

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING FINAL MINUTES
March 31, 2015

The regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held at 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 31, 2015, in the first floor conference room of Independence Hall.

Members Present: First Selectman Michael C. Tetreau, Selectman Kevin P. Kiley, Selectman Sheila H. Marmion

Others Present: FairTV, Soundview, Linda Gardiner, Bob Mayer, Tom Conley, Tom Cullen, Scott Bartlett, Joe Michelangelo, Karen Ronald, Nancy Byrnes, Genny Reilly, Dr. David Title, Sands Cleary, Jessica Gerber, Mary Carroll-Mirylees, Heather Montilla, Bob Stone, Stanton Lesser

1) CALL TO ORDER

First Selectman Tetreau called the meeting to order at 3:45 pm.

2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3) PUBLIC EXECUTIVE BUDGET SESSION (**no public comment**)

Approval of FY 2015-2016 Budget, including all Town Departments and Board of Education and Water Pollution Control Authority

First Selectman Tetreau said he will discuss BOS salaries, revenue and expenditures for the Town and WPCA. Selectman Kiley thanked the CFO, his staff, Linda Gardiner, Dr. Title and his administration, the BOE, BOF, BOF Chairman Tom Flynn, First Selectman Tetreau and his administration for running a solid budget process this year with a lean budget. Selectman Marmion echoed this thanks and said it has been a smooth process thanks to so many people involved in it. She thanked the First Selectman. First Selectman Tetreau said this has been a team effort. The department heads did a phenomenal job over the past few years. He thanked Dr. Title and his team.

Selectman Kiley made a motion to hear, act and consider the First Selectman's recommended budget of \$291,088,646. Selectman Marmion seconded the motion.

First Selectman Tetreau referred to handouts on the BOS salaries. The handouts included a letter from the current Town Attorney, the former Town Attorney and Section 5.2 of the Town Charter. He said starting this year the Town Charter will be followed. Salaries will take effect after the next election. First Selectman Tetreau said he spoke to the BOS, BOF and RTM leadership so this issue looks less like a conflict of interest. As a result, a committee will be set up made up of two BOF members, one Republican and one Democrat, and 2 RTM members, one Democrat and one Republican. This committee will make a recommendation to the BOS on adjustments and compensation. This recommendation is not legally binding. To make the process clearer, the First Selectman would like the next Charter Revision Commission to take up this issue. In June, the BOS will hear recommendations from this new committee. The BOF and RTM will pick the members.

Regarding Revenues, First Selectman Tetreau asked Linda Gardiner if there are any adjustments to revenues. Mrs. Gardiner said there are none. The Selectmen had no adjustments to the revenues.

Selectman Kiley made a motion to accept revenues in the amount of \$291,088,646. Selectman Marmion seconded the motion which carried 3-0.

Selectman Marmion made a motion to rescind the above motion. Selectman Kiley seconded the motion which carried 3-0.

Selectman Kiley made a motion to approve non-taxable revenue in the amount of \$25,957,607. Selectman Marmion seconded the motion which carried 3-0.

CFO Bob Mayer gave the BOS a handout on potential adjustments.

Selectman Kiley made a motion to accept the amendments to the budget as reflected in the Potential Adjustments handout (this doesn't include WPCA). Selectman Marmion seconded the amendments which carried 3-0.

The Selectmen then reviewed the BOE budget. First Selectman Tetreau said the BOE health insurance line increased. Mr. Mayer gave the BOS a handout on potential adjustments for health insurance.

Selectman Marmion made an amendment to increase the BOE budget by \$367,579 for the BOE health insurance. Selectman Kiley seconded the motion.

Mr. Mayer said the handout he gave the BOS shows updated estimates for health care for FY 16. It reflects changes required by that experience. Selectman Marmion asked if there will be new numbers before the RTM votes on the budget. Mr. Mayer said there will be new numbers. Selectman Kiley said the goal is to make sure the BOE budget is whole as it came in so there needs to be a solution found to the problem of the health insurance increase. He asked if there were any anomalies in one month of activity that was not part of a normal trend line or is the information unavailable. Mr. Mayer said he expects the experience study for this year to be on track. Selectman Kiley asked if there are other options to make the budget whole without having to add to it and could any money on the town-side be moved to the BOE. Mr. Mayer said this is the internal service fund and the BOE used up the reserve in the last two years while the Town benefitted. The number will worsen by the end of this fiscal year and next year. The fund balance will deteriorate by \$1,200,000. Selectman Kiley said the town is getting an excess of \$250,000 for special ed state aid. Dr. Title said the special education grant is on the revenue side and after June 30, 2015, the town's education cost sharing will be adjusted. This money is town revenue. Mr. Mayer clarified that Selectman Kiley was referring to the General Education Grant revenue. Dr. Title noted these are two different grants. He said with a quirk in the state's adjustment the BOE incurred higher than expected expenses last year so it's getting a bump this one time. Mr. Mayer said there is no town money to move to the BOE.

