

Town of Ashfield

Select Board & Finance Committee joint Budget Meeting Minutes

March 23, 2015

Budget meeting was held at the Ashfield Town Hall on March 23, 2015. Meeting was called to order at 6:05 P.M by the Chair Tom Carter. There were 5 Audio recorders and approximately 2 people in the audience.

Select Board: Tom Carter-Chair, Ron Coler Vice-Chair, Todd Olanyk,

Finance Committee: Ted Murray-Chair, Ricki Carroll, Tom Schreiber

Executive Administrator: Mary Fitz-Gibbon

Asst. Municipal Clerk: Lynn Taylor

Agenda for 3/23/2015 (document 1)

Payroll Warrant WP15-20 dated March 23, 2015 (document 2)

Vendor Warrant W15-20 dated March 23, 2015 (document 3)

The Ashfield Lake dam plans are 90% complete in design (document 4). The Board and Tom Poissant review and discuss the plans making any changes they see necessary. One of the issues that took a while in the discussion was over the fence planned for low side of the dam on both sides of the bridge. The plans call for a split rail fence, however many concerns are raised regarding that type, other suggestions were made. After discussion it is decided to leave as in the plans for now. Poissant requested that something be placed in front of the dry hydrants to protect them. Poissant would also like to see the temporary aprons to the staging areas changed to permanent if there was not much more cost to the Town. Coler reminds the Board that if changes need to be made it should be done now if it is done later it will cost. Paullette questions weather this will be ADA complaint? Coler advises that it will not be and didn't think it would be an issue. Coler wanted it in the record that these plans have been in Town Hall for viewing since last Friday .Coler makes a motion to appoint Jim Cutler to the FRCOG pipeline advisory Committee as Ashfields representative, seconded. **VOTE: 3-0-0**

Discussion. Carter would like to see the meeting minutes from this committee in a timely fashion. Coler advises that Ashfield is the only town who has not had a Representative on this committee.

Appointments:

Assessors: Sandy Lilly advises the Board that Amy Shapiro has decided to run as a write in for the Assessors seat and will be going to the schooling with Donna Sarro. Lilly gives an overview of her FY16 budget (**document 5**), the only huge increase pertains to more hours for the Clerk. Looking to go from 15 to 19 hrs. Per week at a rate of \$17.32 per hr. this is an increase in pay of \$3,525.00. She explains that Jen does not have enough hours to get her work done, and also would like more public Hrs. the plan is for Monday-Wednesday. Open to the public.

Finance Committee is called to order by Ted Murray-Chair @ 7:20 PM

Town Hall Building Committee:

Stuart Harris gives an overview of his budget (document 6) they are looking for \$7,000.00, they would like to purchase stage lighting and paint the offices of the Town Clerk, Assessors, and Collector. There is discussion as to the lights and what kind to purchase as well as discussion on the lights in the ceiling now. Carter questions the Town offices and its functionality, and whether it was time to start looking for another alternative. Harris advises that it would take hundreds of thousands of dollars to do the offices the right way and in that process would lose the Town Hall as we know it. As it is now the walls are temporary and could be taken out and Town Hall would be back to its original state. Harris advises if you have an alternative place that would be great because redesigning Town Hall would cost way too much money. Murray questions Lilly about the Assessor's office and how crowded it seemed to him when he was in there. Lilly said for the most part it was fine. He also agreed with Carter that the offices the way they are very choppy you cannot go to ones office without disturbing others on the way. Murray also reminds the Board that the DLS Financial review recommended something be done with the offices.

General Government:

Ann Dunne Town Clerk presents her budget (**document 7**) to the Boards line by line. Taking and answering questions. She advises there are huge changes coming in elections pertaining to the 10 days of early voting which should be ready for the Presidential Election. She asks the Boards to fund a \$1, 000.00 towards

preservation of records, explaining how important these are. Dunne has asked for this in the past and has yet to be funded, she does have one book per year restored but that is done by donations.

Laura Blakesley Collector/Treasurer: Laura starts with the Treasurer budget **(document 8)** there are no changes other than the 2 1/2% Cola on salary. The Collector budget Laura is looking as requested in the DLS report to have her demands and fees folded into her salary. There is a lengthy discussion regarding having both Del's and Laura's fees and demands incorporated into their salaries as they are the only employees that receive these. Some of the reasons for changing this are things would be more transparent, would help retirement. Carter brings up the point that a collector getting demands and fees would be incentive to do a good job collecting outstanding debt. If this is to happen it will required a bylaw change. After discussion it is decided to e-mail Town Counsel and have her draft a possible by-law on this issue. There is a discussion regarding tax title Laura advises that right now she has two properties in tax title. For FY 16 she will need she will need more money as she anticipates more properties plus continuing with the current ones. She advises the Board if they need \$3000.00 for the STM they can use it from tax title but will need to be put back. Carter feels there is no need to take it then have to turn around and give it back. After discussion the Boards decide to use \$7000.00 as a place holder for the tax title line for FY16.

Fitz-Gibbon gives and over view of the rest of the General Government lines taking and answering questions for the Boards.

Fitz-Gibbon informs the Board that a meeting for the Town administrator search Committee will be this Thurs at 7:00 PM

Murray has done his homework from last week on the Capital expenditures spreadsheet he reviews with the Board explaining his numbers and his reasoning for them. **(Document 9)**

Murray and Carter will get together and go over the expense report looking for money to use at the STM on April 6, 2015.

Coler makes a motion to adjourn, seconded. VOTE: 3-0-0

Adjourned at 10:00 PM

Document List:

1. Agenda for 3-23-2015

2. Payroll Warrant WP15-20 dated March 23, 2015
3. Vendor Warrant W15-20 dated March 23, 2015
4. The Ashfield Lake dam plans
5. Assessors FY 16 Budget
6. Town Hall Building Committee FY 16 budget
7. Town Clerk FY 16 Budget
8. Treasurer/Collector FY 16 Budget
9. Spreadsheet drafted by Murray regarding capital expenditures
- 10.