

**SELECTMEN'S MEETING**  
**Monday, May 11, 2009**

On May 11, 2009, the Board of Selectmen held a meeting at 7:00 PM at the Library Building in Lakeville. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Maksy at 7:00 PM. Selectmen present were: Selectman Maksy, Selectman Evirs and Selectman Yeatts. Also present were: Rita Garbitt, Town Administrator, Tracie Craig, Executive Assistant and Christine Weston, Recording Secretary.

Finance Committee members present were Gary Mansfield, Chairman, Melissa Hopkins, Michael Petruzzo, Jim Hanlon, and Steve Olivier. School Committee members present were Charlene Shea, David Goodfellow, David McQueeney, Lorraine Carboni, and Aaron Burke. Also present: Laurie Hunter, Assawompset Principal and Louis Rodrigues, Acting Superintendent.

Chairman Mansfield called the Finance Committee to order at 7:00 PM.

**Request from Glenn Chistolini for modification of Earth Removal Permit travel route**

*Glenn Chistolini was present for the discussion.* Mr. Chistolini stated that right now the trucks are traveling down Highland Road to County Road. He would like to have them travel down Highland Road to Route 105 to get to T. L. Edwards. The trucks will still be going to T. L. Edwards, but he would also like the trucks to be able to go to Route 140. K.R. Rezendes is doing the hauling. It is hopeful that this project will be done in two (2) months. Selectman Yeatts and Selectman Evirs stated they were in favor of the change in the route of travel for the trucks.

Upon a motion made by Selectman Yeatts; seconded by Selectman Evirs it was:

VOTED: To approve the change of route of travel for Glenn Chistolini's Earth Removal Permit. The trucks will take a right on Highland Road to County Street and then turn left onto Route 140 to exit Lakeville or take a left onto Highland Road, then a right onto Bedford Street down to the T.L. Edwards plant.  
Unanimous in favor.

**Request from Park Commission for One Day Alcohol License**

Chairman Maksy said the Park Commission is requesting a One Day All Alcohol License for May 13, 2009 from 3:00 PM to 11:00 PM. This is for the funeral reception of Tyler Trahan, the Freetown soldier that recently passed away.

Upon a motion made by Selectman Yeatts; seconded by Selectman Evirs it was:

VOTED: To approve the request for a One Day All Alcohol License at the Ted Williams Camp on May 13, 2009 from 3:00 PM to 11:00 PM for the funeral reception of Tyler Trahan.  
Unanimous in favor.

Ms. Garbitt noted that the flags are at half staff in memory of Tyler Trahan. They will be raised up on May 14, 2009.

### **Meet with Finance Committee to discuss FY10 budget**

Chairman Maksy stated that the dialogue this evening should be between the Finance Committee and the Board of Selectmen. At the end of the meeting, there may be time for questions for those in attendance.

Selectman Yeatts said out of a \$21,504,603 budget, 73% of the costs are fixed. So if we are anticipating a shortfall of \$1 million, then we need to cut that amount out of the remaining \$5.8 million budget that is not fixed. Originally, our revenue estimates were down by \$500,000, however, it seems that it will be more like \$600,000. The Net School Spending for the Region went up \$390,000. So that makes up the \$1 million shortfall. Some expenses that we cannot control went up, like gasoline, heating fuel, and electricity. The Town Accountant estimates that the Town will have \$175,000 in Free Cash. We have also added to Estimated Receipts the money we will receive from the Kensington Court Development. The project is a 40R and for every unit that is occupied, the Town gets \$3,000 in one time funds. We have added a conservative number of \$250,000. That was money that was allocated originally to Debt Service. However, we are now adding this money to Estimated Receipts, since the Town is in such a bind this year. Mr. Hanlon asked about keeping a running tab on what should have happened so that down the road if we have money, we can put it where it should have originally gone. Selectman Evirs said we are taking one time money to balance the budget and this is dangerous. Perhaps we could show it in a different fashion. Further discussion took place regarding this.

Ms. Garbitt said she was using the House budget for the revenues from May 5<sup>th</sup> and that is something that could change tomorrow. The House balanced their budget on a billion dollars less for the whole year, so the Senate is using a billion less. Mr. Mansfield said we are looking at 2009 and revenues are still down \$150,000. Selectman Yeatts said our transportation costs have gone up again at the Region by \$66,228. To balance the budget, we will have to be able to do 20% cuts. The Local School Committee has voted to move the fourth grade back to the Assawompset School. Therefore, the 20% cut has been taken at the Local School level. The Town has also asked the Regional School Committee to give some money back to the Local School. We have verbally heard back that the answer is, no way. Mr. Mansfield said in FY09, the Regional Transportation budget was \$121,679. It has increased to \$245,585 for FY10. That increase seems abnormally large. Ms. Garbitt explained that it is not that the transportation has actually increased that much, the reimbursement from the State has decreased. Mr. Rodrigues said contractually the expense increases each year. Ms. Garbitt stated that the Town has eight (8) students this year attending Bristol Agricultural School, compared to four (4) last year. These numbers could change if the additional four (4) freshmen students decide not to attend. Selectman Yeatts said she was a little nervous about the tuition for Special Needs at \$737,837. This could change drastically as well.

