

**SELECTMEN'S MEETING**  
**Thursday, March 26, 2009**

On March 26, 2009 the Board of Selectmen held a meeting at 6:30 PM at the Town Office Building in Lakeville. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Evirs at 7:02 PM. Selectmen present were: Selectman Evirs, Selectman Maksy and Selectman Yeatts. Also present were: Rita Garbitt, Town Administrator and Tracie Craig, Executive Assistant.

Finance Committee Members present were: Gary Mansfield, Chairman, James Hanlon, Michael Petruzzo and Melissa Hopkins. The Finance Committee called their meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

**Meet with Department Heads regarding FY10 Budgets**

Board of Assessors

*Janet Black, Paul Meleedy, Chairman, and Dana Lucas are present for the discussion.* Mr. Meleedy said their budget was pretty much in line with what they had presented before. Mr. Mansfield asked which number did they use. Mr. Meleedy said the recommended budget the Finance Committee is proposing. Ms. Garbitt said this will be the first rounds of cuts. Is there anything you can do without? Ms. Black thought the fuel number looked kind of high for the building. Perhaps they could work on lowering that number. Ms. Garbitt said fuel for buildings and electricity under the Town Office budget was based on the number of gallons used last year and a 5% increase in electricity. Chairman Evirs agreed that the number seemed high to heat that building. Ms. Black noted the windows are not energy efficient and are covered in plastic. They are looking at installing digital thermostats. Ms. Garbitt said there is a brand new furnace. Chairman Evirs said most of the day people are just on one (1) floor. Selectman Maksy said it might be cheaper to put in a separate zone upstairs. Chairman Evirs asked if the building is air conditioned. Ms. Black said there is a wall unit. Ms. Black said she has had a discussion with Vision Appraisal. They reminded her that they did not charge the Town for the website last year. She thinks this fee might go down. Selectman Maksy said at the last meeting you talked about this being one of the first things to go. Mr. Meleedy said they don't want this to go. Ms. Black said it helps keep questions to the personnel down. Ms. Black said they are going to have to do personal property inspections soon. Summer residences get billed for their furnishings, businesses and farms for their equipment. We are trying to figure out how we are going to do that without adding personnel. Ms. Garbitt asked if this is done every year. Ms. Black said it is a nine (9) year cycle. Ms. Garbitt said a lot of the area communities have come together for regionalization and assessing is one of the topics. Ms. Black said they would like to use in house staff. We need to develop a program first.

Chairman Evirs said your wages are about \$115,000. If you close one day, that is a savings of \$22,000. Ms. Black said they were thinking of extending hours Monday through Thursday. Chairman Evirs said cutting the on line services would put more work on the employees. Ms. Black said certifications are getting harder and getting worse. We've always hired out the personal property service, and we are trying to keep it in house this year. Mr. Mansfield asked about raising fees. Ms. Black said they will raise the copy charges. Ms. Garbitt said the law

says the maximum you can charge is \$.20 for copies. Mr. Mansfield asked if they could charge for personal property inspections. Ms. Garbitt said no. Selectman Yeatts asked if you closed one (1) day, would you be able to cut \$20,000? Ms. Black said they could perhaps close on Friday afternoons. They would need to see how the work load goes.

Chairman Evirs said last year, the elected officials agreed to cut our stipends. Level funded means that our stipends are funded from the previous year, which is ½ like last year. Otherwise you are taking \$5,000 from some other line in your budget. Ms. Black said the Assessors put in an awful lot of time for this job. They have court cases that they have to take days off from work. They have a brand new staff and not an abundance of office staff salary for what is done. Mr. Mansfield said the Finance Committee is unpaid and sometimes it's almost a full time job. Most people choose these positions to serve the community. The trend is to either eliminate stipends or cut them to a minimum. Selectman Maksy said last year we talked about this, and he thought it was a one time thing. We honored that last year, now we need to go back and look at this again. This is not level funded; it was a one time thing. Ms. Black said she did not see anyone else taking pay cuts last year. Chairman Evirs said everyone can have their interpretation of level funded. His interpretation is level funded; you have the same amount of funding the previous year, wherever that goes. If you reach that bottom line, then you are level funded. It means that you are taking that money from somewhere else. Selectman Yeatts said all the part time elected officials came into this with the rules being what they were. She gave up a paying job with the Town to be a Selectman, which she could afford to do with the stipend. She needed to think about her definition of level funding. Mr. Mansfield said the stipend has changed from previous times. Now a stipend, when you add in the insurance, it's a \$20,000 to \$25,000 commitment on the part of the Town. There are ramifications that go beyond the immediate one. Ms. Garbitt said that she wanted the Assessors to be aware that the Selectmen did vote the health insurance contribution rate raise to 75/25%. Chairman Evirs said the Assessors should take the new recommended number, and we will probably need you to surrender some additional money. Try not to get rid of the services that will increase the workload on your staff. Having people work less hours might be the better solution.

