

**Minutes of the Selectmen's Meeting of May 20, 2013**  
**Town Hall – Meeting Room #1 7:00pm**

Present: Selectmen John Franey, Sarah Hewins, Helen Marrone, Richard Ward, Chairman Michael O'Donnell, Town Administrator LaFond and Elaine Weston.

The Chair led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and read the announcements.

John Cotter brought the Finance Committee to order.

Rev. Bob Merritt said a prayer and held a moment of silence for the victims of the tornadoes that have hit the Midwest today.

**School Committee Budget Hearing**

Lance Kennedy recognized the school merits including MCAS scores including 13 students obtaining a perfect score, one child was named Commended 2013 National Merit Scholar, Culinary and Art students won top honors and the Middle High School was awarded Continued Accreditations. The AP class enrollment has increased by 11%. Liz Sorrell and Pat Meagher presented the FY '14 school budget. Level service budget was presented. Central office increase is due to health insurance and Plymouth County Retirement (other than teachers and administrators) as well as FICA payroll obligations. Transportation has an insignificant decrease. Special education has an increase due to enrollment, collaborative tuitions and private out-of-district tuitions. Maintenance, technology, Elementary School and Middle/High School are all flat. A slight reduction taken in the Athletic Department. Salaries are increased due to the return of two teachers and contractual obligations such as district wide cost of living increases and step increases. Ed jobs was a \$600,000 grant which was used to reduce costs over 3 years which mainly went to reduce health care costs. Circuit Breaker helps costs over \$40,000 per pupil are reimbursed by a percentage which fluctuates and gets put back into the budget to lower the special education costs. School Choice allows other districts in the Kindergarten level to attend Carver Schools which gives Carver a reimbursement of \$5,000 per student. This was implemented to save a teaching job. John Cotter questioned school choice & charter line items which are state aid. The amount of children in out of district placement has been reduced and the costs have increased. They presented \$623,228 gap with possible sources to offset the gap such as the lowering of insurance costs, retirement notifications, potential increases in Chapter 70, potential increase in Chapter 70 funds and additional school choice for 2014 Kindergarten. Liz spoke briefly about unfunded mandates. She outlined the handout which include things that all schools are required to do by state or federal law and are either partially or completely unfunded. Marrone questioned OPEV costs-Lafond responded it is not historically funded through the school budget. She also questioned the contract negotiations if they are considering future costs. Lance stated that is a consideration and it is factored into the negotiation. Liz pointed out that of all the south shore towns Carver is the only town with a zero increase in the budget. Liz stated that the Kindergarten program is a cost savings to the community. Ward questioned the flat budget as not progressing the programs in the school. Liz stated the limits the school has had in the limited technology department and last year they had to let go of the technology teacher. Ward stated he is not happy with that. John Cotter questioned the unfunded OPEV payments. Liz stated that they have had to make due and this

year they were able to partially close the gap without eliminating teachers. Lance stated that they will look to be creative when hiring new staff in the hopes that one teacher may be able to provide two different programs. They will look for these opportunities to continue to close the gap. Cotter questioned the cost savings and LaFond replied that the ongoing dedication of funds is thru new revenue which raises the question of the personal property and new growth. The tax dollars you have need to be utilized for the obligations you have. Cotter questioned when the payments will be forced to be made. LaFond stated the economy may provide an opportunity down the road, but the need for more programs will need to be addressed. Franey stated the town is making an effort toward the change in the health care plan. Pat stated that you will not see any other town with two years at a flat budget and the health plan is a GIC look-alike, in both cases, the town and school have been forward thinking. LaFond stated that they are looking at a medicare supplemented plan to help prevent long term liability costs. Andy Cardarelli questioned the costs of special education and the selection of the school. Liz explained the district placements are done by the diagnosing of the specific disability and the team makes a recommendation which is all mandated by the law. When there is more than one child with a specific need, they build an in-house program. Cotter questioned the utility billing and the projected budget. Cotter questioned technology budget –Liz stated that the “Park” exam is now required to take the test online so they will need three full grade levels to have a tablet device and it is needed in advance of the test. The school’s infrastructure will not accommodate the need required for computers to be used. Cotter questioned future potential issues-Liz responded that there is a technology plan in place and the appropriate policies and insurance will be in place. John Cotter questioned the cost of transportation. Liz and Pat stated they will look at it, but that due to the size mileage-wise of Carver there would be very little cost-savings. Franey questioned the savings of the number of teachers retiring vs. the new teachers being hired. Liz stated depending on the type of replacement requirements will determine the hiring salary (i.e., a 4 yr. degree position will pay less than a position that requires a Masters Degree). O’Donnell questioned if there would be room to hire a technology teacher. Liz stated that they would like to do that as well as a Middle School Health Teacher. Cotter questioned security issue regarding the Dare Officer-Liz stated that position served the school but was primarily involved with a 5<sup>th</sup> grade substance abuse prevention program. He questioned a school resource officer and Liz stated that would be under the supervision of the Police Department. Andy Cardarelli questioned doing an RFP for transportation. Pat stated that would cause elevated costs including unemployment during the summer which gets passed down and almost 100% of the contract buses pay by the day, not the hour. Carver bus drivers are paid by the hour.

