

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Joint Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee Meeting**  
**April 22, 2008**  
**7:00 PM**

On April 22, 2008, 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 Chairman Evirs at 7:25 PM. Selectmen present: Selectman Evirs, Selectman Maksy and Selectman Yeatts. Also present: Town Administrator Rita Garbitt and Recording Secretary Christine Weston.

Gary Mansfield called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 7:25 PM. Members present: Gary Mansfield, Mike Petruzzo, Steve Olivier, and Melissa Hopkins.

Also present: Town Accountant Cindy McRae.

**Review FY09 Budget Summary**

Ms. Garbitt distributed a letter from the Park Commission stating that the Lakeville Park Commission is aware of the financial budgetary issues within the Town. Due to these constraints, the Park Commissioners are willing to reduce their requested General Fund Subsidy from \$55,000.00 to \$45,000 for FY09. The budget that was distributed for the Park Enterprise Fund reflected the reduction. Selectman Yeatts stated the good news is that there may be a sale on the last lot in the Industrial Park in the amount of \$300,000. The purchaser will move the stumps and put in a culvert in the middle at their own expense. The LDC (Lakeville Development Corporation) owes the town \$35,000, and the rest of the sale proceeds will be used to defray the costs of renovating the Commissary Building.

Ms. Garbitt reviewed the revised Revenue Summary. Since the meeting with the Regional School Committee, Estimated Receipts has been reduced to \$2,552,744. The SBA (School Building Authority) payment in the amount of \$200,000 for the school roof has been included. The letter of approval has been received. The reimbursement must be received before the tax rate is set. \$2,500 was added from the Cemetery Trust income to fund the Cemetery Commission's budget. The current deficit is \$30,000. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the funding of a Police Officer for another year by National Development and the Federal Cops Grant. The \$75,000 grant was disbursed over a three (3) year period in the amount of \$25,000 a year with the condition the Town fully funded the position in the fourth year. National Development covered the balance of the cost of the Officer including health insurance benefits education, and overtime for the three (3) years. National Development funded the position for the fourth and final year in the amount of \$70,000. The grant was applied for assuming the National Development Project would have been completed in 2005, and the additional Officer would be needed. The overtime and staffing of the Police Department was reviewed, and there was discussion on how the position will be funded going forward.

Ms. Garbitt reviewed the revised Expense Summary. The Assawompset budget amount has not been changed, but the Regional School Assessment was reduced by \$171,000 after the meeting with the Regional School Committee. Special Needs is level funded at \$762,000, but there is a shortfall this year that will have to be funded at the Special Town Meeting along with the gasoline expense for the Police Department. The tuition for Bristol Aggie has been increased for two (2) students. The tuition has gone up, and the School Department submitted only six (6)

students at the lower tuition so it had to be increased. June 10<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for students to notify the School if they are going to attend. There might be a Special Town Meeting after July 1<sup>st</sup> because there is a petition being circulated for rezoning a parcel of land on Main Street from residential to business. The Town pays the tuition for Bristol Aggie on a quarterly basis, so if we want to reduce the budgeted amount by two (2) students, we could fund it at the Special Town Meeting if we had to. The cost of a Special Town Meeting was discussed. The only expenses involved are the legal advertisement and Town Counsel which would be approximately \$1,000 to \$1,500.

The stipend for the Town Moderator was reviewed. Ms. Garbitt said that she spoke with Gordon Goodfellow about eliminating the stipend for the Town Moderator. He said he agreed with it. By eliminating the stipend, the health insurance benefit would be eliminated. Selectman Maksy stated for the record, when we talked about this before, I thought we were bringing it up on the 28<sup>th</sup>. He did not see anyone here, and we told them that we were going to speak on that on the 28<sup>th</sup>. If Mr. Goodfellow gives it up, the next person down the road may want it. Chairman Evirs said he personally did not care. A \$150 job should not allow for a \$15,000 benefit on top of that. Selectman Maksy stated that personally he did, but at the last meeting we had we said to the Elected Officials that we were going to talk about it on the 28<sup>th</sup>. He was uncomfortable talking about it until the 28<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Evirs said what we agreed to was to come back on the 28<sup>th</sup> to discuss 75/25 health insurance contribution rates for part time Elected Officials only. The budget is the budget. It has nothing to do with the actual people themselves. That is voted at town meeting. We are talking about the stipend for the Moderator tonight, and he brought up the fact about the health insurance. That is why Ms. Garbitt and he have recommended that we reduce that \$150. It is not a budget breaker and that individual does not mind. We should have had a budget voted on by now. Selectman Maksy said this is you and the Town Administrator proposing the stipends. This was not initiated by the Board of Selectmen. He has already said a few times that he was not interested in looking at this. Chairman Evirs said then you can hold your vote tonight. Selectman Maksy stated he wanted to hold Mr. Goodfellow's vote also. He just wants to make sure that he knows that Mr. Goodfellow understands what is going to happen.