### Board of Health

*Jennifer Turcotte was present for the discussion.* Ms. Turcotte said that a 10% cut from a level funded budget is easier to swallow than 20%. However, they can live with what is being proposed. Ms. Garbitt noted this budget was different than what was submitted previously. Ms. Turcotte said a 20% cut would be a reduction in staff, education and training. Chairman Evirs said you cut your Part Time Health Inspector. If your Health Agent is out, now you have no one to fill in. If you maintained that position at one (1) day a week and cut ten (10) hours a week from your Assistant Clerk, you still have the Clerk working 32 hours and maintain that back up person to the Health Agent. You realize close to the same amount in cuts, but you aren't crippling yourself and can accommodate the Town's needs. Ms. Turcotte said the Part Time Health Inspector was brought on board four (4) years ago when we were really busy. Larry Perry, Health Agent, was doing more percolation tests than anything else, and we were getting a huge backlog of plans for review. Right now, percolation tests requests are down. If there were inspections that needed to occur, it was something that could be rescheduled. We could look at cutting the hours back to the clerk as well. We thought it was the most efficient way to reduce

the cost without eliminating the services. Selectman Maksy asked if Board of Health members could do inspections. Ms. Turcotte said yes. Chairman Evirs asked if tomorrow morning the Health Agent calls in sick, will someone be on site at 9:30 AM to witness a percolation test. Ms. Turcotte responded that she would go out to the test.

Discussion occurred regarding the bottom line number. Chairman Evirs felt there was still work that needs to be done on this budget. Ms. Garbitt said if something has to go from the level funded budget, they are saying it is the Part Time Health Inspector. Chairman Evirs said you are cutting your nose off to spite your face. You have money invested in the Part Time Health Inspector. If you reduce a full time clerical person and maintain the Part Time Health Inspector, you have not lost any of your investment. There might be a disgruntled employee because you cut some of the hours back, but you will be able to still provide services. If you think you can do away with him, why is he still employed. Ms. Turcotte said when the economy turns around, we will be here requesting that position back. Chairman Evirs said if you cut that position, you may not get that individual back, and it will cost you more to retrain someone else. You should be looking at cutting clerical hours. Chairman Evirs said we need a 10% cut from the budget. Chairman Evirs said the Board of Health should also look at ways to generate additional revenue. He is concerned with the commercial haulers that do not use the Transfer Station, which is lost revenue. You should look at that and come up with a greater fee to charge them, which they will pass along to the customers. That would make it more attractive for residents to use the Transfer Station. Mr. Mansfield said all Departments that have the ability to assess fees should review their fees annually.

Discussion occurred regarding in-state travel. Selectman Yeatts asked why did the in-state travel go from \$300 to \$5,000. Ms. Turcotte said they are way over budget on in-state travel, which is gasoline for the Health Agent. Chairman Evirs said we have a Board of Health vehicle. Ms. Turcotte said in the past the vehicle has been unreliable. Ms. Turcotte said it was her Board's understanding from Mr. Perry that it has broken down a few times, and he is uncomfortable driving it. Chairman Evirs said if it not safe, we need to repair it or replace it. Ms. Garbitt noted that under the Board of Health gasoline account, they budgeted \$4,000 and only \$299 was used in the Board of Health vehicle. In-state travel covers if someone uses their personal vehicle to attending meetings, parking, etc. Chairman Evirs said Mr. Perry should be using the Board of Health vehicle if it is available.

Ms. Turcotte said they had reduced the Animal Inspector's salary. They had previously increased their stable fees and the Animal Inspector brought in \$8,000. They felt comfortable cutting the Visiting Nurse. Chairman Evirs asked the Board of Health to take another look at the Animal Inspector.

