

# Town of Hampton



## TOWN OF HAMPTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN October 19, 2009 Minutes

PRESENT: Richard Griffin, Chairman  
Richard Nichols, Vice Chairman  
William Lally  
Richard Bateman  
Gerald Znoj  
Frederick Welch, Town Manager

6:00 PM

Chairman Griffin called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and introduced the members of the Board.

### SALUTE TO THE FLAG

#### I. Peter Chapel, NH LGC – Health Insurance

Peter Chapel from LGC explained that each year at this time the new rates for January renewal groups are determined. The Board of Directors met on Wednesday and set the rates. He would like to give the Board an idea at how they arrive at the rate. There is a methodology to how the rate is set and Mr. Chapel went through the process with the Board. The increase for Hampton for 2010 is 13.7%. The increase for the whole January pool is higher and this is because of the increase in claim activity. There was a discussion in regards to the fact that Hampton choose in 2001 to have a two year period to look at claims when calculating the rate as opposed to a one year period of claims. If the Town would like to switch to a one year cycle the rate increase would be 10.4%. If the Town chooses to do this they cannot switch back to the two year cycle for a minimum of five years. The renewal goes into effect 1/1/10 so the Town would have to make a decision by that date as to whether or not they are interested in changing to a one year period. Mr. Schwotzer would suggest that a decision be made sooner than later for budgeting purposes.

There was an additional discussion as to how things are negotiated through Anthem and the fact that LGC provides a large number of contracts to Anthem.

#### Discussion

Mr. Nichols wonders if the average increase for January was 15.7% what was the average for July. It was 20.5% but this pool is higher and has a different cycle.

Mr. Nichols wonders if there is any way to tell what portion of the rate increase is linked to utilization and what portion is linked to increases by providers. There does not appear to be a

way to determine this according to members from LGC. They do believe that it is primarily related to utilization.

Mr. Nichols questioned why the cost of a family plan is up to around \$25,000 when Massachusetts is supposedly the highest and a family plan only cost around \$14,000. One reason for this could be that many of the plans in NH are much richer benefit plans. There was a discussion in regards to copayments and coinsurance. The only way to bring a premium down is to increase the copayments including prescription copayments.

Chairman Griffin wonders who makes the plan choices for the Town and it was answered that the Collective Bargaining Agreements make the selection.

There was an additional discussion as to how cost can be reduced and the many different plans and copayments and how they can help reduce the cost.

It was also brought to the Boards attention the additional savings that the Town receives by having multiple types of insurance coverage through LGC.

Mr. Lally clarified that by changing to the one year alternative the rate increase would drop from 13.7% to 10.4%.

Chairman Griffin thanked them for coming.

## II. Public Comment Period

Martha Williams, 175 North Shore Road, is here to see about getting High Street Cemetery mapped. She just started working as a volunteer for the Historical Society. In this day and age she thinks that this information should be available on a computer. She would like advice as to how she can go about getting this done. The information is currently available on index cards and there are plenty of volunteers to put the information into the computer software but would need to use the Town Hall to do this.

## III. Announcements and Community Calendar

Mr. Znoj attended the Harvest Festival and it was a very nice affair.

Mr. Bateman announced that on October 14<sup>th</sup> Eva Katherine Bateman was born and everyone is doing well.

Chairman Griffin apologized for not announcing the event that Skip Webb sponsored at the James House. He did attend and it was wonderful.

## IV. Appointments

1. Matt Shaw & Tom Harrington, Cemetery Trustees, & Danny Kenney, Cemetery Director.

Mr. Kenney first would like to thank the Fire Department for assistance with a water leak at his home the other night. He would also like to clarify that he does have heat in the building at the cemetery however it is not used very often since there is not money in his budget.

Questions on budget:

Mr. Znoj noticed that part time wages are up about \$11K over last year. Mr. Kenney pointed out that being one of the 25 largest cemeteries in the State they are the only one with a budget under \$150,000 and with one fulltime employee. He spoke about part time wages and the lack of them

and the fact that they are not going to be able to do any fall cleanup. He presently has 3 part time employees but this number fluctuates especially in the spring before Memorial Day. There was a discussion to fuel cost and it depends on how much it snows as to how many gallons of gasoline are burned. In regards to equipment replacement he is hoping to buy new mowers next year. Also this year some money was paid out of supplies that should have come out of equipment because it was for parts for the lawn mowers. Mr. Shaw expressed how conservative Mr. Kenney is when it comes to purchasing equipment.

