

TOWN OF HOPKINTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Meeting Date: June 10, 2003
MINUTES

Members Present:

Ronald M. Clark, Chairman
Leonard A. Holden, Vice-Chairman
Mary C. Pratt
F. Eric Sonnett
Paul J. Nelson

Others Present:

Jim Cosgrove, Comcast Technician
Cathy Flynn, Hopkinton Crier Reporter
J. T. Gaucher, DPW Director
Ronald Eldridge, Appropriation Committee Chairman
Fire Chief Gary Daugherty
Police Sgt. Richard Flannery
Andrew Branz, School Committee Chairman
Nadine Stewart, School Committee Member
Geoffrey MacDonald, Business Administrator School Department
Dr. John Phelan, School Superintendent
Theodore D. Kozak, Executive Secretary
Geri Holland, Clerk

Residents: Paul Dietz, Mary Ann Cotton, Nancy Emrick, and John Hilliard

7:00 p.m. Mr. Clark, Chairman, opened the meeting and invited attendees to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. The Board approved the Town bills for payment. Town warrants were also approved as follows:

- Town payroll #03-49 for \$109,475.81
- Accounts payable #03-72 for \$175,180.24
- School accounts payable #03-0090 for \$5,713.50
- School accounts payable #03-0093 for \$257,857.50

FY'04 Budget Presentation (see attachment):

Mr. Clark gave an overview of the events that have led to this forum and the approved \$900,000 override to be voted at the Saturday, June 14th Town Meeting and the ballot question at the June 27th election. He explained the two budgets, with and without the override, which will be presented at the June 14th Town meeting. Mr. Clark asked the Department Heads to explain their PowerPoint presentation.

Appropriation Committee:

Mr. Eldridge explained the following: additional revenue since April 1, 2003; additional expense reductions since May 19, 2003; Stabilization Fund utilization; financial and budget summary overviews; and the new \$900K override plan.

Police Department:

Sgt. Flannery gave the PowerPoint Presentation on behalf of the Police Chief. Sgt. Flannery summarized the Police Department's personnel and the FY 04 proposed budgets with and without the override. Sgt. Flannery said that two police officers' positions would be lost should the override fail to pass.

Fire Department:

Fire Chief Daugherty presented the Fire Department's FY 04 budget scenarios with and without the override, including the loss of two firefighters should this next override fail.

DPW and General Government:

Mr. Kozak presented the DPW and General Government's FY 04 budgets with and without the override vote.

School Department:

Mr. Branz presented the School Department's FY 04 budgets and explained the additional budget impact with and without the override vote.

Mr. Clark concluded the presentation explaining the total budget summary. He explained that the \$900K override vote on June 27th ballot referendum is part of a one-year financial plan.

Mr. Clark asked the Board if they had any questions or comments.

Mrs. Pratt asked, in regards to the search for a Math/Science Coordinator, if the candidate would have a science background. Mr. Branz responded yes. Dr. Phelan added that the School Department would find someone with a dual background (Science/Math). There was general discussion regarding the qualifications of hiring school personnel.

Mr. Nelson commented that the \$900K override is a smaller amount than the recently failed \$3.8M override vote; and since the scope of work has effectively changed with this revised over-ride, people should be aware that this number addresses only the current fiscal year ('04) and not the next couple of fiscal years.

Mr. Sonnett asked Chief Daugherty and Sgt. Flannery to elaborate about how reduction of services would affect the Town. Both Chief Daugherty and Sgt. Flannery explained the impact of the reduction of services including the reduction of emergency staff and the maintenance of cruiser vehicles versus replacement.

Mr. Holden asked Chief Daugherty how the town would handle mutual aid to other Towns. Chief Daugherty explained that under MA General Law, the Town is required to respond to other Towns under an emergency. He added that the Fire Department would always do what they can.

Mr. Clark read out an email that the Selectmen's Office received from resident, Brian Hanks. Mr. Hank asks how much was put into the Stabilization Fund each for the last four years. Mr. Clark asked Mr. Eldridge to expand on the function of the Stabilization Fund and how much has been in the Fund over the last few years.

Resident, Paul Dietz (6 Prestwick Drive) stated his disappointment of the assembling of the proposed budgets and asked why the Board did not approach the Union to consider renegotiating their contracts.

Mr. Clark gave an overview of how the Board determined to use more funds out of the Stabilization Fund, which was in response to feedback from residents made on Town Meeting floor. Mr. Clark also commented that the Board talked about the Unions' contracts and determined that "a deal is a deal". He added that the three-year contracts end in fiscal year 2004. He explained that when times were good, there wasn't any discussion about the Unions wanting more money, and that shouldn't change with a poor economy. He pointed out that all six Unions agreed to the Town's Health Care Plan proposal.

Mr. Sonnett also responded to the question of renegotiating the Unions' contracts and said that their salary increase of 3.5% is right in line with the economy.

Mr. Dietz asked if he thought the Unions would appreciate the opportunity of renegotiating their contracts so that layoff could be avoided.

Mr. Sonnett believes no.

Mr. Dietz strongly recommends that the Board consider one-year contracts versus the present three-year. There was discussion regarding the School's Union and that three-year contracts are standard. Mr. Nelson believes that bonds of trust are formed with a three-year contract that cannot be accomplished with a one-year contract.

Mr. Clark extended his appreciation to all Department Heads and Supervisory Personnel for their presentations and accomplishments over the last few weeks in presenting their fiscal year 2004 budgets with and without the override. He encouraged residents to participate in the town meeting on June 14th and encouraged them to vote on June 27th.

Chapter 90 State Aid Anticipation Note: \$56,532.19 (see attachment)

Mr. Clark explained the State Aid Anticipation Note for \$56,532.19 under Chapter 90 funding with an interest rate of 2% for \$278.79 totaling \$56,810.98. Mr. Clark noted that under Chapter 90 funding the Town would be reimbursed the \$56,532.19. There were no comments or questions.

VOTE: Mr. Clark entertained a motion to approve for signature the State Aid Anticipation Note under Chapter 90 funding for \$56,532.19. So moved Mrs. Pratt. Second Mr. Holden. Unanimously voted.

Meeting Adjourned:

8:20 p.m. VOTE: Mr. Clark entertained a motion to adjourn the public meeting. So moved Mr. Sonnett. Second Mr. Holden. Unanimously voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Geri Holland

Clerk

Date Approved: June 17, 2003