The amendment carried 3-0.

Budget Director Linda Gardiner said the new number for the BOE is \$161,215,640. Selectman Kiley said he supports the BOE budget and it's an efficient budget. First Selectman Tetreau asked Dr. Title if there are any places in the BOE budget that could be adjusted to compensate for this increase. Dr. Title said there are no places. Selectman Marmion said the public schools are among the Town's finest assets. The BOE and administration have accomplished a lot. She said Dr. Title and the BOE did a terrific job with fiscal responsible government and meeting mandates. Selectman Marmion further stated that the goal of our schools is directly related to the quality of our town and housing values. First Selectman Tetreau said the quality of Fairfield's schools is number one for buyers.

Mr. Mayer gave the BOS a handout on potential adjustments on the new finance staff accountant position per Selectman Kiley. The Selectmen then went through expenses. Regarding Administration, Selectman Kiley discussed the proposed part-time clerk for conservation. He said the new director coming in will have the opportunity to make the best use of these dollars. In an effort to keep up the good work of the department, Selectman Kiley supports this adjustment. Selectman Marmion agreed with Selectman Kiley.

Selectman Kiley made an amendment to reduce Legal Services by \$50,000 in fees and professional services. Selectman Marmion seconded the amendment which carried 3-0.

Selectman Kiley thanked the non-profits for all they do and for providing certain services the Town cannot provide. Selectman Marmion agreed stating that these non-profits provide needed services to the Town. She would like to have greater specificity on what the Town is getting back on the funding it gives to Pequot Library.

First Selectman Tetreau said for the past two years he has sat down with the non-profits and looked for overlap and found none. Each non-profit provides value. Next year, he'll be looking for a formula and rationale from the non-profits and how town money is applied.

Regarding the proposed new finance staff accountant position, Selectman Kiley wants to find a few dollars to defer and thanked the finance department for the job description.

Selectman Kiley made an amendment to reduce the new finance staff accountant position by \$21,878. Selectman Marmion seconded the amendment.

Mr. Mayer said there are a lot of demands on his department. The comments in the audit letter said to have this position. First Selectman Tetreau said he has seen a tremendous increase in the workload in the last few years. He thanked Mr. Mayer. Selectman Marmion said it's not worth cutting this amount to save this amount of money because of the high workload in the finance department.

The amendment failed, 1-2-0. Selectman Kiley voted in favor; First Selectman Tetreau and Selectman Marmion voted against the amendment.

Regarding DPW Operations, Selectman Kiley asked if there is anything smaller in capital items. DPW Director Joe Michelangelo said the department can wait on the brush bucket attachment for the pay loader.

Selectman Kiley made an amendment to reduce the brush bucket attachment for the pay loader in the amount of \$19,500. Selectman Marmion seconded the amendment which carried 3-0.

Regarding the library, Selectman Marmion said she supports this budget. Selectman Kiley thanked the staff for their work. First Selectman Tetreau announced the upcoming One Book One Town event.

Selectman Kiley made an amendment to increase \$198 in health insurance in the Human Resources Department budget. Selectman Marmion seconded the amendment which carried 3-0.

First Selectman Tetreau made a motion to accept the expenditures budget as amended in the amount of \$291,302,456. Selectman Kiley seconded the motion which carried 3-0.

The Selectmen commented on the budget. Selectman Marmion talked about the strategic plan. Selectman Kiley said improvements have been made along the way. He's looking for a forward thinking budget. First Selectman Tetreau said Fairfield is one of the leaders in efficiency of delivery of services. He wants to make sure Fairfield stays as one of the best values in Connecticut. He noted the positive service increases while having a 1.6% budget increase. First Selectman Tetreau said the mill rate is one of the lowest around. He thanked his colleagues.

Selectman Kiley made a motion to approve \$5,417,036 for WPCA's budget. Selectman Marmion seconded the motion.

Selectman Kiley made an amendment to increase health insurance by \$9. Selectman Marmion seconded the amendment which carried 3-0.

Selectman Kiley made an amendment to decrease the WPCA budget by \$7,854 to adjust the OPEB with the new estimate information. Selectman Marmion seconded the amendment which carried 3-0.

Selectman Kiley made a motion to approve the WPCA budget, as amended, in the amount of \$5,409,191. Selectman Marmion seconded the motion which carried 3-0.

4) ADJOURN

Selectman Marmion made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6 pm. Selectman Kiley seconded the motion which carried 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer S. Carpenter
Recording Secretary

