12/16/2019 SB Minutes

Bethlehem Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

December 16, 2019
Present: Chairman Boisseau, Selectman Moritz, Selectman Moore, Selectman Jensen, Selectman Caplain.
At 5:32 Selectman Moore opened the meeting and moved to go into non-public session per RSA 91A:3 II for matters of personnel and reputation. Selectman Jensen seconded. Selectman Moore did roll call with all members agreeing to go into non-public session.
The Board discussed pay increases and agreed on 3% for all department heads.
The Board discussed tax deeding.
Public portion of the meeting began at 6:15.
PUBLIC INPUT – None
Lou Dearborn and Carrie Faucette from Consolidated did a presentation on a premise-based phone system. Mr. Dearborn said a premise-based system versus a cloud system is more stable. He explained they found cabling from Cat 2 through Cat 5. He said the cabling is very important and said we should really look at addressing the cabling. Mr. Dearborn said there is a lease option for their system. He explained there would be a dedicated circuit for the system. Chairman Boisseau asked what our need is currently. Mr. Dearborn said people don’t sell analog anymore and IP is only thing right now. He said we don’t need it right now but probably will eventually and said it might have more features than what we need but like a new car it is the platform you are buying. He said they (Consolidated at their office) have been using the switch they bought in 2008 and said the products are built very well. The Board discussed assessing the two quotes they received.
BUDGETS
Conservation Commission – This budget has remained flat. Selectman Caplain asked why keep it the same if only 50% was spent. Cheryl Jensen said the field trip they usually fund for the elementary school students didn’t happen and the one they did go on was less money.
Mary Jackson from the Bethlehem Revolving Loan Fund Committee came before the Board to ask to reimburse two applicants – Buckeye Cottage who did work on the porch and Mulburn Inn which was painted – for the facade grant. Selectman Moore moved to award grant to Buckeye Cottage and Mulburn Inn for $3000.00 each. Selectman Jensen seconded. Carried 4-0 (Selectman Moritz recused herself).
Debt Service/TAN – This was down slightly.
Library – Trustee, Doug Harman thanked the Board for what they do. Len Grubbs said the changes to the budget are to wages and taxes and also said Laura (Clerkin) is the only employee (that is dept. head) in the town without health insurance. He said the town requires an employee to work 40 hours to be on town insurance and said she isn’t paid for 40 hours a week. He explained they would like to increase her salary to $50,000 to give her money to get an insurance plan and the other employees will receive a 2% raise. Mr. Harman said similar libraries with similar size towns offer benefit packages. He also said it used to be offered in the past for former librarians. Selectman Jensen said he is fine with this. Selectman Moritz said it would have to be agreed that it (big salary increase) doesn’t happen again next year. She also said $50,000 is a full-time wage and not for someone working 35 hours a week. Mr. Grubbs said it is not giving that much as a raise. Ms. Clerkin said it is the total benefit package. Mr. Harman said they did comparisons last year with other libraries and we are way below. Selectman Moritz said the Board asked every other department to be flat and this is a huge raise. Mr. Grubbs said Franconia librarian receives a salary of $43,000/year with benefits, Lincoln receives $46,217 with benefits. Barbara Szeidler (trustee) said they will not be able to replace Ms. Clerkin if she left. Selectman Moritz said it would be setting a precedent and said we have a seasonal employee that doesn’t get benefits. Selectman Moore said they need to consider the employees that don’t get benefits and said she wasn’t comfortable with this. Mr. Harman said they have been talking about this for awhile and the town budget is low. He said he understands where the board is coming from. Chairman Boisseau said he is struggling with how this looks for other department heads, the financial piece and the principle of it. He also said the library is a huge asset to the town. Ms. Szeidler said other employees have option of having insurance. Chairman Boisseau said this job position didn’t have insurance as a benefit and now trying to retro it. Mr. Harman said it is why we lost the last director. Mr. Grubbs said you can’t put insurance as a line item unless they are owner of policy, so they have to report that as income. Mary Jackson asked if she would have to provide proof of insurance. Mr. Harman wasn’t sure of the answer to that. Chairman Boisseau said they need to get advice from legal and wants to see comparison. The Library also has a warrant article to start a capital reserve fund for the maintenance on the building. Mr. Grubbs said a salaried 40 hour a week position for the librarian would be $44,000.
Highway – Brett Jackson went over the budget with the Board. He said it is up 3% and explained his services line includes sweeping, cleaning catch basins, etc.
Recreation – Tim Fleury told the Board that payroll is the biggest increase and he explained that is up because the program has increased so the hours increased. He also said the pool employees that are returning get increases with certifications. Mr. Fleury said his revolving fund revenue is up 8% which includes a sponsorship that is $2000. a year for 5 years. He said he will have 2 warrant articles, one for the gazebo concerts and one to authorize someone to spend from the fund for the comfort station trust fund. He also said the pool revenue is up $1770. and explained what needs to be done to the pool (cracks – cement work, painting, build subfloor in pump room). He said he got a quote for all the fencing for all the parks to replace and repair as needed and it is $15,000 for everything.
Country Club – Matt Courchaine reviewed the country club budget with the Board. He explained if they subtracted the $23,500 for growth from the expenditures the number would match the proposed revenues. He explained they will take care of moving the oil tank with in-house employees to save some money.
The Board discussed purchasing the cruiser this year. Selectman Jensen said Brett Jackson may want the old cruiser for the highway department. The Board discussed the benefit of replacing the cruisers and rotating them to save on wear and tear. Selectman Moore moved to let Chief Ho-Sing-Loy utilize his balance in budget to purchase cruiser. Selectman Moritz seconded. Carried 4-1 (Selectman Jensen opposed).
The Board discussed a request from the snowmobile club to talk with rec about using the snack shack once a month to sell hot dogs & snacks, etc. to snowmobilers going through and giving the proceeds to the recreation department.
The Board reviewed the minutes from 12/02/19 & 12/09/19. Selectman Moore moved to approve the minutes. Chairman Boisseau seconded. Carried 5-0.
At 9:30 Chairman Boisseau moved to go into non-public session per RSA 91A:3 II for matters of personnel. Selectman Moritz seconded. Chairman Boisseau did roll call with all members agreeing to go into non-public session.
The Board discussed personnel.
At 9:40 Chairman Boisseau moved to adjourn. Selectman Moore seconded. Carried 5-0.
Respectfully submitted,

April Hibberd

Administrative Assistant