Mr. Nichols has been on the budget committee for the past 3 years and does understand what a low budget Mr. Kenney has to work with. The only comment he would make is that it is a 14% increase of a small budget and he would just encourage him to look at things that might not need to be done anymore and maybe use those funds to purchase a new lawn mower. Some examples given would be to cut out the gate keeper or bookkeeper wages. Mr. Kenney shared many reasons why the gate keeper is needed mostly due to vandalism.

Mr. Znoj clarified that the cemetery is open from 7:30 to dusk. Mr. Kenney can be reached 24/7.

Mr. Shaw would like to explain the missing flag situation. He does believe that the three reasons are squirrels, a few are probably stolen and lastly workers remove broken flags and take them to the Legion.

#### Discussion with Martha Williams:

Mr. Kenney first explained that only three of the cemeteries in the Town are on public property the rest are on privately owned land. He also explained that many people do not want their cemetery plot locations made public. Mr. Welch clarified that whether individuals want this information made public or not makes no difference since it is a matter of public record. Mr. Kenney would like this information computerized but as far as he is concerned this is purely a want and not a need. He does not feel like this would be a good time to spend money on this.

Ms. Williams explained that there are volunteers willing to input the information.

Mr. Shaw has done a lot of research and although it was mentioned that every cemetery in the area has this information in a public place is not accurate. He spoke with many of the area cemeteries and they mostly have the information computerized but the only way to get the information is to contact whoever is in charge of that Town's cemeteries. Mr. Shaw has also looked at the software and it ranges from \$399. to \$5,000. There was also a discussion as to how this information will be kept updated.

Mr. Nichols clarified with Mr. Welch that this is not really a matter for the Selectmen.

Ms. Williams would like some more information in regards to the Trust and the Cemetery Trustees will let her know when they are going to hold the next meeting.

## 2. Michael Schwotzer – Monthly Financials Report

Mr. Schwotzer presented the September financials with the target being 75% since we are  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way through the year. Income motor vehicles came in at \$163k running behind 7%, interest on taxes \$97k, departmental income \$40k and parking lots \$19k. Revised year end estimate to be \$6.14M. In regards to expenses removing spiking charge and departmental reductions 69.2%. The smaller line items are over their year to date target. Estimated 2009 YE "Savings" shows that if we were to spend at the current rate for the last 3 months of the year, the operating departments would have not spent some \$1.36M. Police came in at 68.85%, Fire came in at

73.3%, Highways and Streets came in at 56.2% and Sanitation came in at 65.4%. He also explained that tipping fees run a month behind.

Discussion:

Mr. Lally questioned the \$1.36M year end savings and wonders how many open PO's are still out. Mr. Schwotzer explained that the PO's are sitting at \$200,000 which is very low and he thinks this is due to the tight budget constraints.

Mr. Znoj commented that we have been zeroing in on 2010 and something will need to be done with overtime in that budget.

Mr. Nichols asked about the \$50,000 for mosquito control, he knows it is being bided out and wonders if it is a flat bid or if there is a time and materials component. Mr. Schwotzer does believe that there is a time and materials component. Mr. Nichols commented on the drop in motor vehicles. He wonders when the Board will be presented with the ways the \$1.36M might be spent. Mr. Welch gave a few examples of some ideas but they will have to be put together for the Selectmen. Mr. Nichols wonders if this discussion could take place next week. Mr. Schwotzer believes that he will have some of the needed information tonight. Mr. Nichols asked about the \$500,000 in grants and wonders if this includes the \$450,000 related to Foss. It was confirmed it does. Mr. Nichols asked if the EMS fund reflects the 9 months or if it is behind and it was stated that yes the actual balance is higher than reported there.

Mr. Lally wonders if any of the money that came from FEMA in regards to the Ice Storm went to the cemeteries and it did not. Mr. Schwotzer did clarify that the income did come back to the Town but it did not directly go against any expenses.