### Town Clerk

*Janet Tracy, Town Clerk was present for the discussion.* She spoke on the Elections budget first. Looking at that budget, there really is no where else to cut. Election officers cannot be cut back anymore. If we have more elections than predicted, she would not have enough to pay the poll officers. She cannot cut the printing because that is for election ballots. Under the Town Clerk's budget, she added \$100 to the printing expense for additional dog licenses because there

are more dogs. She cut money from registration and contracted professional services. That is used to print the street listings. Postage is going up and they have to mail the absentee ballots. She might be able to cut some from Registration Officers. Other than that, there really isn't any other thing to cut. The majority of her budget is wages. Cutting 10% means she has to cut the Assistant Town Clerk ten (10) hours. Ms. Tracy said she really needs a full time person. The Assistant Town Clerk not only works in her office, but helps in the Treasurer's Office as well since she is short staffed. We have the 2010 census coming up that will require lots of work. Mr. Mansfield said the Town Clerk's Office is one of the Departments that do not have a huge budget with areas to cut. He asked if the numbers that we recommended are numbers you can live with. Ms. Tracy said she could. Chairman Evors asked what would happen if you closed a day. Ms. Tracy said that would be difficult to do. If she were short staffed, she would have to close to the public. Chairman Evors asked if your office was closed a day, would you be able to get the rest of your work done. Ms. Tracy said she would still work 40 hours. We already take work home for the census. You can't do that during the day at work. She said during election time, there is a lot more work, so she would have to work more. Chairman Evors said we would have to factor into the budget, say like ten (10) weeks, there would have to be someone there five (5) days a week.

#### Treasurer/Tax Collector

*Debra Kenney, Treasurer/Tax Collector, is present for the discussion.* Ms. Kenney said as long as she doesn't lose a position, she will be fine. She has already lost one position two (2) years ago on a temporary basis and has not gotten that position back. Ms. Mansfield asked how many employees she has now. Ms. Kenney said she has three (3) full time (one is the payroll processor) and the Assistant Town Clerk floats back and forth because she is cross trained. Chairman Evors asked Ms. Kenny if she could close the office one (1) day a week and keep the business of the Town going. Ms. Kenny said that would impact the public being able to pay their bills. Her office has a ton of foot traffic. Chairman Evors said we may have to close the whole building one (1) day a week. Selectman Maksy said Ms. Kenney should look at on line payment of bills. Ms. Garbitt said at first, banks were charging municipalities for this service, but they have stopped. Ms. Kenney said on-line payments are not perfected yet. She would like to wait for it to be perfected. Mr. Mansfield said he has an issue with cutting staff and closing the office. Basically you are saying to the staff you can do 40 hours of work in 32 hours. If that's the case, we could stay open and cut someone's hours. There is no savings if you cannot do the work. Chairman Evors said the Departments we have been talking to all have a window open to the public that is taking away time from work they can be doing. Mr. Mansfield said he has no problem closing the window, but we are asking staff to do 40 hours of work in 32 hours. Chairman Evors asked Ms. Kenney on a four (4) day week with the window open, can you get all your work done. Ms. Kenney responded probably not, so the window would have to be closed to catch up on the work. There are 12,000 excise tax bills and everyone thinks they are being overcharged. Four (4) times a year we have to do real estate tax bills. Chairman Evors said we may have to rely on the website to get more information to the public.

Ms. Kenney said she has saved money on the postage machine, payroll, insurance and one (1) position. She doesn't mind giving more, but she was not going to let her employees that are working harder because we lost a position not take their raise. Selectman Maksy said we are

just giving suggestions. We want you to get back to us with your ideas. Chairman Evirs said take this budget as a working document and try to find some cuts. Not all Departments will be able to cut the same amounts. Ms. Kenney said every source of revenue for the Town goes through our Department. If you want timely cash processing so that the money is earning interest, you need to consider that. Selectman Maksy asked if she could charge back any Departments for processing. Ms. Kenney said she could charge the Board of Health because we do all their WPAT septic loans and the School Department for school lunch, school activity programs. Selectman Evirs said it is one thing to charge an Enterprise Account, but to charge other Departments is charging ourselves. Chairman Evirs asked Ms. Kenney to see if she could review her budget and see if she could help out wherever.

