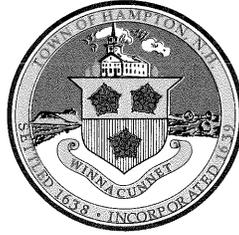


Town of Hampton



TOWN OF HAMPTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN November 30, 2009 Minutes

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

7:00 PM

Chairman Griffin called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and introduced the members of the Board.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

I. Public Comment Period

Michael Pierce, 16 Hedman Ave, would like to make two comments. The first one is in regards to the ambulance billing write offs on the agenda. He spoke about how individuals are billed for ambulance service and how the revolving fund works. The second thing he spoke about was the large increase that Town's are going to be faced with from the Retirement Pension Plan. He thinks it is time for the Legislature to do something to clean this pension plan up.

Art Gopalan, 20 Windmill Lane, also brought up the pension plan and how many of the bills that dealt with fixing this plan did not pass last year. Many of the bills did not affect any of the current employees but instead new employees and they did not make it through the Legislature.

II. Announcements and Community Calendar

Mr. Lally mentioned that the three times winning State Championship Winnacunnet Girls Basketball Team is seeking donations to attend a Christmas time basketball tournament in Orlando. Donations should be sent to Winnacunnet High School care of the Boosters.

Mr. Nichols informed everyone that the Fire Chief has added a question/answer section to the Fire Department website in regards to the new Fire Station plans.

Mr. Bateman pointed out that this is not an item listed on the sidebar but instead you must scroll all the way down the page to find this information.

III. Appointments

1. Discussion with the State Senator and the Town's State Representatives on current legislative matters – Representatives present included Nancy Stiles, Renny Cushing and Chris Nevins.

Nancy Stiles provided the Board with some LSR's that pertain to municipal actions, fees, taxes, zoning, planning and the retirement system. These are not in bill form but should be on the web by December 10th. Two have been sponsored by Ms. Stiles pertaining to Hampton one is to allow the Town the right to put forward for vote by the residents an ordinance for the sale of martial arts weapons. The second is in regards to the trash at the beach and coming up with a way to initiate some fines.

Mr. Cushing spoke about legislation in regards to urban compact roads and some support for the bill. This bill was put together by Ms. Kepner.

Ms. Stiles spoke about the bills in regards to retirement. Some of the items being brought forward include: removing extra pay for new and current employees, the rate the employer has to pay; one for State employees being restricted from retiring from one position to collect a pension and then work in another capacity for the State; and lastly one restricting widows from being able to continue collecting a pension if they remarry. These bills are not being sponsored by Ms. Stiles but are bills that she thought might be of interest to the Board.

Mr. Cushing would like to share some other things going on that might be of interest to the Town. One is that there is a transportation sustainability group that has been set up that is trying to bring everyone that is concerned with transportation together. He spoke about how currently the Town only receives 10% from the State to maintain their roads. Another thing going on is that the State has received a grant to do a study called Re-engineering Justice. This would take a look at the existing criminal justice system and make it more efficient.

Discussion

Chairman Griffin brought up a bill being sponsored by Ms. Kepner granting planning and zoning powers to Hampton Beach Village District. Ms. Stiles did not sponsor this bill so she would have to talk to Ms. Kepner. Mr. Cushing does not know for sure but he believes that Ms. Kepner is putting the bill forward on behalf of a member of the Hampton Beach Village District.

Chairman Griffin asked about the rooms and meals tax in regards to campsites. Ms. Stiles believes that it is an effort to reduce the taxes on campsites back to the 8%.

Ms. Stiles would also like to bring up the education funding. There are two bills coming forward that are looking to hold the funding for two more years under the current formula. This would put a cap on the increase and decrease to hold it steady since there are some communities who would lose a lot of money and some who would gain a lot of money. The concern is that we do not become a donor again.

