

**BRATTLEBORO SELECTBOARD  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2014  
SPECIAL MEETING – 7:00AM  
EXECUTIVE SESSION – 9:00AM  
MINUTES**

Selectboard members present: David Gartenstein, Kate O'Connor, David Schoales, John Allen, and Donna Macomber.

Staff present: Interim Town Manager Patrick Moreland, Finance Director John O'Connor, Town Assessor Russell Rice, Police Chief Mike Fitzgerald, Police Captain Mark Carignan, Recreation & Parks Director Carol Lolatte, Fire Chief Mike Bucossi, Assistant Fire Chief Peter Lynch, Public Works Director Steve Barrett, Highway/Utilities Superintendent Hannah O'Connell, Town Clerk Annette Cappy, Library Director Jerry Carbone, Planning Director Rod Francis, and Executive Secretary Jan Anderson.

Media present: Howard Weiss-Tisman representing the Brattleboro Reformer and cameraman Ian Kiehle from BCTV.

Others present: Ivan Bruneau, Dale Joy, and Dick DeGray.

Chair David Gartenstein called the meeting to order at 7:00am in the Selectboard meeting room. He confirmed that the meeting was officially warned.

***PUBLIC PARTICIPATION***

None.

***FY16 BUDGET*** – Chair Gartenstein offered a list of items to be reviewed and discussed at this meeting. Moreland suggested adding an additional item being a \$30,000 capital item consisting of purchasing public recycling vessels to be installed where public trash receptacles are offered in accordance with the new Act 148 trash law. There was some discussion about the changes made to the budget since the last budget discussion, including the Police-Fire facilities project, effects of adoption of 1% local option sales tax, the Museum's request for \$7,000, and an increase of attorney's fees. Moreland reviewed the summary of changes made to the proposed budget since the Board's last budget discussion.

The Board agreed to discuss how to proceed with the Police-Fire facilities project as approved by the Board at the December 16 meeting, including completing renovations to Central and West Brattleboro Fire Stations as previously proposed and relocating the Police Station to a Putney Road location. There was substantial discussion by the Board about how to proceed, moving forward in a fiscally responsible manner, necessary funds for the project, phasing in the Police Station relocation and renovations over time, and other matters. Dick DeGray shared his comments and concerns. Gartenstein and O'Connor spoke about financial concerns and the need for a long-range plan for operating expenses, capital equipment, infrastructure expenses, and other projects.

**MOTION BY DAVID SCHOALES TO INCLUDE THE FIRST YEAR BOND INTEREST PAYMENT ON A \$4.7 MILLION BOND OR NOTE, DEPENDING ON WHERE TO GET THE BEST RATE, TO COMPLETE THE TWO FIRE STATION PROJECTS AND TO ESTABLISH \$1 MILLION EARNEST MONEY TOWARD THE COMPLETION OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT.**

There was further discussion. Finance Director John O'Connor noted that interest rates on bonds and notes were substantially different. He said the interest rate on a note was lower but would only be spread over a five-year term, whereas interest on bonds could be carried out over twenty to thirty years. He asked for clarification in order to add the proper interest payments into the proposed budget. Schoales agreed to amend his motion to borrow money through a bond and remove the possibility of borrowing through a note.

**AMENDED MOTION BY DAVID SCHOALES TO INCLUDE THE FIRST YEAR BOND INTEREST**

**PAYMENT ON A \$4.7 MILLION BOND TO COMPLETE THE TWO FIRE STATION PROJECTS AND TO ESTABLISH \$1 MILLION EARNEST MONEY TOWARD THE COMPLETION OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT. MOTION CARRIED 3-2 (GARTENSTEIN AND O'CONNOR OPPOSED).**

Gartenstein called for a 5-minute recess at 8:15am.

Gartenstein reconvened the meeting at 8:25am. He said the next item to discuss was the impact of the new pay-as-you-throw (PAYT) system. There was discussion about the proposed PAYT system, pending policy development on the sale of PAYT trash bags, need to purchase public recycling vessels to install with public trash receptacles, pending and unknown changes to the trash/recycling processing system, and implementation of Act 148 requirements. Dick DeGray inquired about public recycling vessels. Ian Kiehle spoke in support of the PAYT system and composting program. No action was taken on this matter.

Gartenstein said the next item to discuss was renovations to the Municipal Center. Moreland spoke about the improvements required by the Fire Safety Division and said the total cost would be approximately \$450,000. He said that improvements could be made all at one time or phased in over the next two or three years. There was discussion by the Board. Gartenstein asked Administration to provide costs to include in the FY16 budget and subsequent years if improvements were phased in over two or three years. There was also some discussion about moving the offices out of the Municipal Center if the Police Department was relocated to a different location.

Gartenstein said the next item to discuss was various capital expenses that had been requested. The first request was for the purchase of air packs for the firefighters. Fire Chief Bucossi spoke about the age of the current air packs and the need to replace them. He said he received a quote of \$235,042 to purchase and replace all of the air packs. There was discussion about financing the purchase over a three-year period.

**MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN TO ENDORSE THE INCLUSION IN THE FISCAL YEAR 2016 BUDGET OF PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST PAYMENTS ON THE PURCHASE OF 34 AIR PACKS FOR THE FIRE DEPARTMENT AND FINANCED OVER A THREE-YEAR PERIOD. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

Gartenstein asked the Board to discuss five additional capital items:

(1) Replacement of one or two police cruisers. Police Chief Fitzgerald spoke in support of replacement of the 2008 and 2011 cruisers. Dale Joy spoke in support of maintaining proper equipment for emergency personnel. There was some discussion by the Board.

