

Minutes of Meeting
CONWAY BOARD OF SELECTMEN
December 14, 2009

The Selectmen's Meeting convened at 4:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room of Conway Town Hall with the following present: Selectmen Larry Martin (Chair), C. David Weathers, Howard C. Dickinson, Robert Drinkhall and Michael DiGregorio; Town Manager, Earl W. Sires; Finance Director, Lucy Philbrick, Finance Director; and Recording Secretary, Holly Meserve.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Martin led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

The Board agreed to sign the manifest dated 12/17/09 out of session.

REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED 2010 BUDGET

Mr. Drinkhall stated that the reason for going line by line is because he feels that individuals and government are not fiscally responsible. Mr. Drinkhall discussed the status of the Federal Government's, the State Government's and the Local Government's budgets. Mr. Drinkhall stated that the Town does a very good job and this is an extraordinary time and we need to take extraordinary measures. Mr. Sires stated that they have come in under budget over the past few years by an average of about 1.2%.

Mr. Sires stated that the Board of Selectmen has asked staff every year for a status quo budget; but if you want to save money and save expenses you have to stop providing services or level of services, or staffing. Mr. Sires stated that you will have to reduce what you do, what you provide to the community.

Mr. Sires stated that this budget is as lean as you can get and do what we do. Mr. Sires stated that we cannot shave the budget much more and keep doing what we are doing. Mr. Drinkhall stated that other Towns have been laying off employees, requiring furloughs without pay, cutting road salt and shutting off street lights. Mr. Drinkhall stated that we are not quite that far yet, but we could do better.

EXECUTIVE

0150 - Reference Books: Mr. Drinkhall moved, seconded by Mr. Weathers, to reduce from \$200 to \$100. Mr. Dickinson asked if the RSA books need to be replaced. Mr. Sires stated we have been relying on the internet. Mr. Sires stated that we do wait until this time of year to purchase such items to see

how we are doing. **Motion carried with Mr. Martin voting in the negative (4-1-0).**

0170 - Executive Seminars: Mr. Drinkhall moved, seconded by Mr. Dickinson, to reduce from \$500 to \$250. Mr. Sires stated that this covers the municipal meetings. Mr. DegliAngeli stated that he is on the Board of Directors for the New England Regional Chapter of SWANA (Solid Waste Association North America) and is one of two Directors for the State of New Hampshire. Mr. DegliAngeli stated that he is planning on attending the conference in Boston. Mr. Drinkhall asked the cost of that conference. Mr. DegliAngeli stated that this year's was \$800. Mr. Dickinson stated that the line item should be increased to \$1,000. **Motion unanimously defeated (0-5-0).**

Mr. Drinkhall moved, seconded by Mr. Dickinson, to increase to \$1,000. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).

0205 – Office Supplies: Mr. Drinkhall moved to reduce from \$8,500 to \$7,500. There was no second.

0210 – Telephone: Mr. Drinkhall moved, seconded by Mr. Dickinson, to reduce from \$11,000 to \$10,000. Motion defeated with Mr. Weathers and Mr. Martin voting in the negative and Mr. DiGregorio abstaining from voting (2-2-1).

0215 – Postage: Mr. Drinkhall moved, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall, to reduce to \$19,000. Motion carried with Mr. Weathers and Mr. Martin voting in the negative (3-2-0).

0230 – Office Equipment and Maintenance: Ms. Philbrick stated this is where the maintenance for the copiers goes and this is the time of year for Budget Committee copies; so this will go up. Mr. Drinkhall moved, seconded by Mr. Dickinson, to reduce from \$12,100 to \$11,100 Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).

Mr. Weathers stated that there is a \$2,100 savings under Executive. Ms. Philbrick stated that the bottom line for Executive is \$223,101. **Mr. Drinkhall moved, seconded by Mr. Dickinson, to approve the bottom line of \$223,101 under Executive. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).**

SOLID WASTE

Mr. DiGregorio asked if the number under Administrator is for two people. Mr. Sires answered ½ of two people. Mr. DiGregorio asked why it is at 8%. Ms. Philbrick stated when these reports were done the merit adjustments had not been made. Mr. Sires stated that the number you see in 2009 hasn't been adjusted for raises given in 2009. Ms. Philbrick stated that the adjusted number is \$56,008.

Mr. DiGregorio stated that he couldn't find where the benefits were and asked if they are somewhere else. Mr. Sires stated Non-Union is in Employee Benefits.