Selectman Yeatts said some Departments had their budgets cut drastically two (2) years ago. The Treasurer/Collector's office lost a person and has not replaced that position. We would be

looking at a 5% cut of \$10,900 out of the \$218,000 budget. This is where our revenue comes in, so we need to keep this office running. Selectman Evirs said last year, the Elected Officials agreed to take a 50% cut on stipends as a one (1) time thing. He did not think we are out of the woods yet and he didn't think the stipends should be restored to 100%. We are asking others to take level funding and cuts. The Elected Officials should look at perhaps taking a cut in the stipend again. We thought this year would be better, however, it is worse. Selectman Yeatts said people that took a cut across the board have already helped out. There were no layoffs last year. This year layoffs are inevitable. We took a 50% cut in our stipends last year and a 20% cut this year, so she thought that would be fair. Mr. Mansfield said the Elected Officials got an increase and he felt this should be adjusted down as well. Selectman Evirs said this is a \$12,000 increase when all the stipends are combined. Chairman Maksy said Elected Officials helped last year, why penalize them again this year.

Ms. Garbitt said the Town Clerk's budget actually has four (4) budgets within it: the Town Clerk's salary, the Town Clerk's office budget, Election Budget and Registrars' Budget. All four (4) total \$123,527, so the 5% cut is \$6,176. She stated that the Assistant Town Clerk is cross trained for the Treasurer's Office to assist in that office during busy times. Selectman Yeatts said the Conservation Commission took a \$5,000 hit in 2008, and their budget was \$16,500. There is only one (1) part time agent in that Department. They are not making it, so their budget was increased to \$13,100. They will institute additional fees to cover this increase. Selectman Yeatts said a 10% cut was made to the Town Office/Fire Station Budget. Ms. Garbitt said these cuts will probably affect the network and computers since that is the only place it can be taken from. Selectman Yeatts said part time secretaries will have to be cut. In the Board of Selectmen's Budget, the cut is \$24,554. That is a 10% cut. Ms. Garbitt said we did not go line by line to look. We looked at the total and assigned a percentage to be cut. The Department Heads will have to decide how to allocate the money they have been allotted. Selectman Yeatts said the Police Department was cut 20%. That means a loss in personnel.

Selectman Yeatts said we cut the Fire Department 10% because we do not want to lose the ambulance service, which brings in revenue. The Animal Shelter took a 10% cut of \$8,884. If we talk about an override, we will have to re-address Public Safety since some shifts may not be covered at the Police Station. Selectman Yeatts said under Public Works, the Highway Department was cut 15%, which will hurt. Mr. Mansfield said the Highway Department is one of the critical Departments of the Town. There is a small staff there. He hoped that cut will not mean that there will be no plows or sanders out on the road for a storm.

Selectman Yeatts said the Town can under fund Snow and Ice, along with the Legal and Special Education budgets. The Town is up to approximately \$180,000 for Snow and Ice and had only budgeted for \$40,000. This will have to be made up at the Special Town Meeting, if possible. Selectman Yeatts said the Council on Aging was cut by 20% or \$27,882. That will probably affect the van service, which is a reimbursable expense. Selectman Yeatts said the Library was cut 20% in the amount of \$55,264. The Library will lose certification. Ms. Garbitt said the Town will lose some State reimbursement on this also. Nancy LaFave, Library Trustee, said they would be applying for a waiver from the State. Selectman Yeatts said that the Park Department was cut 44%. Ms. Garbitt said they most likely won't be able to open Clear Pond. Ms. Garbitt said they need to know the actual number, the sooner the better for them. Selectman

Yeatts said we will have a later discussion about funding the Park Department at zero. Especially if the Highway Department is losing people who mow the grass for the Park Department. Selectman Yeatts spoke about the renovation of the Commissary Building. Hopefully that will attract more rentals. It is hoped, that at some point, the Park Department will be able to be self sufficient like the Transfer Station.

Selectman Yeatts said with these reductions, we have ten (10) layoffs between the Town and School Departments. The Town now has to budget for Unemployment and that is estimated to be \$440,000. However, nine (9) family plans and one (1) individual plan have been reduced for employee group benefits (health insurance). Selectman Evirs said the Town also has to pay 65% of an employee's Health Insurance when it lays someone off. Mr. Hanlon thought there were going to be more layoffs. Selectman Yeatts said we want to look at cutting hours instead of laying people off. Selectman Yeatts said the Town has to start funding GASBE 45, so we put \$5,000 in there to show good faith. We have reduced that to \$1,000. Our actual liability estimate is \$17 million or \$2 million a year. Mr. Olivier said the longer you put this off, the harder it will be, and it is a huge liability hanging over the Town right now. Ms. Garbitt said a new actuarial will be done since the health insurance contribution rate changed to 75%-25%, so it might be slightly lower.