3. Chief Sullivan – Departmental Update

Chief Sullivan touched on the following: calls for service up, arrest up, motor vehicle accidents up, part 1 crimes against persons down 18%, part 1 property crimes up 20%, part 1 against society down 6%, part 2 crimes down 14%, manpower reports patrol hours down by 4,456 hours, Officer Ruth in academy, part time hiring has begun, grants NH Highway grants, JAG grants and others have all been approved, budget running in positive, Seafood Festival update, department training took place last week on updates in law activities and computers in cruisers, a lot of training in the Fall and Trick or Treating for Halloween on Saturday the 31<sup>st</sup> will be from 5:30 to 8.

Discussion:

Mr. Nichols wonders if the patrol hours being down was a quarterly figure and or is it a year to date figure. Mr. Nichols also would like to know how this relates to past years. Chief Sullivan explained that this is a new item that is being tracked and they do not have any historical data.

Chairman Griffin thanked him for the report.

4. Chief Silver and Chief Sullivan – Emergency Sheltering

The Chiefs explained the work that they have done. This includes visits with the Red Cross. There are three types of shelters: Red Cross Shelters, Co-Shelters and community run shelters. They have been exploring the community run shelters and have found the following: Winnacunnet generators run the cafeteria and accommodate 200 people, other parts of the building are not generated supported including showers, estimated cost investment of \$65,000 to

\$100,000 with additional cost each time the shelter needs to open and be run. Chief Sullivan would recommend that we continue with the Red Cross Managed Shelter and possibly open some warming shelters by the Town. Chief Sullivan also added that we could provide transportation if the Red Cross was to only open a regional shelter.

Discussion:

Mr. Znoj clarified that if the Red Cross is called in to run a shelter there is no cost to the Town. Chief Sullivan did mention that the Town could provide security and medical aid if needed but there is no cost from the Red Cross.

Mr. Lally commented that the Red Cross chose not to open the shelter in Hampton, as is their prerogative and instead opened one in Exeter during the Ice Storm in December.

Mr. Nichols wonders how far back we have to go to find another event like the Ice Storm. Chief Sullivan does not recall another event like this since he has been around.

Chairman Griffin MOTIONED to follow the Chiefs recommendation to remain with the Red Cross Managed Shelter. Mr. Bateman SECONDED.

VOTE: 4-1-0 (Lally)

#### V. Minutes of October 05, 2009

Mr. Lally MOTIONED to approve the minutes October 5, 2009. Mr. Bateman SECONDED.

VOTE: 5-0-0

#### VI. Town Manager's Report

A proposal was award to the low bidder, the County Pres of Middleborough, MA to print the Town Report for 4559.68

A public hearing will be held on November 2, 2009 at 7 PPM in the Selectmen's Meeting Room to receive input on what the cable needs of the residents, town and school governments need from the cable provider. Please be in attendance to enter your testimony or forward your suggestions to the Board of Selectmen in writing.

Fire Chief Christopher Silver represented the Town at a presentation held at the State House on Wednesday, October 14<sup>th</sup> designating Hampton as the first community in the State to be designated as a Heartsafe Community.

The Town has been awarded a grant to place a generator at the Town Offices for emergency lighting and power needs.

The Department of Public Works has put out a bid to replace a sewer main and the high bid was \$447,414.50 and the low bid was \$259,795. His only concern is that the Board does not want to encumber any year end PO's but he does not believe it is possible to complete this work before the end of the year. He would like the Boards consideration on this as to it being encumbered. Mr. Welch informed the BOS that Mr. Schwotzer has met with DRA to set the tax rate, and the tax rate for December is down; the municipal rate is going to be \$6.41, the county rate is going to be \$.95, the local school rate is going to be \$6.65 and the state school rate is going to be \$2.27. The total tax rate to the Town for this past year was \$16.33 and the new tax rate is going to be \$16.28.

Discussion:

Mr. Znoj clarified that the money is in the budget to complete this sewer main work.

Mr. Lally is in favor of the sewer main work.

There was a discussion as to what line item it will come out of and Mr. Schwotzer explained it would come out of two line items sewer line maintenance and drainage.

Mr. Nichols stated that he does not have a problem with encumbrances he has more of a problem with encumbrances that have been sitting on the books for a long period of time in large amounts.