1740 - Diesel and Gas: Mr. Drinkhall asked what was used for a per gallon figure. Mr. DegliAngeli stated that the 2010 requested was level from 2009. Mr. Drinkhall asked if it looks like we will have to spend that. Mr. DegliAngeli answered that it does not, but at the time it was when they were increasing. Mr. DegliAngeli stated that we have always waited to make our adjustments. Mr. Drinkhall asked if he thinks that is enough. Mr. DegliAngeli stated that we don't really know.

1653 – Merit Account: Mr. Drinkhall asked why there has been no expenditure in the last year and a half. Ms. Philbrick stated that the contract requires that they receive increases as of November 1st and as of now, there is nothing left in that account. Mr. Sires stated in 2010 we plan to adjust that with the tentative agreement with the Union with the 2% merit increase and the change in the Co-Pay Insurance Plan.

1655 – Sick Leave: Mr. Drinkhall stated that the actual is \$7,300; do we have enough for 2010. Ms. Philbrick answered in the affirmative and stated that it is based on unused sick time in 2009. Mr. Drinkhall asked if she is comfortable with that number. Ms. Philbrick answered in the affirmative.

1680 – Equipment and Hand Tools: Mr. Drinkhall asked if there is anything coming up that would be unusual. Mr. DegliAngeli stated last year when there was a freeze, a major piece of equipment, the baler, went down. Mr. DegliAngeli stated that they had two outfits look at it and said it was done, but we fixed it in house and it has been working for three weeks now. Mr. DegliAngeli stated that they are still waiting for a few bills that will be taken out of that line.

1767 – Household Hazardous Waste Day: Mr. Dickinson asked if most of that is collected in the summer. Mr. DegliAngeli stated that it is one single day in September. **Mr. Dickinson moved, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall, to reduce from \$9,000 to \$8,500.** Mr. DiGregorio asked the number of people who attend. Mr. DegliAngeli stated that the numbers are very consistent. Mr. DiGregorio asked if the company we contract with to take the waste has been increasing their prices. Mr. DegliAngeli stated that they have held their prices for two years and will hold for next year.

Mr. Weathers stated you expect people to save all year long and then shut them off when the money has run out. **Motion defeated with Mr. DiGregorio, Mr. Weathers and Mr. Martin voting in the negative (2-3-0).**

Mr. Weathers moved, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall, to approve the bottom line of \$742,079. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).

HIGHWAY

1378 – Seminars and Professional Development: Mr. Dickinson moved, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall, to reduce to \$2,000. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).

1490 - Garage Tools: Ms. Philbrick stated that \$7,350 is currently spent.

1540 – Highway Street Lights: Mr. Drinkhall stated that he would like to see what we could save by shutting off lights. **Mr. Drinkhall moved, seconded by Mr. DiGregorio, to turn off any street lights that are not in a business district and that are not at an intersection with a sidewalk.** Mr. Dickinson stated that the town has not done a good job of striping these roads and sometimes the street lights are needed. Mr. Weathers stated without knowing the number of lights and the effect this will have, he is not in favor of this motion at this time. Mr. Weathers stated that it is like saying we support the business district and not the residential district.

Mr. DiGregorio stated that Tom Irving did a good job investigating the number of lights. Mr. DiGregorio asked what the savings was with shutting off approximately 30 lights. Mr. Martin answered \$5,100. Mr. DiGregorio stated that he does not want to shut off all the lights, but he would like to see more efficient lighting. Chief Ed Wagner stated where we turn the lights out it is very dark and is very dangerous for the motoring public, the walking public and it is dangerous for the police.

Mr. Drinkhall stated that he would like to amend his motion to look at what the cost savings would be. Mr. Dickinson agreed to the amended motion. Mr. Martin stated that the motion would direct staff to look at particular lights and what the cost savings would be. **Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).**

1570 – Salt and Calcium: Mr. Drinkhall moved, seconded by Mr. DiGregorio, to reduce to \$150,000. Mr. Drinkhall stated that we use an ungodly amount of salt and we should put the responsibility back on the people. Mr. DiGregorio stated that the current number obviously reflects the beginning of the year, but what have we spent during the last couple of storms. Ms. Philbrick stated that the bills have not come in yet. Mr. Sires stated that we can look at this line item in March and have a discussion at Town Meeting. **Motion defeated with Mr. Dickinson, Mr. Weathers and Mr. Martin voting in the negative (2-3-0).**

1590 – Highway Striping: Mr. Sires stated that the paint formula has changed with environmental changes, so now you get a season out of the paint if you're lucky. Mr. Sires stated due to the construction schedule we didn't do some of the striping. Mr. Sires stated that they had to work out the details with the low bidder and that has now been resolved to our satisfaction, but we didn't

do a good bit of the striping this year. **Mr. Drinkhall moved, seconded by Mr. DiGregorio, to reduce from \$27,836 to \$25,000. Motion defeated with Mr. Dickinson, Mr. Weathers and Mr. Martin voting in the negative (2-3-0).**

Mr. Drinkhall moved, seconded by Mr. Dickinson, to approve the bottom line of \$1,887,583. Motion unanimously carried.

