



**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Working Session
Town Hall Meeting Room
461 Boston Street, Unit E-6, Topsfield
Wednesday, April 19, 2017
5:00 PM**

MEETING MINUTES

Board Members present in addition to Chairman Stephen Lais were Clerk Mark Lyons, Boyd Jackson and Martha Morrison. Selectman Laura Powers was not in attendance. From the Selectman's Staff, Town Administrator Kellie Hebert and Administrative Assistant Susan Winslow were in attendance. Others in attendance from Town Departments were Accountant Catherine Gabriel, Assessor Toula Guarino, Treasurer/Collector Barbara Michalowski, Director of Purchasing and Community Development Donna Rich. Resident Richard Gandt was in attendance.

Chairman Lais called the meeting to order at 5:09 pm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Lais announced, "Please be informed that the Board's Recording Clerk has a recording device for her record-keeping. Is there anyone else present who wishes to record the meeting?" There was no response to this question.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Lais informed the Board that he called this meeting to conduct a review of the FY18 Budget Process and Annual Town Meeting Warrant development process. He referred to two documents he drafted, "Post Mortem discussion points Meeting notes" and "Post Mortem discussion points Warrant issues" outlining his concerns:

- inconsistency in language/phrases, ie: raise and appropriate versus raise, assess and appropriate
- concern that the process ran late resulting in a last-minute rush
- time-frame should be reworked for FY19 process

- three typographical errors in ATM due to renumbering of warrant articles 31, 32 and 37 in the final week before the ATM went to the printer

Selectman Morrison agreed with these points and added that there should be more time to review the Draft Warrant before it goes to the printer. Selectman Jackson also agreed that there should be improvement in the process next year.

Town Accountant Catherine Gabriel distributed the document, "Post Budget Analysis" (PBA) indicating Highlights, Challenges/Obstacles and Future Considerations. This document was drafted by Catherine Gabriel after the Finance Team met to review the FY18 Budget Process and ATM process. Ms. Hebert responded to Chairman Lais's concern about language used in the ATM to say that the language in the articles was reviewed by KP Law and is legally correct.

Ms. Hebert praised the work of the Finance Team: Donna Rich, Barbara Michalowski, Catherine Gabriel and Toula Guarino for their hard work and assistance with the process.

Ms. Gabriel informed the Board that the Masconomet Budget numbers were released after the ATM Warrant went to the printer. The numbers were lower than indicated in the ATM Warrant. This will be clarified on the floor of Town Meeting.

Clerk Mark Lyons suggested that the Budget Process and ATM preparation calendar should be reviewed and improved for FY19 to start the preparation process earlier and make the timeline more legible. Clerk Mark Lyons offered to work with Town Administrator Hebert and others to go through the calendar and language for this year's Warrant to better prepare for next year. It was suggested that there be three tracks for the process: Capital, Budget and Warrant.

Chairman Lais asked Catherine Gabriel to include identification on the PBA document indicating the author and date it was drafted.

The Meeting Minutes for March 20, 22 and 27 will be reviewed at the April 24, 2017 Regular Business Meeting.

ADJOURN

Selectman Morrison made a motion to adjourn at 5:58 pm. Seconded by Selectman Jackson, so voted 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Winslow
Recording Secretary

Per the Open Meeting Law, the documents that were either distributed to the Board of Selectmen before the meeting in a packet, or at this meeting were:

1. Agenda
2. Annual and Special Town Meeting Warrants for May 2, 2017 Town Meeting
3. Document, "Post Mortem discussion points Warrant issues"
4. Document, "Post Mortem discussion points Meeting notes"
5. Document, "Post Budget Analysis"
6. Draft Meeting Minutes for March 20, 22 and 27.

Approved as written at the April 24, 2017 Board of Selectmen's meeting.

Pursuant to the "Open Meeting Law," G.L. 39, §23B, the approval of these minutes by the Board constitutes a certification of the date, time and place of the meeting, the members present and absent and the actions taken at the meeting. Any other description of statements made by any person, or the summary of the discussion of any matter, is included for the purpose of context only, and no certification, express or implied, is made by the Board as to the completeness or accuracy of such statements.