#### Council on Aging/Veterans Agent

*Marilyn Mansfield, Council on Aging Director & Veterans Agent, was present for the discussion.* Ms. Mansfield said that a 10% budget cut would mean a 50% reduction in her part time clerk and the Senior Center would only be opened four (4) days a week. The 20% would mean the Senior Center would be closing one (1) day a week and an 88% reduction for clerical staff. The van would run three (3) days instead of five. Selectman Maksy said they are trying to get her budget to \$133,000. Ms. Mansfield said she has a part time fill in clerk and a 32.5 hour clerical person. Chairman Evirs said she has \$8-9,000 in the budget for the part time fill in clerk and \$36,900 for the 32.5 clerk. To get to 10%, you would cut half of the \$8-9,000 for the part time fill in clerk. Selectman Maksy asked if any of this would affect any of her reimbursements coming in. Ms. Mansfield said it will definitely affect the van. We get 100% reimbursement for the van. Chairman Evirs said why do we even want to consider cutting a service that is 100% reimbursable. Ms. Mansfield said it's either that or she would have no staff. Selectman Maksy said he thought there was enough to put \$7,000 back to the van and still meet our goal. Ms. Mansfield said she had just received these numbers. She said they turn the heat down at night and weekends. About 15 minutes before a group comes in, they turn the heat up. We have turned off the exterior lights and replaced them with sensor lights.

Chairman Evirs said this budget has \$12,000 taken out of this. He thought Ms. Mansfield did a great job on her budget. There are so many things that this Department gets reimbursed for; we don't want to cut those. You have to remain open to get those 100% reimbursable services. Selectman Maksy said this budget is at \$133,000 and he doesn't know if anymore can be cut. Chairman Evirs noted there was an extra \$2,000 in gasoline from last year. Perhaps that can be cut back to \$5,000. Ms. Mansfield said if she went over, she could move it around in her expenses. Chairman Evirs asked about the heating expense this year. Ms. Garbitt said year to date, it is \$1,240 but Roby's bills are way behind. It was decided to budget gasoline at \$4,000. and adjust the heating expense line.

Regarding the Veterans budget, Ms. Mansfield feels she will be approximately \$4,500 short this year. She just picked up three (3) cases. Anything that is under medical or fuel expenses is 75% reimbursed the following year. Chairman Evirs asked about the fuel expenses. Ms. Mansfield said it is a flat \$250 a month benefit, but it is reimbursable. Selectman Maksy suggested reducing this line. Ms. Mansfield said she is in a deficit this year for fuel, 75% over the budgeted amount. Selectman Maksy said this expense is like Snow and Ice; we don't know

what this will be. Ms. Garbitt said during the year, this budget's total line cannot go in a deficit, Snow and Ice can. Selectman Maksy asked how do we make up this year. Ms. Garbitt said we will have to transfer money at the Special Town Meeting.

### Historical Commission

*Nancy LaFave, Gerry Taylor and Joan Morton Gladu from the Historical Commission are present.* Ms. Taylor said the Historical Commission has no staff. Their budget includes \$10 in postage. They subscribe to one (1) magazine that has gone up to \$100 for the year (Gravestone Association). The total budget is \$500. Ms. LaFave said if you are taking 10% from everyone else, you have to take 10% from us. We will make up the money from donations amongst the members. It was agreed to cut \$50 from the Historical Commission budget.

### Town House

Ms. Taylor said they spent about \$70 in electricity so far and still have three (3) more months to go. They had \$400 budgeted for electricity. She feels they typically spend about \$100. This year we split the water service expense with the Library. The water budget was \$1,609, which was \$310 over. Chairman Evirs suggested not irrigating quite as long. Ms. LaFave said the sensor tells us if it rains and we only irrigate when it's needed. They have to have water in the line for the cemetery. The irrigation is on a timer. Ms. LaFave said the problem is the sun is on the lawn all the time, there is no shade. Ms. Garbitt said there is \$19.63 in the water budget left for the rest of the year. Ms. Taylor said the Town House account is used to repair the Town House. Paul Macuch just did the painting and restoration for \$3,300 and we still have to do the trim work and the chimney needs to be repointed. We had an inspection with the Building Commissioner and Deputy Fire Chief and they asked for some more work to be done. Ms. LaFave said the estimate for the trim was \$1,390, and we may have to do some flashing work done.

Chairman Evirs said in the past, we have discussed about charging a fee for the use of the Town House. Should we discuss this again? Ms. LaFave said we are usually talking about local groups consisting of residents. Once in a while, a group will use the Town House for a yard sale and make a donation to the Historical Commission. She would prefer having groups do a service in kind for them. Ms. LaFave said they would prefer to ask P.O.L.L. for money than ask for a fee. Chairman Evirs said we will take \$500 out of their budget, hopefully to take some out of electricity and some out of water.

