

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2011
AVON TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM
7:30 P.M.

Members present: Francis A. Hegarty, Chairman
Steven P. Rose
Wayne M. Phillips

Others present: Michael McCue, Town Administrator

Not present: Joseph Lalli, Town Counsel (out sick)

Chairman Hegarty called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. with all members present.

Mr. Rose made a motion to approve the minutes of Thursday, February 10, 2011 (Regular Session) as submitted. Mr. Phillips seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Mr. Rose made a motion to accept the minutes of Thursday, February 10, 2011 (Executive Session) as written. Mr. Phillips seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Rose made a motion to table acceptance of the Thursday, January 13, 2011 (Executive Session) minutes until the March 10, 2011 Board of Selectmen meeting. Mr. Phillips seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Update

Chairman Hegarty presented a FY '12 Budget update indicating that there are several items to bring to the Board's attention—the cost of Medical and Life Insurance was figured on a 7.2% increase but he is hearing increases may be more like 10-14%. Figures will have to be adjusted when they come in from the insurer. In addition, the Blue Hills Technical School budget has not been received. Right now the figures are level funded. Pension costs will be higher this year; approximately \$69,000 plus where the average has been \$20,000 to \$23,000.

Chairman Hegarty asked the Board to review the handout presented and get back to the Town Administrator with comments. A budget meeting will be scheduled in the near future.

7:45 p.m.—Meeting with the Library Trustees

Library Trustees Wilma Macdonald, Ellen Nagle, Charles Comeau and Director Karen Johnson appeared before the Board.

Chairman Hegarty stated that due to budgetary constraints, the Board did not fill any open positions at the Library. Assistant Librarian Kathy Connors retired and the position has remained open. It is an AFSCME position. Chairman Hegarty reported that there are cuts in State aid and local revenues are down. The Board is working very hard to maintain all levels of service to the Town with no layoffs.

Library Trustee Wilma Macdonald stated it is the proposal of the Library Trustees to promote from within and upgrade one of their employees to take over additional responsibilities and cover as the Assistant Librarian, increasing the hours from 30 to 35 hours. This would be a \$2.00 per hour increase, totaling \$70.00 per week additional. The Assistant Librarian's position is the second in command and this individual covers for the Library Director when she attends required meetings of the OCLN. To date, Karen Johnson, the Library's Director, has missed meetings because of the lack of coverage. Ms. Johnson stated this could be problematic in the future. There are four (4) full time employees working, which includes the Director; one employee is out on Long Term Disability, but according to Ms. Johnson, may be back in April. She has been out on disability since November. It has been necessary to close the Library on Mondays to the public because there is not enough staffing. If someone calls in sick, the Library would have to close because there is not enough coverage.

Ms. Johnson reported that the Library is essential for the Town; it is a place for students to come and do their homework; the computers are used constantly and the services are vital to residents and non-residents. If they upgrade one employee to cover some of the responsibilities of the Assistant Librarian, then services can be maintained. The Library is currently open 35 hours per week, down from 42 hours.

Mr. Rose made a motion to approve the request to promote from within to the Assistant Library position. Mr. Phillips seconded the motion with discussion. Mr. Phillips asked "what about the AFSCME Union contract"? Mr. McCue replied that he would look into the posting per the Union contract. The vote was unanimous.

A "Service Animal Policy" was presented to the Board for review. Mr. McCue explained this is a new ADA regulation regarding the presence and use of Service Animals in local government buildings and programs, including Public Schools. All local governments and Public Schools must have policies in place by March 15, 2011. The policy he presented would apply only to municipal buildings, not schools.

Chairman Hegarty asked the Board to review the "Service Animal Policy" and the item would be placed on the March 10th agenda for adoption.

Snow and Ice Update

Mr. McCue reported that so far \$323,494.20 has been spent on snow removal for the Town of Avon. The appropriated amount is \$65,000; leaving a deficit of \$258,494.20. This does not include orders placed for sand and salt. Street sweeping will begin in the spring and that also is a Snow and Ice expense.

Mr. Phillips asked if the deficit could be paid by free cash? Chairman Hegarty responded “yes” – it would be allowed, but unlikely due to the modest free cash expected this year.

Mr. McCue responded that for specific snow events there may be help from the Federal Government. Chairman Hegarty responded that this has been a bad year across the country and he doesn’t expect reimbursement.