Assessor Janet Black stated she did not think it was right when there is not any big cut on other personnel. We are talking cutting the people already on the Board by 50%. Ms. Garbitt stated she thought the Board should vote to increase the stipends back to \$10,000 so that a budget could get approved tonight and so it could be printed for Town Meeting. Mr. Olivier said he recalled discussions with other towns, and Lakeville surpassed most of them. There have been increases in stipends over the years. This will not be affecting the medical coverage. It is only the stipend. We should be where other towns are, more in line with them since they are feeling the same pain as we are. We cannot leave this alone. Other departments are asking for more money, and we are not giving it to them. Selectman Maksy said they are getting 2% every year. Mr. Mansfield said this is not full time positions or employees. It is a stipend. For most of the towns, these positions are volunteer positions, and they are not paid. We are exposing the Town to the insurance if someone holds this type of elected position for six (6) years. Then they get this benefit of \$15,000 a year when they retire, and that could even increase. Selectman Yeatts stated that is for an elected position. Mr. Mansfield stated even still, someone voluntarily ran for the office. No one twisted their arm. Selectman Yeatts said we said we would discuss this on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Evirs said we can increase the stipends, but we need a balanced budget tonight. We will need to take \$15,000 out from someplace else.

The following motion was made by Selectman Maksy and seconded by Selectman Yeatts:

MOTION: To leave the Board of Selectmen's recommendation as it was of \$10,000, \$10,000, \$10,000 without making any cuts, and if Gordon Goodfellow wants to cut his stipend, then the Board would like to see a letter on that.

Mr. Mansfield stated that this is a budget, and it can always be changed as pointed out at Town Meeting. As people looking out for the town, we have supported this cut in the past since it is the right move to make. It is wrong to make other cuts, but this is a stipend and this is a motion that is wrong for the town. He would be opposed to going back to the \$10,000 and rather leave it at the \$5,000. Chairman Evirs said he owns a business in private industry which is quite a bit different than the Town. With a private business, the owner takes less so that the personnel still get all that they were promised. In the Town, we are the elected people, and his opinion was that he only has \$4,000 to contribute. Each Elected Official would be donating half of their salary to maintain the employees. It is a difficult thing. He does not need the \$4,000 if it means taking it from someone else, so he would like to amend the motion to \$6,000 for the Board of Selectmen. If you two choose to work at full salary, then that is your choice. Selectman Maksy stated his motion stands. He does not want to amend it. My whole thing is that we said we would discuss it on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Evirs asked where will the \$15,000 be taken from. Ms. Garbitt stated the position in the Treasurer's office was not restored. The recommendation to reduce the stipends is for only one (1) year. Mr. Olivier said we are in a tough financial situation. If you are going to ask people to make changes, then you need to show the Town that you are going to step up and make sacrifices yourself. You still get the insurance and half of the stipend, but the insurance is worth more. So he agreed with Mr. Mansfield. It shows great leadership, and it will pave the way to have other things happen in this Town like we want them to. Ms. Black stated that this is a minimum pay for the Elected Official position. We already have trouble getting people to run for the offices, and we need professional people. We do not use Town Counsel to take cases to court. She did not think they were giving them a vote of confidence. You need to think of what kind of people you will attract to these positions if you are taking the money away.

VOTE taken: Two (2) in favor and one (1) opposed, so the motion carries.

The following motion was made by Chairman Evirs stepping down and seconded by Selectman Maksy, it was

MOTION: To amend the Board of Selectmen's budget by reducing by \$4,000 so the Chairman receives no pay for one (1) year.