Selectman Yeatts said in regards to raises, there were some Departments that did not figure in raises. She felt it should be either a wage freeze across the board or no raises at all. The raises have been left in for now, and then we will figure out what it will be if there was a wage freeze. Mr. Mansfield said there are approximately 75 Town employees with approximately 40 non-union employees. The Town really has no control over the unions, unless the contract is opened. If only the non-union employees are on a wage freeze, we will only save approximately \$43,000. It is important to point this out. To have a substantial impact on the budget, we have to work with the unions as well. Mr. Mansfield said the Reserve Account should have, at a minimum, \$100,000, and we only have \$50,000. The Stabilization Account has a balance of \$460,000, and we should have at least \$1 million.

Selectman Yeatts said this is a balanced budget, more or less. However, we do have to go back and look at a few areas. We can talk about an override, but we have to go to Town Meeting with a balanced budget. As Mr. Mansfield alluded to, if we did a wage freeze for the non-union personnel, and we asked the Fire and Police Unions for a wage freeze, we would realize a savings of \$77,000. Selectman Yeatts read a letter into the record to be sent to the Fire and Police Unions regarding discussing a wage freeze. Mr. Mansfield said he was personally in favor of the request, but had not discussed it yet with the other members of the Finance Committee. Selectman Yeatts said this is just about sending a letter, and the Board of Selectmen need to vote on this. Selectman Evirs pointed out that a wage freeze includes a longevity freeze. Selectman Yeatts said that would be more than \$77,000. Ms. Garbitt asked what about steps. Are they frozen as well? You will have to stipulate that then as well. Mr. Mansfield said you need to specify and give a definition of what it means. Mr. Olivier said the cost of living raise, longevity and steps are all part of this, and it all needs to be clearly defined. Chairman Maksy said we cannot dictate to the Unions. This is simply asking them to open their contracts to discuss this. Further discussion took place on the topic. Selectman Yeatts said that Attorney

Mason was very exact on the wording as it was, but she would go back and discuss the letter with him. We are at a minimum looking at a wage freeze for non union employees.

Upon a motion made by Selectman Evirs; seconded by Selectman Yeatts it was:

VOTED: To authorize Selectman Yeatts to discuss changing the language in the letter with Attorney Mason.  
Unanimous in favor.

Selectman Yeatts said there has been discussion about an override. She believes that a \$500,000 override is needed. It will not restore the budget, and it will still mean laying people off. She did not want to decimate the budget so much that we cannot provide services, but \$500,000 and perhaps another \$100,000 from a wage freeze, would mean \$600,000. She did not think she would vote for anything more than \$500,000. Chairman Maksy said perhaps \$800,000 would make things so that we can still survive and are not crippled. Selectman Yeatts said next year we are looking at a little more increased revenue. For a \$1 million override, with an average home being priced at \$357,000, the increase to taxpayers, for just the override, would be \$208. For \$500,000, it would be a little more than \$100. Then you would add the 2.5% tax increase allowed under Proposition 2 ½. Mr. Mansfield said he did not think that number is sufficient looking forward to next year. We are using one time revenue for the 40R. Selectman Yeatts said they will be building another 100 units next year, so the Town will have additional one (1) time revenue from those units. Mr. Mansfield said we are trying to make up a deficit for this year. With the increase to the Region, he did not think \$500,000 will return enough money to the Local School. He believed we have to look at a higher figure for the override. Selectman Yeatts said she was looking at what we can get to pass. Chairman Maksy said if we are going to go forward with an override, we should go for the amount that will let us get to the level we need to or not do it at all.

Selectman Evirs said he is looking at a budget that is \$1.6 million short and \$500,000 does not go very far. We would be doing this again next year. The State is \$1.4 billion short on their revenues. They did not meet their anticipated revenues on April 15<sup>th</sup>. New car sales are down and that affects our Excise Tax Revenue. We do not get to participate in a tax for hotels since there are no hotels in Lakeville. Our anticipated increase in the meals tax is not much. Every budget is at a bare minimum, except the Elementary School. Selectman Yeatts said we are \$1.7 million over Net School Spending for Assawompset for FY09. Mr. Mansfield said we also have to look at the quality of life in Town. We are at a point that we need to go to the public and find out what quality of life they want. We can come up with an amount and find out if that is what the Townspeople would like. However, \$500,000 is not enough to solve the problems, and he does not want to go through this again.