Mr. Nichols commented that the stumbling block for bills regarding the retirement system has been in the Senate as opposed to the House for the past few years. Based on a Senate bill NHRS that was to provide a report to the Senate around this time in regards to the spiking charge. Ms. Stiles has not seen the report but will be sure to look for it when she is in Concord. Mr. Cushing added that it will also be available online. Mr. Nichols spoke about the bill to raise the retirement age for group II employees that passed both the House and the Senate and then died in a committee of conference and he wonders if they have any comments. Ms. Stiles stated this would be a good question for Senator Clark since she sat on that committee. There were only a

few bills that passed both House and Senate and died in the committee of conference. It was confirmed that all of these LSR's do not necessarily make it into bills it depends on the sponsor. Mr. Nichols is bothered by the makeup of the ED&A committee in the Senate. This committee is made up of 5 members; and 4 members appear to have a conflict of interest due to the fact that they collect a pension from the system. Mr. Cushing stated that these members would argue that they have knowledge that can help. Mr. Nichols questioned if they were aware of the increase that the actuaries for the retirement system are proposing to place on municipalities. The impact for the Town, which included the schools from 2006 to 2010; the Town's burden for retirement went from \$1.2M to \$1.8M. If he applies the proposed percentage increase the number would pop from \$1.8M to \$2.3M in 2011. This would calculate to a 27% increase in one year. There was an additional discussion as to the fact that the States portion is to go back to 35% in 2011 so that could reduce the burden on the Town. Mr. Nichols would request that a CD of the meeting be sent to Senator Clark.

Representative Chris Nevins joined the meeting and explained that his late appearance was due to the reason that he was at a Selectmen's meeting in Rye. He shared with the Board that they are currently working on a Rye Way Project on 1A.

Mr. Bateman questioned in regards to criminal justice what is the cost to keep a prisoner for a year. Mr. Cushing believes it to be around \$31,000. There was additional discussion as to the cost of using an ankle bracelet tracking device and the cost being much lower. This is being investigated as an option but needs a little research for safety purposes. There are also some devices being looked at for DWI offenders.

Mr. Lally wonders if studies have been done in regards to the privatization of the prison system. Mr. Cushing knows they have looked into this in the past but it did not make sense from the corrections perspective. Mr. Lally would also like to see how the planning and zoning at the beach came about.

Mr. Znoj wonders if there is a plan at the beach to install more of the new parking meters. Ms. Stiles believes that this is in the works. Mr. Lally agreed that the last time Brian Warburton was here; Mr. Warburton mention the installation of these new meters possibly up to Winnacunnet Road. Mr. Znoj reminded everyone that these types of meters generated more revenue. Mr. Znoj brought up the fact that there are several LSR's in regards to gambling. Mr. Cushing stated that there is a 2 year study underway in regards to gambling. Mr. Cushing does believe that there will be bills for gambling in the next session. Mr. Znoj wonders if there is a way to get out of the retirement system. Ms. Stiles did attend the meeting for municipalities to get out of the retirement system, however, the public that attended did not speak and they were there to listen. Ms. Stiles will follow up on this to see if anything is being filed. Mr. Znoj reiterated that this will be for new employees. Mr. Nevins commented that some other States have done this and perhaps it will be in our future.

Mr. Nichols added that although the NHRS report has not come out; he does believe that it will come out less funded then it was when it came out in 2008.

Chairman Griffin thanked them for coming.

IV. Minutes of November 10, 2009

Page one change the following: Chick to Chuck; meet to met; a to an.

Mr. Lally MOTIONED to approve the minutes of November 10, 2009 as amended. Mr. Nichols SECONDED

VOTE: 3-0-2(Bateman, Znoj)

V. Town Manager's Report

Please remember that the Winter Time Parking Ban is in effect from 1 AM to 7 AM on all streets within the Town of Hampton until March 15, 2010. Violators will be ticketed and/or towed.

Also please remember that during declared snow emergencies there is no parking on any street or in any public parking lot in Hampton and the vehicles are subject to ticketing and towing.

Leaf collection will continue during the week of November 30th.

Wednesday, December 9th is the last day that you may submit a petitioned warrant article for changes to the Zoning Ordinance.

The Assessor and I recommend that you award a bid to Vision to prepare a revaluation of the Town for 2010.

