

Board of Selectmen – Budget Workshop
Tuesday, January 15, 2013

A Board of Selectmen budget workshop was held on Tuesday, January 15, 2013, in Conference Room A at Rockport Town Hall, with five selectpersons and the Town Administrator.

7:06 p.m. Meeting Called to Order

FY14 Operating Budget Review with Departments

Public Safety:

Police Department: this is level funded; R. Lesch's stipend (\$5,200) is not reflected in this budget though the department has an excess due to R. Lesch's retirement. The budget reflects the \$2,000 longevity bonus for the chief. There are currently nine patrolmen, three sergeants, and one Lt. This staffing level is less than it was years ago. The chief said there are still gaps on the weekend. The chief was asked to look at the overtime hours and assess whether this is the best model. He stated that this budget supports ten patrolmen.

Pilot program on meters. Selectperson Fleming stated that previously it was discussed that a public hearing would be held on the meters. The chief said he has heard positive things about the credit card capability of the meters. In 2011 \$137,238 was generated by the meters, in 2012 \$172,479 was generated. The chief stated that complaints were received regarding the time changes, maybe go back to 8am to 6pm, the five hour meters were complained about.

Lifeguards for next summer. The budget presented reflects full staffing on all beaches, Old Garden Beach was added, the plan is 10am to 5pm, 7 days/week, 10 lifeguards total to cover for days off. The DPW has painted the lifeguard chairs red so they'll be more easily noticed; also umbrellas were added to keep the lifeguards out of the sun.

Traffic meeting – the chief asked for two more portable cross walk signs, they are \$300 each. He would like to add \$600 to the sign & post item on Traffic and Parking.

Moderator: no change

Board of Selectmen: an increase consistent with the guideline was added to the Selectmen stipends, however it was decided that the Board of Selectmen would not take an increase in the stipend. The guideline increase for the Senior Administrative Assistant and the Assistant to the Town Administrator is in the budget. The contract for the Town Administrator is up on 12/31/13.

Selectmen Committees:

Economic Development: this is level funded from last year. Lana Razdan stated that the seed money was for year one and it will take multiple years to realize the benefit. She shared a printout of what the committee has been

working on as they've worked with the consulting group, Matter Communications. They're working on off-season interests, get stories written about Rockport; reporters are about one year out with pieces. Pieces should highlight why Rockport is a great place to visit and a great place to live. Maybe hold another forum, maybe in the spring. Chronicle is doing a piece, should air sometime in February, 2013.

Historic Commission: Chairperson Battistelli stated that she would like to see the Historic Commission apply for some administrative funds to provide some promotion and other administrative items; not for this year.

Community House:

Town Art Committee: \$2,000

Finance Committee: this is level funded

Town Accountant: Roberta Josephson spoke about the FY 14 budget and stated that the purchase of services have been cut in half, they are able to handle much more internally, drastically reduced for FY 14, office supplies increased from \$1,500 to \$2,235, now they have to purchase their own copy paper. The whole budget has decreased 1-1/4%.

Assessor's office:

Treasurer Collector: Carrie Arnaud stated that the purchase of services line has additional administrative costs associated with the flexible spending accounts, an approximate annual cost of \$3,000 for fees and to ensure there are funds there if an employee terminates and has accessed more reimbursement than they have contributed. Travel expenses are increased due to an annual meeting that two employees need to attend for treasurer/collector school only one person previously attended. The job requirements say they must be certified within a certain number of years, so the cost has doubled to include both the Collector and the Asst. Collector.

Legal Dept: The Town Administrator stated the budget has been increased by 1% after reducing it in prior years, there could be some activity on land use issues.

Personnel Board: Merit bonus pool was increased by \$24,883; it was previously 2.08% of total eligible salaries. Eight additional positions have been added to the eligible positions, for FY 14, 2.08% of the new base is \$35,000.

Information Systems and Technologies: At the 2/6/13 School Committee meeting the job descriptions could be reviewed; the funds don't need to be transferred until 7/1/13.

Town Clerk: Town Clerk is requesting an increase of 8% in her salary, she stated that the position hasn't had an increase since 2009. She continued that she's been in the clerk's office for many years. She brought a salary comparison from 2009, this is a separate article town meeting vote. The Town Clerk

position has not received any cost of living adjustments, now she doesn't get a merit bonus because it's an elected position. She stated that the prior Town Clerk received a stipend because he was certified; it takes three years to be certified.

Elections:

Moderator:

Conservation Commission:

Recreation: The total cost of the program will not change. The budget has been revised so the director and the clerk are paid totally by the program budget, the fees will be used to pay other costs.

Council on Aging: level budget, asking for a \$1,865 increase in the salary line item for Paula Bertolino, Program Specialist, this will cover a 10 week gap with the formula grant.

Library: Includes a \$3,000 increase for lawn maintenance, this was previously paid out of patron donations and shouldn't have been.

DPW: Chairman Gardner and Director Parisi were in attendance: The non-union labor is at the guideline except for a step increase for a clerk, union labor includes contractual step increases and license increases. Seasonal overtime is budgeted to include six months of Sunday operations at the Transfer Station. It was questioned if this has to be overtime. It was discussed that if the schedules of transfer station staff are changed, union bargaining would be necessary. Offering overtime to existing staff allows the town not to increase the workforce. The DPW Director was questioned why they don't take care of the lawn maintenance at the library, J. Parisi stated that they don't cover the schools, the library or the police department.

Schools: Rob Liebow stated that nothing has changed, some potential changes through the spring is the reduction of two Teacher Assistants in Special Education whose caseload is no longer with us. Unless two more children are enrolled, those two staff members would be dropped next year – the cost is \$50 to \$60,000 between them. R. Liebow continued that there are retirements at the elementary school, one grade level position would not be replaced because the enrollment is down. He continued that there may be approximately \$100,000 of reduction in projected costs.

9:45 Selectperson Fleming moved to adjourn, Selectperson Murphy seconded, Vote: 5-0.

Warrant signed:

Warrant signed for the Fiscal Year 2013 Payroll and Expenses for the week of 1/17/13 in the amounts of \$98,831.23 and \$622,192.12 respectively.