back to the Town when funds are received.
Unanimous in favor.

Miscellaneous budgets

Ms. Garbitt then spoke on the Conservation Commission budget. Their budget is funded through fees. The Conservation Agent moved a step this year. The Historic Town House is level funded. Selectman Maksy asked about the water service for the Town House. Ms. Garbitt responded that they are on the same sprinkler system as the Library. They could also be connected to the Ted Williams Camp well. Mr. Bernier explained that there is a line to the Tennis Club from the Ted Williams Camp well, which was shut off. The pump is being upgraded for the fields and lacrosse. It will have to be zoned to the pump with a valve, and it would cost about \$500 for the valve. He explained that it should be able to be done, however, he will have to take this back to discuss with the Park Commissioners. Selectman Maksy stated that the Town is paying \$4,000 to the City of Taunton for the Library and Town House water for the sprinkler system, and he would rather see it put towards the pump for the Town.

Ms. Garbitt pointed out that on page 49 is the Historical Commission is a budget of \$500. This is used pretty much for office supplies, dues and subscriptions. The rest of the budget

pretty much all falls under the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Petruzzo asked about the Historic Library. Ms. Garbitt explained that there were leaks which needed repairs, so maintenance was increased \$500. The budget was re-arranged based on what the actual costs were. There is the ADT alarm, Verizon, etc. Discussion then took place on the water that is provided to the Historic Library. Ms. Garbitt said the Town does charge them for the water.

Ms. Garbitt distributed the updated and corrected budget worksheets for the Highway Department, the Accountant, and the Assessors. A new summary page was also distributed. Selectman Olivier then spoke on the budget. He stated that some Department budgets came in on target and some came in over. There is \$191,063 deficit right now. The Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee need to vote on a balanced budget and need to get the budget there. Chair Yeatts stated that it is only March 10th and she does not want to rush the Board of Assessors. She would like a chance to review the budget again since all the information was just received. Selectman Olivier explained that the problem with this year's budget is having the Local School moving into the Region's budget. There will be a meeting next Wednesday where the two (2) Local School Committees, the Regional Finance Committee and the Regional School Committee will be looking at a menu of items that need to be cut from the budget. It is very important that the local budget is nailed down as much as possible so that everyone is very well aware of the amount that Lakeville can provide to the Region. It is important to get down to a final number. Chair Yeatts stated that she is not ready to vote a balanced budget tonight. Ms. Garbitt stated that she felt that transportation could be leveled at \$160,000 and give the Region an additional \$708,000. The Region could be told that the Town is at a deficit of \$200,000 and would like to give more, but cannot.

Selectman Olivier stated that the Town was close to zero, but now is at a \$191,000 deficit. Ms. Garbitt pointed out that the School Committee has not voted on a budget yet either. Chair Yeatts suggested that the Board of Selectmen have a meeting with the Freetown Board of Selectmen to discuss particulars of the budget. Selectman Olivier stated that the amount that needs to be decreased for the School Department is \$2.8 million, time is running out and the budget needs to be done by the end of March. Discussion then took place on some of the options that have been heard about to try and reduce the budget by the School Department. Ms. Garbitt suggested that Selectman Olivier report at the meeting next week that the Town is trying to remain level funded in the amount of \$708,000. Mr. Bunn stated that he would like to know more about the \$2.5 shortfall and what it is comprised of. Structurally we need to think about that. We are going to the bone here. That is not going to the children, this is for compensation. We are actually taking a hard look at the supplies and ammunition for the Police Department, and we need to send that message. Our job is also to support our budget, as theirs is to support theirs. As bad as it is this year, it will be worse next year. He wanted to say that for the record. We need to aggressively look for alternative ways. We will wind up at the 11th hour with a closed elementary school. This is the time for drastic measures. It is incumbent upon us to bring this to the table and make sure we are getting to the cause of everything, and he thought we are cutting the kids. Chair Yeatts stated that she does not mind squeezing the money out if it is going to the kids. Selectman Olivier stated that at the last meeting of the School Committee, it was asked to vote to have the union reopen the contracts and it got defeated.

Ms. Garbitt will contact Larry Ashley to get some dates for the Boards of Selectmen from both Towns to meet together.

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

VOTED: To adjourn the Finance Committee meeting at 9:45 PM.
Unanimous in favor.

At 9:32 PM, upon a motion made by Selectman Maksy; seconded by Selectman Olivier, on a unanimous roll call vote, the Board:

VOTED: To enter into Executive Session to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel and to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Fire Department because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Board and not return to Open Session.

Polled vote of Selectman Olivier – aye, Selectman Maksy – aye and Selectman Yeatts – aye.