10 minute recess.

**Seek the opinion of outside counsel with regard to LaFond’s dual municipal employment contracts and any conflicts or liabilities that might arise.**

O’Donnell recused himself from the discussion and turned it over to the vice-chair. Franey stated he was confused that he had signed a contract with Abington beginning on May 6 and would like to get clarification. Motion by Franey to seek the opinion of outside counsel with regard to LaFond’s dual municipal employment contracts and any other conflicts or liabilities that might arise. Second by Marrone for discussion. Franey stated the by-law and Hewins interpreted the by law and stated that it is a transitional period. Franey stated he would like to

seek counsel. LaFond questioned the danger he foresees. Franey said he does not see any danger and is drawing this from the by-law and would like to get clarification. LaFond questioned if Franey didn't think he was giving the service to the town he said he would. With a new Town Accountant, he feels he has a professional obligation to the town to get them thru town meeting. Franey questioned the 60 day obligation and him taking vacation time. Rick stated he can stay past July 1 but it would put a new financial burden on the town. LaFond was confused at what the problem is. Franey wants someone to review the contract and get direction. Ward stated LaFond is not working for Abington and he is not working for both and between now and June 15<sup>th</sup>. He stated he will be working for Abington beginning on June 10. Hewins stated we cannot deny him his vacation benefits. LaFond stated if there is a concern he would like to fulfill his obligations with Carver and he is only hearing that there is a technical question. Franey stated he is just requesting a legal opinion. LaFond questioned what he is seeking to achieve. Franey wants clarification on his vacation time. LaFond stated you don't need a lawyer to fulfill his obligation to the town. Unless there is an effort to exclude him from town meeting he can't see any other reason to pursue this. Ward stated he is not going to be working for both towns so he suggests we move on. Helen questioned if LaFond could ensure thru an agreement that he would be available to be available to Carver if the town meeting went to June 17 & he stated he would be glad to do that. Motion by Marrone to table Franey's recommendation to seek outside council, second by Ward. Vote 4-0.

#### **Appointment of James Grimes to the Audit Committee**

Grimes spoke briefly about his experience. Motion by Marrone to approve James Grimes to the Audit Committee, second by Franey. Ward passed out criteria used in several towns as to how the committee should be appointed. Each town has specific needs, skills and the Dept. of Revenue recommended we do a Finance Committee member, a Selectmen and a Town Accountant. He feels the town needs parameters as to how to go about appointing the committee. He feels that should be the case. Franey suggested using the mission statement given to the original committee when they formed so it can be utilized by the newly appointed committee. Marrone stated that it was previously discussed and her motion stands. Ward stated that the applicants are business partners and would like to see more diversity in the committee. Grimes referenced a concern he had with a document from Ward. Marrone stated she has maintained her morals and ethics by ignoring the documents which contain personal hardship information. Ward stated his concern is that he didn't want to mention it at all. Grimes stated it is public information and feels that it is negative and feels that in the last 6 years a lot of people in the town are suffering. He feels the documents are edited and feels it is insulting. Franey stated he was not aware of this. O'Donnell stated everyone should treat others as you want to be treated. Vote 3-1-1 (Ward abstained).

#### **Town Administrator Budget Proposal**

LaFond feels he has addressed concerns that everyone has come to him with over time. His hope is that the Board of Selectmen will adopt his budget. The significant changes are Data Processing includes additional funds for technology support that we have been utilizing and part-time administrative help at the Council on Aging. He would like address any questions so there the Finance Committee and Selectmen are on the same page for town meeting. Marrone

questioned the Data Processing expense. LaFond pointed out that we have been drawing on their services for a while and we would be putting additional resources there so the town can use those also. Marrone asked for an analysis on the time Ellen Smith spends on the town vs. the school. Liz stated it is need based, not hour by hour. This week the Police Department was in need so Ellen worked there. She also pointed out that the former Town Accountant John Adams did a lot to service the town hall employees and other services were outsourced. Marrone would like to hold off for a year to get some sort of analysis for hours spent. LaFond suggested compromising on the budget and approach the school to work out a system to document the services and does not want to see the town spending extra money on emergency services. Cotter questioned new growth. LaFond estimated approximately \$400,000 is projected. Franey questioned other recreation. LaFond stated that the late John Rinella was looking to start programs. Part of the goal was to address the issues of staffing due to the uncertainty of attendance and need in recreation programs. Having the funding there will be a helpful tool for the Recreation Committee to begin.