Mr. Lally is happy to see that the municipal tax rate is under \$6.50 as one of the goals set by the Board.

Mr. Nichols wonders if the grant for the generator is 100%, Mr. Welch stated that the Town is going to put in \$20,000. It should be functioning before the snow hits.

## VII. Old Business

1. 18-Month Fiscal Year Change – Mr. Welch explained that this was put on the agenda as requested by the Board.

### Discussion:

Mr. Bateman wonders how much the Town saves by switching to this fiscal year. Mr. Welch explained that there are certain advantages one being that the Town's fiscal year will coincide with everyone else's except the Federal Government.

Mr. Lally brought up the disadvantage Hampton had last year with the State since we were not on the same fiscal period that they are on.

Mr. Welch explained that the main advantage is the money is appropriated before it is spent. The Board also might at sometime wish to change the date of the Town Meeting but that is separate from this change.

Mr. Nichols asked about the problems that North Hampton had. Mr. Schwotzer has contacted North Hampton but he has not received the information yet from the Administrator. Mr. Schwotzer believes it was a cash flow issue.

Mr. Nichols and Mr. Schwotzer discussed a quarterly tax bill. Mr. Schwotzer does not have a good feel for this but he could look into if anyone does this. Mr. Welch believes that the City of Concord is the only one to do this. There was an additional discussion in regards to the cost involved with quarterly tax bills.

Mr. Nichols would suggest that the timing be in line with the State budget therefore deferring this change one year.

Mr. Znoj wonders if there will be a savings in regards to borrowing. Mr. Welch said that there will be no additional expenses involved.

Mr. Welch stated that there is no magic to this but it would help to schedule this in line with the State budget.

Mr. Znoj and Mr. Lally agree that putting it in line with the State budget is a good idea.

Mr. Nichols MOTIONED to defer the starting time for the 18 month fiscal year change to January 2012. Mr. Lally SECONDED.

VOTE: 5-0-0

## 2. Budget Review – Police, Animal Control and Emergency Management

Chief Sullivan gave a quick overview: made priorities as dealing with lack of special officers, training and mounted patrol, and mounted patrol will be one of the first things he will need to look at if cuts must be made.

### Discussion:

Mr. Nichols questioned if the Police IT person were to retire, would the work shift to Paul Paquette. Chief Sullivan is meeting tomorrow with a vendor in regards to this since this is one of the many hats this employee wears. Mr. Nichols asked about the new equipment under traffic control and it may be items needed for the Emergency Management. Mr. Nichols questioned the heating fuel budget and YTD only spent \$10,000 and asking for \$28,000. This issue exists in every building in Town not just with Police.

Mr. Nichols stated going forward there are a few scenarios he sees in regards to the whole budget not just police. One is that we raise taxes which does not seem like the way the voters wish to go. Two is that we reduce spending. Three is the status quo which seems to be the way that we have been going. Mr. Nichols went on to point out the budget request for the Police Department over the past several years and how what was requested was denied and what was actually spent was less than what was budgeted in the end. Mr. Nichols questions with these cuts in public safety we become less safe and he wonders when less safe becomes unsafe.

There was an additional discussion as to the current increase between the budget and warrant articles are around 6%. Mr. Nichols believes that this number needs to be between 0 and 2%. He would like the Chiefs thoughts on this. The Chief has been asked to give what he feels he needs to run his department professionally. They can make reductions until something breaks and if they do not have enough manpower to handle that certain event. Chief Sullivan does not have the ability to predict what will happen next year especially in regards to the weather. The main risk times are in June, July and August. Mr. Nichols would like to see control over the overtime accounts.

Mr. Lally does not see any one line item that jumps out at him the only thing he does see is the mounted patrol and that will be up to the Chief.

Mr. Znoj stated that from an overall budget we are going in the right direction. He questioned the following line items: under Administration printing supplies, equipment replacement and training, under traffic control mounted patrol, vehicle replacement, training, promotional testing and consultants, under support services court wages up, under building fuel cost, electric, building maintenance, telephone and summed up by stating that we have line items with growth. Mr. Znoj asked if Chief Sullivan would want the mounted patrol or more police specials. The Chief would like both but if one must be scrapped it would be mounted patrol.