Mr. McCue provided the Board with an Anti-Fraud policy and Response Program at the last meeting for review.

Mr. Rose made a motion to approve the proposed Anti-Fraud Policy and Response Program. Mr. Phillips seconded the motion with discussion. Mr. Phillips questioned whether the Policy was run by legal counsel?

Mr. McCue responded that adoption of the policy was recommended by our auditors and legal counsel. Mr. McCue used other Towns as a guide and did not have legal counsel review the policy, in consideration of the cost. He took bits and pieces from various Towns that reflected the similarity of Avon.

After clarification was given, the vote was unanimous.

8:15 p.m. —National Grid petition to relocate utility pole—P47-84 East Main Street

A petition was received from National Grid to relocate P47-84 East Main Street relocation of a utility pole to town property. The existing pole is leaning up against a building. The Highway Department approved the request with the stipulation that 60 inches is needed between the pole and the building for a sidewalk tractor.

On a motion made by Mr. Rose, seconded by Mr. Phillips, it was unanimously voted to approve the petition by National Grid to relocate pole P47-84 with the stipulation that 60 inches is needed between the pole and the building for a sidewalk tractor.

Mr. McCue presented to the Board a request for transfer from the Reserve Fund, in the amount of \$1300.00, into the Tree Warden’s account to cover removal of a huge pine tree that has fallen in DeMarco Park. Several estimates were received.

After some discussion, Mr. Rose made a motion to approve the request for transfer of \$1300.00 from the Reserve Fund to the Tree Warden’s account. Mr. Phillips seconded the motion with

discussion. Mr. Phillips questioned whether \$1300.00 would complete the job? Chairman Hegarty responded that he believed so. The vote was unanimous.

Chairman Hegarty announced that this past Monday (February 21st) the Town of Avon celebrated its 123rd Anniversary, when it was emancipated from the Town of Stoughton. Avon's 125th Anniversary will soon be here. The Board of Selectmen is encouraging anyone who would like to serve on this Committee, to drop a note to either the Town Administrator or the Board.

Mr. McCue received a letter from the Old Colony Crossroads Collaborative (OCCC) explaining that this is a new, regional economic development initiative targeting 28 communities and numerous organizations on the southernmost part of I-495 and the crossroads of Routes 24 and 44. This area has great potential for future expansion. The letter is asking if the Town of Avon is interested in joining the Collaborative. There is no fee to join but a Collaborative Member Commitment form must be returned for the Town to participate.

Mr. Rose made a motion as follows: that the Town of Avon is in favor of joining the Old Colony Crossroads Collaborative with no fee and we, as the Town of Avon, agree to cooperate with the Old Colony Crossroads Collaborative. Mr. Phillips seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Rose wanted it noted that the Board had previously discussed elected Constables paying out of pocket for their required Bond. A bill was received for one of the elected Constables seeking reimbursement for his Bond. Mr. Rose wanted it so noted that in the future "elected Constables are responsible for paying their own bonds."

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. McCue thanked the Board for the review and approval of participation in the Old Colony Crossroads Collaborative (OCCC).

Mr. McCue reported the painting job is complete at Town Hall. Sheriff Bellotti's crew did an excellent job. Thank you to the Sheriff's office. The cost to the Town was approximately \$600-\$700 which included the cost of the paint and feeding the crew.

Mr. McCue informed the Board that he would be attending a meeting on March 1st regarding a Federal solar incentives program which offers solar panels on municipal buildings at virtually no cost to Towns. Mr. McCue will look into this as a cost saving measure for the Town and report back to the Board.

Mr. McCue will attend a MMPA meeting on March 3rd. The featured topic will be "Personnel and Labor Law."

Mr. McCue received many e-mail addresses from the Board of Selectmen of area towns who attended a meeting here last week where regionalization and shared approaches to the delivery of municipal services was discussed.

On a motion made by Mr. Rose, seconded by Mr. Phillips, it was unanimously voted to approve all vouchers for payment as submitted.

At 8:40 p.m. Mr. Rose made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss a collective bargaining matter. Mr. Phillips seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken:

Mr. Rose voted aye

Mr. Phillips voted aye

Chairman Hegarty voted aye

The Board would not reconvene in Open Session.

Respectfully submitted,

Miriam Rothstein
Secretary