### Library

*Nancy LaFave, Betsy Walters, Ruth Gross, Library Trustees and Olivia Melo, Library Director, were present for the discussion.* Ms. Melo said with a level funded budget, we should be okay. None of the Library staff would get the 2% raise. There is an increase in longevity. Ms. Garbitt said you can't exclude your Department from the 2% raise, so you need to put that back in. Mr. Mansfield asked how many employees were at the Library. Ms. Melo said there are two (2) at 30 hours per week and two (2) at 20 hours per week. Every other Saturday they work, so she eliminated the Saturday work. Ms. Melo said she was going to hold off turning on

the air conditioning as long as possible and open the windows. We are going to try to be energy conscious. Selectman Maksy said we need to make some cuts, and it might not be 10% for your Department. Mr. Mansfield asked about the minimum hours the Library had to be open for certification. Ms. Melo said 40. In the summer, we are open 36 hours. Whenever you have 10,000 people, you must be open 40 hours. You don't use the Federal census. We budgeted the four (4) hours on Saturdays in the summer. She questioned the water bill. It should have been half of the Town House. She has tried not to use it that much. She learned how to run the system from midnight to 7:00 AM, fifteen minutes per zone and there are 24 zones. Selectman Maksy said that is one of those things you pay for that you can do without. Ms. Melo said every measure has been taken to make sure that we are not wasting water. She will not turn the waterfall on this year and will cut repair and maintenance to buildings and grounds. We had a lot of expenses regarding heating and air conditioning. We are now working with a local company so we don't get charged mileage. Standish will have to come in and reinstall the air conditioning compressor. Other contracted services she can reduce to \$3,500. Ms. Garbitt did not recommend cutting the maintenance contract. A discussion occurred regarding cost of copies from the public copiers. Ms. Melo said approximately 30% of the copies are probably the Library's. We use that money to supplement our office supplies and cleaning supplies. Chairman Evirs suggested raising the cost of copies to 20 cents.

Ms. Melo said the Library has generated quite a bit of revenue over the past two (2) years. Ms. Melo said ideally 16% of the budget is supposed to be for materials; they are up to 14%. She makes up the difference with money from the Friends of the Library. Chairman Evirs asked if she could operate with less staff and maintain the certification. Ms. Melo said we would maintain certification, but would have to drop services. We will only be able to check in and check out books. On Saturdays we have five (5) people on and it's very busy. We could probably close on our slowest afternoon, which is Friday. Ms. LaFave said they had the same number of staff as at the old Library. Ms. Melo was looking at making one of the 30 hour people 20 hours and they will eliminate services. Mr. Mansfield said we all want to keep the Library certified. Ms. Melo said she was prepared to work with whatever number she is given. Selectman Maksy said if we reduce the budget by 10%, we will cut \$18,000 in materials and will lose \$16,000 in reimbursement, but we will still be ahead \$2,000. Certification is killing us. Ms. Melo said we would have to present our case to the Library Commission. Selectman Yeatts said the Library cannot take a 60% cut and the other Departments take 5%. Chairman Evirs said he wants to maintain certification. Would the Friends of the Library step up and volunteer? Ms. Melo said presently they perform about 60-70 hours a month of volunteer time. They cannot help us at the circulation desk due to personal information access.

### Cemetery Commission

*Kenneth Upham from the Cemetery Commission is present for the discussion.* Ms. Garbitt noted that the Cemetery Commission revenue comes from the expendable interest from the Cemetery funds. Mr. Mansfield said the Cemetery Commission has done a great job with the cemetery on Route 79. Mr. Upham said they are taking the loam from the Transfer Station. We had seed donated. In Clark Cemetery, they will replace granite posts, which are being donated. Clark will have a new fence and the signs are all being repainted. Chris Reed is helping with backhoes and spreaders. Ms. Garbitt said the \$2,500 is coming from the Cemetery Expendable

Interest Trust. This does not come out of the Operating Budget. They would like to do some extra things in 2010. They do have about \$22,000 in expendable interest from Perpetual Care that they can spend. We have to increase Estimated Receipts; he feels that they will sell around 20 lots. The Cemetery Commission instituted a fee of \$600 for the burials. We have to pay the vendor \$500, so they make \$100 on each burial. Mr. Upham said they are estimating that Perpetual Care will earn \$6,000. He said they have over \$77,000 in monies that people have not paid. Some of these bills go back to 1972. Discussion occurred on how to clean up the unpaid balances on the books. Mr. Upham said last year was the first time in a while we had plots available for sale. He anticipated \$25,000 in revenue for FY10. He is asking for a \$22,000 budget.

### Adjournment

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

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 10:49 PM.  
Unanimous vote.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Hanlon, seconded by Ms. Hopkins, the Finance Committee:

VOTED: To adjourn their meeting at 10:49 PM  
Unanimous vote.