### **Capital Outlay Recommendation and Financing**

LaFond passed out the Capital Outlay plan as laid out by the Capital Outlay Committee including the recommendations and requests for 2014. The amounts on the side is what is recommended be taken from Free Cash. He would propose \$464,850 be used to finance the middle column and the rest to be leased. Ron Clarke explained the work the Capital Outlay Committee has done throughout the year. The votes were all 4-0 due to the fact that one member was unable to attend the meetings but in the interim has since conceded to the decisions making the suggestions unanimously recommended by the committee. He acknowledged not everyone gets everything that they need. He feels every department head works with them to make it easy on the town as possible. He feels meeting the infrastructure needs of the town has become imperative. The next three fiscal years the Fire Department will be in need of new engines. He feels matters of public safety need to be taken seriously. He feels we need to find a way to build a new Fire Station, Police Station and School. He feels the only way to talk about it is to do a debt exclusion. Police are looking to replace firearms and two cruisers. The School is need of 2 buses and 2 minivans as well as the technology upgrades. He explained the need for security upgrades. Liz stated they had a security audit and the school pared down the recommendation to the bare bones needed for the entrances and exits making it a minimum security upgrade to make it as safe as possible. Cotter questioned if painting was maintenance not Capital Outlay. Ron stated anything over \$10,000 goes to the Capital Outlay.

Motion by Ward for the Board of Selectmen to accept the Town Administrator budget and Capital Outlay Budget, second by Franey. Finance Committee will wait until they receive additional documentation. Vote 5-0.

Motion by Cotter to accept the Capital Outlay plan as amended, second by Cardarelli. Vote 5-0.

## **Review & Recommendation of Special Town Meeting and Annual Town Meeting Budget Articles**

Motion by Franey to approve the Special Town Meeting articles, second by Marrone. Vote 4-0-1 (O'Donnell abstain). LaFond went through each Annual Town Meeting article. Motion to approve article #2 & #6 by Franey, second by Hewins. Marrone questioned the salaries of the Treasurer/Tax Collector and the Town Clerk. Lynn Doyle addressed the issue that the previous Town Clerk was getting \$1,000 for certification which she is no longer doing. The position is no longer getting compensated by fishing license fees. Motion to approve article #6 by Ward, second by Marrone. Franey questioned what the \$25,000 would be used for. Cotter gave an example of the implementation of the zobrio system. Vote 5-0. Motion by Marrone to approve article #8 - #11, second by Franey for discussion. Vote 5-0. Motion to approve article #12 by Marrone, second by Ward, Hewins & O'Donnell recused themselves. Vote 3-0. Motion by Marrone to approve article #13, second by Ward. No action taken. Motion to approve article #14 and #15 by Franey for discussion, second by Marrone. Motion to take no action by Ward, second by Marrone. Vote 5-0. Motion to approve articles #16-18 by Franey, second by Hewins. Vote 5-0. Motion to take no action on article #19 by Ward, second by Marrone. Vote 5-0. Motion to approve article #20 by Franey, second by Ward. Vote 5-0. Motion to approve articles #21-#23 by Franey, second by Marrone. Vote 5-0. Motion to approve article #24 by Franey, second by Hewins. Vote 5-0. Motion to approve article #25 by Franey second by Marrone. Vote 5-0 (with the exception of Hewins recusing herself from the Cole Property revolving account vote 4-0). Motion to take no action on articles #26 - #30 by Franey second by Marrone. Vote 5-0. Motion to table article #31 by Franey, second by Ward. Vote 5-0. Motion to approve article #32 by Marrone second by Hewins. Vote 5-0. Motion to table articles #33 -#34, second by Ward. Vote 4-0-1 (O'Donnell abstain). Motion to approve article #35 by Ward, second by Hewins. Vote 3-0-2 (Frandey & O'Donnell abstain). Motion to approve article #36 - #38 by Franey, second by Hewins. Motion by Franey to table the articles, second by Marrone. Vote 5-0. Motion by Franey to table article #39, second by Ward. Vote 4-0-1 (Marrone abstain). Motion by Franey to table article #40, second by Ward. Vote 5-0.

## **Possible rescheduling of Town Meeting until June 17, 2013**

No action taken

## **Approval of Minutes of March 12 and March 26, 2013**

Motion by Marrone to approve both sets of minutes with amendments, second by Ward. Vote 5-0.

## **Citizens Participation**

Paula Foley: Concerned about tabled agenda items including the Police Chief.

Alan Dunham: Requests that the Board includes the re-appointment of the Police Chief on the next agenda.

**Town Administrator Notes**

Wrapping up collective bargaining agreements and health insurance so the town will be in a place where they can be approved by town meeting. There is an LEPC meeting tomorrow.

**Selectmen Notes**

**Franey:** Thanked everyone for their hard work on the Son's of Veterans Hall.

**Hewins:** Wished everyone a nice Memorial Day.

**Ward:** The Memorial Day parade begins at the renovated Sons of Veteran's Hall & the mini parade at the North Carver Green.

**Marrone:** Thanked Rev. Merritt for praying for the Oklahoma victims tonight.

**O'Donnell:** Welcomed everyone to come to the Memorial Day parade on Monday. Keep all service men & women in your thoughts and prayers.

Motion to adjourn at 11:55 pm by Ward , second by Hewins , Vote 5-0.