POLICE

Chief Ed Wagner; Commissioner, David Doherty and Commissioner, Robert Porter were in attendance. Mr. DiGregorio stated in the general budget it is confusing on what role we play. Mr. DiGregorio stated that the Town in the past has been very conservative; and you do due diligence too, but he was wondering if there is anything you think you can come up with to cut out of the budget. Mr. DiGregorio stated that he looks at the manifest every week and the communications budget sticks out at him. Mr. DiGregorio asked when the last time it was reevaluated.

Chief Wagner stated the answer to the first question is no. Chief Wagner stated in regard to the second question there are five lines coming in, two cell phones and we pay the State a terminal fee, which gives us access to motor vehicles. Mr. DiGregorio stated there are two cell phones. Mr. DiGregorio asked if they are using their personnel phones. Chief Wagner answered in the affirmative and stated that they are not reimbursed.

0940 - Secretarial: Mr. Drinkhall asked if the 4% increase was due to a raise. Chief Wagner answered in the affirmative. Ms. Philbrick stated that \$89,745 is what is currently budgeted. Mr. Drinkhall stated that he doesn't see where it is possible to cut the budget. Chief Wagner stated that he did a quick overview of 2009 budget and there will be a couple \$1,000 left.

Mr. Dickinson moved, seconded by Mr. Weathers, to approve \$2,571,914 for the Police Budget. Mr. DiGregorio stated that he would like to find another \$50,000 to fix some other funds. Mr. Weathers stated he would like to see a savings, but not out of the operating budget. Mr. Weathers stated he would like to review the vehicle fleet. Mr. Sires stated that the Board will discuss separate articles at a later date.

Mr. Martin asked for public comment; Jim Lafabvre asked how the fuel cost is decided and budgeted for. Chief Wagner stated that they review previous years for amount of fuel used and its cost. Mr. Lafabvre asked who they purchase the fuel from. Chief Wagner answered Lyman. Chief Wagner stated that they provide fuel for the Town and we then get reimbursed.

Bob Barriault stated that he has read where some Police Departments have gone to hybrid vehicles; is that something to look at. Chief Wagner stated that they don't get in high speed chases every day and it is something we could

consider, but think you will find that they are used more as administrative vehicles and not transporting criminals. Mr. DiGregorio stated that they are more for the inner cities. Mr. DiGregorio asked if the Resource Officer has been rolled into the School Budget. Mr. Sires stated that it is still under discussion. Chief Wagner stated that the money still has to be raised and appropriated under our budget. **Motion carried with Mr. DiGregorio voting in the negative (4-1-0).**

PARKS AND RECREATION

John Eastman appeared before the Board. Mr. Martin stated that fees are not a part of budget process. Mr. DiGregorio asked if all of the adult programs are self sufficient. Mr. Eastman answered in the affirmative, plus 10%. Mr. DiGregorio stated that administration costs keep going up and asked if the fee structure can be reviewed and see if that needs to be adjusted. Mr. Eastman answered in the affirmative. Mr. Sires stated that they would be happy to come back with recommendations.

Mr. DiGregorio stated that he is concerned with the location of the water for the new ice rink setup. Mr. DiGregorio asked if he is confident there is money there to fix any problems. Mr. Eastman stated that this is a much better situation and he thinks this is going to be okay. **Mr. Dickinson moved, seconded by Mr. Weathers, to approve the bottom line of \$292,758. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).**

LIBRARY

Mr. Sires stated that did not ask a representative of the Library to be present. **Mr. DiGregorio moved, seconded by Mr. Weathers, to reduce the overall budget by \$25,000.** Mr. DiGregorio stated there is a difference between want and need and we need to buckle down on things that we want. **Mr. Dickinson moved, seconded by Mr. Martin, to amend the motion to reduce the overall budget by \$15,000.** Mr. Dickinson stated that they have cut back on a number of things; they have made an effort and he doesn't think they can make a whole lot more.

Amended motion defeated with Mr. DiGregorio, Mr. Drinkhall and Mr. Weathers voting in the negative (2-3-0) defeated.