(2) Paving budget. Public Works Director Barrett spoke about the cost of paving roads and duration of repaved roads. There was some discussion by the Board.

(3) Sidewalk repair and replacement. Gartenstein said that approximately \$25,000 would be carried over in the capital fund, and that \$10,000 was in operating budget for sidewalk repair. Public Works Director Barrett discussed the costs for sidewalk repair and replacement, and the pending grant for the Main Street sidewalk replacement project. There was a brief discussion.

(4) Gibson-Aiken Center windows. Recreation & Parks Director Lolatte said there were 135 windows in the Gibson-Aiken Center in need of repair. She said that replacement of all of the windows would cost about \$120,000. She suggested phasing the replacement over a few years, and said that she obtained an estimate of \$30,000 for the first year to replace windows in the gymnastics room and other high priority windows around the Center. Schoales suggested asking the Energy Committee for its response. There was a brief discussion.

(5) Living Memorial Park pool repair. Recreation & Parks Director Lolatte said that a total repair would cost approximately \$400,000, with (a) repairing leaks in the pool at a cost of about \$165,000, (b) renovations to bath house for about \$75,000, and (c) renovations to the wading pool for about \$120,000. There was some discussion by the Board, including funding repairs through fundraising efforts. DeGray

spoke about extending the length of the pool season.

Gartenstein said that the Board was asked to consider use of the unassigned fund balance. He said that the audit report indicated that approximately \$1,962,900 would be available in the unassigned fund balance after payment of required insurance and tax relief payments. He said that the Selectboard previously adopted a guideline to keep 10% of the budgeted expenditures available in the unassigned fund balance. There was discussion about applying some of the funds to the operating budget or capital projects. DeGray suggested being specific about the use of the funds. Before deciding on the matter, Gartenstein asked the Board to vote on each of the five capital items previously discussed. There was a brief discussion between the motions to clarify each motion.

**MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN TO ADD \$42,000 FOR THE PURCHASE OF A SECOND POLICE CRUISER INTO THE FY16 CAPITAL BUDGET. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

**MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN TO ADD \$100,000 MORE INTO THE FY16 CAPITAL BUDGET FOR PAVING, MAKING THE TOTAL AMOUNT \$300,000 (RATHER THAN \$200,000). MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

**MOTION BY DAVID SCHOALES TO ADD \$50,000 INTO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS FY16 CAPITAL BUDGET FOR SIDEWALK REPLACEMENT. MOTION WAS DEFEATED 1-4 (GARTENSTEIN, O'CONNOR, MACOMBER AND ALLEN OPPOSED).**

**MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN TO INCLUDE \$30,000 IN THE FY16 CAPITAL BUDGET FOR REPLACEMENT OF WINDOWS AT THE GIBSON-AIKEN CENTER. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

**MOTION BY DAVID SCHOALES TO ADD \$75,000 IN THE RECREATION & PARKS CAPITAL FY16 BUDGET FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE BATH HOUSE AT THE LIVING MEMORIAL PARK POOL. MOTION WAS DEFEATED 1-4 (GARTENSTEIN, O'CONNOR, MACOMBER AND ALLEN OPPOSED).**

Gartenstein asked the Board to continue its discussion about whether to authorize a portion of the unassigned fund balance to defray capital and/or operating expenditures from the FY16 budget. There was some discussion. DeGray suggested that if use of the funds was authorized then specific expenditures be identified, rather than using the funds to reduce taxes. It was generally agreed to request up to \$500,000 be available from the unassigned fund balance to use for capital and operational items. The Board agreed to discuss it further at the regular Board meetings in January. Moreland reminded the Board that \$20,000 was voted previously to add to the Warning to investigate feasibility and assist in development of a skatepark at Living Memorial Park.

Gartenstein said the next item to discuss was potential cuts to the budget. The Board agreed to discuss this matter at a later time.

Gartenstein said the next item to discuss was implementation of a 1% Local Option Sales Tax. There was some discussion about the matter and the history of votes on it. DeGray suggested that it be added to the ballot again for the voters to respond in order to remind Representatives that it was voted in the affirmative by the voters at-large. Weiss-Tisman asked if voters would get an opportunity to vote on the Police-Fire facilities project. Gartenstein responded that full public process had not yet been designed but that it would be discussed at the January 6 regular Selectboard meeting. There was some discussion by the Board.

Gartenstein asked Administration to revise the FY16 budget to include items voted at this meeting, and provide a revised budget to the Board for further discussion at its meetings on January 6 and January 20. It was generally agreed that the Board anticipated approving the FY16 budget at the January 20 meeting, and approving the Town Meeting Warnings at the special meeting on January 29.

**MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS APPOINTMENT, EMPLOYMENT OR EVALUATION OF A PUBLIC OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE, WITH A FINDING THAT PREMATURE GENERAL PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE WOULD CLEARLY PLACE THE**

**TOWN, SELECTBOARD, AND PEOPLE INVOLVED AT A SUBSTANTIAL DISADVANTAGE. THE INTERIM TOWN MANAGER WAS INVITED TO ATTEND A PORTION OF THE SESSION. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

Gartenstein reconvened the meeting at 11:00am. There was no further business.

**MOTION BY DONNA MACOMBER AT 11:00AM TO ADJOURN. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.**

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David Schoales, Clerk