Mr. Olivier said he did not think that is the right way to go. You are asking taxpayers to give 2 ½ % and to continue on ponying up more and more. We have to change how we are doing business to sustain what we will do in the future. These cuts show the taxpayers we are doing what we can. Further discussion took place on the matter. Chairman Maksy said we could put different amounts on the override and one could fail and one could pass. Chairman Maksy said we would need to have a contingency budget for Town Meeting. Ms. Garbitt said the Board

needs to determine what Departments you would want to restore. Mr. Mansfield recommended that the Finance Committee and Selectmen meet again to discuss a contingency budget. Chairman Maksy requested that the Finance Committee attend the Selectmen's meeting on Monday evening.

David McQueeney, Chairman of the Lakeville School Committee (LSC), said he would like to clarify a few things. The LSC voted a level funded budget. We have to have a budget in the area of \$5 million to keep the 4<sup>th</sup> grade in GRAIS. Additionally, we have been planning for the other percentage cuts. We did vote to move the 4<sup>th</sup> grade back to Assawompset so that people can start planning. We only voted it for that purpose and to give direction to the Administration. We started this meeting explaining that we had only \$5 million of funds not fixed. With a \$1 million shortfall, you have decided to cut from the Local School Budget and that means an increase in class sizes. There will be 700 kids in a school for built for less than 550. Class sizes will be approximately 30 students per class. It also means that a building designed for 700 students will have only 250 fifth graders in it. We are leaving a beautiful building only partially occupied to go back to the Assawompset School. That is absurd. With full Regionalization, this would not be taking place, so it is imperative to fully regionalize our schools as soon as possible. \$500,000 is grossly insufficient. That is what we need in our budget alone. What we are saying this evening is that a 10% cut is a reasonable number, but that would move the 4<sup>th</sup> grade back to Assawompset and basically leave a vacant GRAIS. A \$1 million override is absolutely essential. We handed out layoff notices last Friday to 26 people.

Chairman Maksy said he thought that the consensus was that \$500,000 is not enough. Aaron Burke from the LSC said he would like to expand on what Mr. Mansfield said regarding the impact of these cuts. One of the reasons people want to come to Lakeville is not only for its great schools, it is also for the municipal services. These cuts would not cut to the bone, but would sever the head. If the services fall to a point where people do not want to move to Lakeville, it will affect the Town. It is a balancing act, but you should try to consider the concept of the long term damage of not funding enough money. Selectman Yeatts said we are not the only Town that is facing this. Maria Perrone Martin of Cedar Drive said she agreed with Mr. Mansfield about keeping the quality of life in Town. She urged the Board to come up with a good number and keep the quality of life in Town. The burden should not be on just the non-union employees to save the Town. It should be the burden of the entire Town. Selectman Yeatts said she wanted to be careful because if the number is too high, the voters will come out in droves to vote it down. Kim Borges of Baker Lane said she agreed about the high number. She hoped that we could go to Town Meeting with maybe two (2) numbers. There are only 25 of us here tonight, but there will be more residents at Town Meeting, so we need to make them aware of what will take place depending on the number. Tanya McCluskey of Baker Lane said she was concerned that we are not separating necessities from luxuries. We could live without Clear Pond and the Library, but not with a child not being able to read. \$500,000 is not enough, but to vote for a larger amount, she would need to know that a fair share will go to Assawompset. Chairman Maksy said for the first year, the budget would reflect where the money is going. After that, the money goes into the General Fund.

Michael Day of Johnson Drive said he would like to make note of the additional apartments near the Train Station. When you include all the commuter rail traffic, the Route 105 traffic and

the new apartment development and we are going to cut Police and Fire, this will create problems. Selectman Evirs said before we would allow the 40R to continue, they had to complete the horseshoe connecting Commercial and Riverside Drive. The Route 79 relocation will go out to bid in June. That includes the widening of Route 105. There are plans for traffic lights at the end of the ramps of Route 495. There will be a total of five (5) sets of lights when it is all said and done. Discussion occurred regarding the Kensington Court Development. Sherry Barron said people are looking to preserve the School, Police, Fire, and Highway Departments. Many Towns are in the same situation, but have passed overrides. You need to be positive and take the high road on what we need. This is your job. Frugal is not what people are looking for; they want a quality of life of what they are used to. Selectman Yeatts said there are only 25 people in this room. Even if there were 100, there are 6,000 voters, and we have heard from a lot of people that they are not voting for an override. We really need to be careful on the amount. If it is too high, it will not pass. Mr. Olivier said we need to change how we do things.

### **Adjournment**

Upon a motion made by Selectman Evirs; seconded by Selectman Yeatts it was:

VOTED: To adjourn at 10:00 PM.  
Unanimous in favor.

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

VOTED: To adjourn the Finance Committee at 10:00 PM.  
Unanimous in favor.