Motion to reduce by \$25,000 carried with Mr. Dickinson and Mr. Martin voting in the negative (3-2-0). Ms. Philbrick stated that the bottom line would be \$427,934.

ELECTION AND REGISTRATIONS

Mr. Drinkhall moved, seconded by Mr. Dickinson, to approve the bottom line of \$95,560. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).

FINANCE

Mr. Sires stated we ended up out to bid for 2009 and we received one bid. Mr. Sires stated there is something going on in the audit industry and there are a lot of companies not taking on new customers. Mr. Sires stated that our long term auditor didn't bid and dropped us. Mr. Sires stated that we received one response and the fee was doubled. Mr. Sires stated that we had to go back to the existing auditor, negotiate a deal and we are now locked in for three years.

Mr. Drinkhall asked why the Budget Committee line has doubled to \$2,600. Ms. Philbrick stated that the current amount spent is \$1,600. Mr. DiGregorio stated that number was increased a few years ago because the meetings were going very long. Mr. Lafabvre stated it is mostly for the minutes. Mr. Drinkhall asked if it could be reduced to \$2,000. Mr. Lafabvre stated he would be more comfortable with \$2,200. **Mr. Drinkhall moved, seconded by Mr. DiGregorio, to reduce to \$2,200. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).**

Mr. Drinkhall moved, seconded by Mr. Weathers, to approve the bottom line of \$253,151. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).

ASSESSING

Mr. Drinkhall moved, seconded by Mr. Weathers, to approve the bottom line of \$141,581. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).

LEGAL

Mr. Sires stated that he is concerned that is not enough. **Mr. Weathers moved, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall, to approve the bottom line of \$60,000. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).**

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Mr. Weathers moved, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall, to approve the bottom line of \$864,445. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).

PLANNING

Mr. Drinkhall moved, seconded by Mr. Weathers, to approve the bottom line of \$162,533. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).

GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

Mr. DiGregorio stated if the garage doesn't pass we are going to be in serious problems with fixing that garage. Mr. Sires stated that it does not have to be in an operating budget, it can be a warrant article. Mr. Sires stated that we don't know what the fix is in the interim or even if we have to do that. **Mr. Dickinson moved, seconded by Mr. Weathers, to approve the bottom line of \$107,726. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).**

CEMETARIES

Ms. Philbrick stated that there needs to be a line item to move money into if necessary. **Mr. Dickinson moved, seconded by Mr. Weathers, to approve the bottom line of \$1. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).**

INSURANCE

Mr. Weathers moved, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall, to approve the bottom line of \$56,400. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Mr. Weathers moved, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall, to approve the bottom line of \$421,960. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).

INSPECTIONS

Mr. Dickinson moved, seconded by Mr. Weathers, to approve the bottom line of \$69,463. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).

HEALTH

Mr. Weathers moved, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall, to approve the bottom line of \$3,275. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).

WELFARE

Mr. Drinkhall moved, seconded by Mr. Weathers, to approve the bottom line of \$85,632. Mr. Martin stated that BJ Parker does a tremendous job. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).

PATRIOTIC PURPOSE

Mr. Drinkhall moved, seconded by Mr. Weathers, to approve the bottom line of \$11,700. Mr. Dickinson stated that a number of towns are putting fireworks in special articles. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).

Mr. Dickinson moved, seconded by Mr. Martin, to reconsider the motion. Mr. Sires stated that Mr. Eastman is just about starting on the planning for Fourth of July and we would be at risk of having entertainment and no fireworks if defeated. Mr. Dickinson stated that he would like to see more participation from the businesses. Mr. Dickinson asked if this pays for all the fireworks. Mr. Sires answered in the affirmative. Mr. Dickinson stated that he would like to see the businesses contribute. Ms. Philbrick stated that the entertainment is paid for by contributors and the Town only pays for the fireworks. Mr. Dickinson withdrew his motion to reconsider. Mr. Martin withdrew his second.

CONSERVATION

Mr. Weathers moved, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall, to approve the bottom line of \$17,250. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).

DEBT PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST

Mr. Dickinson moved, seconded by Mr. Weathers, to approve the bottom line of \$433,045. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).

CAPITAL RESERVE

Mr. Dickinson moved, seconded by Mr. Weathers, to approve the bottom line of \$680,500. Motion carried with Mr. DiGregorio voting in the negative (4-1-0).

BOTTOM LINE

Mr. Dickinson moved, seconded by Mr. Weathers, to approve the budget of \$9,608,581. Motion unanimously carried (5-0-0).

ADJOURN

The Board adjourned without objection at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly L. Meserve
Recording Secretary