Discussion

Mr. Nichols commented on the bid from Vision which he recommended that the Town bid out. Mr. Nichols explained that the objective is to have a revaluation completed before the 2010 tax bill. He also pointed out that this money will be encumbered using a portion of the year end savings that was predicted by Mr. Schwotzer to be in the \$800,000 range.

Mr. Znoj wonders if this will include having someone from Vision here available to answer questions from the public. Mr. Welch explained how the process will work and people will be able to make appointments to come in and discuss any questions.

Mr. Welch stated that under this contract we will be able to oversee and review any properties the Assessor wishes. Mr. Nichols explained which properties will be measured and listed and that all properties at a minimum will receive a drive by to evaluate the condition of the property.

Mr. Lally and Chairman Griffin both agreed that this is a good idea and the way that the Town should go at this time.

Mr. Znoj confirmed that all new sales from April 2008 to April 2010 will be measured and listed and all properties will receive a drive by and digital photo taken. Mr. Nichols added that there will be pictures available online once this process is complete. Mr. Znoj verified that there are funds available to do this with.

Mr. Bateman stated that Vision has a wonderful reputation.

Mr. Nichols MOTIONED to approve to enter into a contract with Vision to prepare the revaluation of the Town for 2010 for the amount 195,000.00 using the 2009 encumbered funds. Chairman Griffin SECONDED

VOTE: 5-0-0

VI. Old Business

Mr. Nichols would like to bring up the discussion last week in regards to the rise in private detail charge. The rate increase is actually between \$3 and \$4 which reflects an increase from 20% to

30%. Mr. Welch added that the reason for the increase is because the State is now charging the Town for Special Duty Pay.

Mr. Nichols also brought up warrant articles. Mr. Welch has provided the Board with the money articles that he has come up with this far with the exception of the Fire Station. The Board will discuss these warrant articles next week.

Mr. Nichols would also like an update on the I-95 Bridge. Mr. Welch said they have been very quiet on this in Concord. There is talk that the bridge is going to be rebuilt and be much bigger because this is what the Federal Government wants. There was an additional discussion about problems with removing the dam.

VII. New Business

1. Write Off of old EMS receivables (Ambulance Service)

Mr. Welch explained that he was given a list from Finance of the charge offs. The total is \$125,339 and this represents the period from 2003 to 2007. There is a balance of reserve for write offs totaling \$274,000. He listed the majority of reasons. Mr. Welch added that he would look into Mr. Pierce question about the rate people without insurance are charged.

Discussion

Mr. Nichols shared with the Board that he spoke with Chief Silver and that people without insurance are billed at a list price which is higher than the Medicare rate.

There was additional discussion about the fact that these bills have been sent to a bill collector and that these write offs will be reported to the credit bureaus and reflect negatively on these individuals credit reports.

The reserve was explained as the amounts being billed out. There was a discussion as to some other ways that the Town might be able to go about collecting these funds.

Mr. Welch explained that the only way would be to take them to small claims court and it is a difficult and long process.

Mr. Znoj wonders if it might be worth going after some of these individuals. Mr. Nichols pointed out that this only really reflects about 6 to 8% of actual billings.

Mr. Bateman MOTIONED to write off \$125,339 for the EMS receivables in regards to ambulance service from 2003 thru 2007. Mr. Lally SECONDED.

VOTE: 4-1-0(Znoj)

Mr. Znoj wonders if we have exhausted all necessary means. Chairman Griffin wonders if we might want to change collection agencies.

Mr. Nichols would like to see these write offs be done on a yearly basis.

VIII. Consent Agenda – No Items

IX. Closing Comments

Mr. Znoj announced that the final review of the budget by the Budget Committee will be held next Thursday December 10th.

X. Adjournment

Mr. Lally MOTIONED to adjourn. Mr. Znoj SECONDED.

VOTE: 5-0-0

Meeting adjourned 8:30 PM

The Board went into Non-meeting with Legal Counsel under RSA 91-A:2, I, (c)


Chairman