There was a discussion as to whether or not there is a policy in place for personal use of the telephones.

Chairman Griffin is mainly concerned with the overtime. He would like to know how they feed the prisoners. Chief Sullivan explained that they generally do not have to feed them but if they do they use the supply and expense account.

Chief Sullivan summed up that overtime is time on the street for them and also training time which makes overtime a critical thing for them. Mr. Nichols wonders about using part timers year round. This is currently a contractual issue and will take some negotiating.

A discussion took place as to what is being done to raise the number of police specials.

Under Animal Control it is pretty much an exact repeat of last year. Mr. Znoj commented that if you annualize out this year you come in about \$9,000 less then requested budget.

Under Emergency Management Mr. Znoj commented that we have spent \$234 and are asking for \$3,000.

Mr. Nichols would like to make a comment about the budget and the moving of money out of the revolver and what can and cannot be done. Mr. Nichols read the RSA that involves revolvers and also reviewed the warrant article. He thinks that we have the legal means to purchase an ambulance and maybe help with other budget items. There was a discussion as how to go about doing this. Mr. Nichols would like some input from Mr. Schwotzer, Mr. Welch and Atty. Gearreald.

Mr. Welch commented that discussions have been started in regards to this.

- 3. Mapping of the Town's Cemeteries – discussed above
- 4. Town Clock Report

Mr. Pratt would like to form a committee after the first of the year to find a location to place the clock. The committee would be made up of 4 or 5 members and once they have an idea of where it should go they would come back to the Board with their suggestions.

Chief Silver has spoke with the architect and they both feel that it would be a great place for the Town Clock.

Chairman Griffin MOTIONED that Mr. Pratt can form the committee to search for a location for the Town Clock. Mr. Lally SECONDED.

VOTE: 5-0-0

VIII. New Business

- 1. Warrant for the Collection of 2008 Yield Taxes – Mr. Welch explained that this needs to be voted on, as it is a tax and is in the amount of \$545.50.

Mr. Lally MOTIONED to make a warrant for the collection of the 2008 Yield Taxes. Mr. Bateman SECONDED.

VOTE: 5-0-0

- 2. Recreation and Parks Department

Mrs. Martin requested a change in operational hours as requested by the public to come in before work in the morning. They would like to change their hours to 8 to 6 Monday from Thursday and Friday from 8 to noon. The office would be open to the public from 8 to 5 and 8 to noon.

The time from 5 to 6 in the evening would be used to complete work that cannot be done when they are assisting the public.

Discussion:

Mr. Nichols sees that it has been approved by the union but he would suggest that they have the union approve the right to change the hours back if this does not work out.

Mr. Bateman said it is obvious that they are trying to accommodate the public and if it does not work they will have to switch back.

Mr. Znoj clarified that this will only have a positive effect on overtime.

It was stated that if this does not work the hours will go back to the current hours.

This change will take place in two weeks.

IX. Consent Agenda

1. Proclamation – Frederick Rice; Hampton Beach Area Commission
2. Order – RSA 37:6 – Re-organization of Assessing Department
3. Appointment recommendations to the Recycling Education Committee
4. Heritage Commission request for BOS Representative

Discussion:

The Board agreed that Mr. Bateman will be the representative for the Heritage Commission.

Mr. Lally updated the Board on the business of the Recycling Education Committee.

Chairman Griffin read the Proclamation for Frederick Rice.

Mr. Nichols MOTIONED to move the Consent Agenda. Mr. Lally SECONDED.

VOTE: 5-0-0

X. Closing Comments – None

By roll call and all member present the BOS will enter into a nonpublic session under RSA 91-A:3., II., (a).

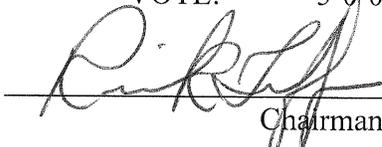
VOTE: 5-0-0

XI. Adjournment

Mr. Lally MOTIONED to adjourn the public meeting portion and to enter under RSA 91-A:3., II., (a) for the non-public session. Mr. Nichols SECONDED.

VOTE: 5-0-0

The Board adjourned at 9:42 PM

  
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 Chairman