Selectman Maksy stated that he would like to talk about it on the 28<sup>th</sup> to understand the ramifications. Chairman Evirs said there are no ramifications. It can all be discussed and amended. Selectman Yeatts stated that we can have you say that on the 28<sup>th</sup> and it might be better received then than now.

VOTE taken: One (1) in favor, two (2) against , so the motion fails.

Selectman Yeatts stated that she had a question about the \$5,000 reduction in the personnel for the Selectmen's Office, and she did not think that she agreed with it. There was a brief discussion about the coverage for the office. Selectman Maksy discussed the Plumbing and Gas Inspectors for the Building Department. He would like to try and combine those position since those inspections could be done by one (1) person in one (1) visit. He is waiting for Bob Iafrate

to get back to the Board with information about this. We could cut down the visits to each job. With New England Rental, the Plumbing Inspector came in one day, and the Gas Inspector another day. It did not affect him, but the Town had to pay twice.

Ms. Garbitt reviewed the revised Debt Service based on the new principal and interest payments. The budgeted amount for Employee Benefits keeps changing. Open Enrollment for Health Insurance was held on April 15<sup>th</sup>. Some employees switched from the PPO Indemnity Plan to HMO which was a savings of \$3,114 for each family plan. The FY 09 premium for the Harvard/Pilgrim HMO increased 18% and the premium for the Network Blue HMO increased 6%. Ms. Garbitt is hoping most of the employees that have Harvard Pilgrim will switch to Network Blue which is actually a better plan and has a \$500 dental rider. There could be a \$60,000 savings. There was further discussion about restoring the \$5,000 in the Selectmen's part-time clerk position and the stipends if other revenue became available. The budget deficit is \$15,150. There was further discussion about other employee benefits and working with the unions.

Upon a motion made by Selectman Yeatts and seconded by Selectman Maksy, it was

VOTED: To reduce the stipend in half for the Board of Selectmen's stipend for one (1) year to \$5,000 for FY09, and then determine what other Boards are considering on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Also, to inform others that the rest of the money would otherwise have to come out of the Stabilization Fund.  
Unanimous in favor

Mr. Olivier stated the Selectman could say, since they are Elected Officials, they are doing this because it would not be prudent to take it from the Stabilization Fund.

After a discussion about health insurance benefits, upon a motion made by Selectman Yeatts and seconded by Selectman Maksy, it was

VOTED: That the Board of Selectmen would be willing to do a 75/25 contribution effective July 1, 2008 for health insurance benefits, if it is legal.  
Unanimous in favor

Upon a motion made by Mr. Olivier and seconded by Mrs. Hopkins, it was

VOTED: To accept the budget with the \$5,000 taken back from the Board of Assessors and the Board of Health as well as the reduction just made by the Board of Selectmen and changes made to Estimated Receipts and to Bristol Aggie tuitions to get a balanced budget, therefore, balancing the budget and not needing the \$10,000, and to also cut the Town Moderator's stipend by \$150.  
Unanimous in favor

The difference between the Finance Committee's recommended budget and the Selectmen's recommended budget was \$10,150.00.

Upon a motion made by Selectman Yeatts and seconded by Selectman Maksy, it was

VOTED: To balance the Board of Selectmen's budget by reducing Employee Group Benefits by \$10,150. To also approve the Budget Summary as presented with the changes to Estimated Receipts, the reduction in tuition for two (2) students at Bristol Aggie in the amount of \$89,940, the reduction of the Board of Selectmen's stipend to \$5,000 for FY09, and to restore the stipends to the Board of Assessors in the amount \$5,000, the stipends for the Board of Health in the amount of \$5,000, and the stipend for the Town Moderator in the amount of \$150.  
Unanimous in favor

Additional discussion took place on the long and short term debt.

**Any other business that may properly come before the meeting**

It was decided to post a meeting for the Board of Selectmen for Monday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM which will also include the Finance Committee.

**Adjournment**

Upon a motion made by Ms. Hopkins and seconded by Mr. Petruzzo, it was

VOTED: To adjourn the Finance Committee meeting at 10:20 PM.  
Unanimous in favor

Upon a motion made by Selectman Yeatts and seconded by Selectman Maksy, it was

VOTED: To adjourn the Joint Meeting of the Board of Selectmen at 10:20 PM.  
Unanimous in favor