

The following meeting was neither audiotaped nor video recorded.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND DEPARTMENT HEADS

Wednesday, 6 May, 2015, 10 o'clock a.m.

Town Hall Hearings Room

Meeting called to order at 10:00 am

Present are Chairman Cronin, Selectman Tanis, Selectman Menges, Jennifer Luiz, Jocelyn Tavares, Donald Hirschy, Jim Aguiar, Sue Medeiros, Chief Antone Roderick, Chief Robert MacDonald, Tom Ferry, Carol Beauregard and Administrative Assistant Karin Brady.

Jocelyn Tavares

The Library is having Pastel Painting tomorrow night. Jocelyn states that she just returned from a conference today, so she doesn't have a lot.

She does, however, have a story to share with the Board. A little girl that recently came into the library in a wheelchair. Her mom was with her and was really good about carrying her downstairs. Jocelyn says that she carried wheelchair down so she could get around. I shared this because it hit home with me. It is a public building and it should have access for handicapped citizens. It was during vacation week. I just wanted to share that with you.

Don Hirschy

Visitations are going well. The POW MIA dedication is this Saturday at 1:00pm. He is starting to get RSVP's and it looks like a lot of people will be attending the event.

Bristol County Sheriff's Office will be here starting Monday. The inmates will be cleaning our cemeteries in town and will be there for 3-4 days. Will be done for Memorial Day. All is looking good. He says that's all he has.

Chairman Cronin asks about the Memorial Day Parade. He asks if there are any changes. Don says it will end at the gazebo as of right now. He goes on to say that the Gazebo is not finished. But as of now ceremony will be there. He adds that he has a meeting at the gazebo tomorrow night.

Tom Ferry

He says that this is his busiest time of year. It was easier when it was snowing.

He asks the Board if any requests for street sweeping are coming to your office. The board answers "no". He adds that it is not an easy question to answer. They are finishing South Dighton today and then continuing west. There will be another three weeks of sweeping if you get any calls.

He goes on to say that his budget is still short. He is looking for transfers from other departments before finance committee meeting on Monday. He states that he needs another thousand. Carol Beauregard says that she will do a transfer for him, but she will need a form. Tom says he has a form with him. (Laughter). He says demands on our department are high. We do mowings for Park and Recreation, and we have a bulky item pickup coming at end of Month.

There are also other projects that are being requested.

Rapid recovery money - Use it or lose it. We are getting 43,000.00.

Paving company is coming in and we are trying to get ready for that. They want an order of 1000 tons minimum to spread, Chapter 90 turnaround is good. They wanted to come tomorrow, but I need to hold them off, due to other repairs that I need to do in preparation.

(Discussion of departments on what they will contribute to the Highway budget.)

Sue Medeiros

She sends out a huge thank you to the Fire Department and Stacey Ferry for Rabies Clinic.. They vaccinated over 35 dogs. It was a great turnout. She adds that the parking fine system is coming together. A little bit of revenue is coming in, but it is working.

Jen Luiz

Says that it is May. The end of year is coming. Everyone needs to worry about end of year budgets. They will need to be signed by sending department and voted by Finance Committee, before you spend it. Beginning of the year payrolls. Sick bonuses will come down to last day of June. But we can discuss everything else before then.

She adds that she will be taking Thursdays off, and may not be here on Wed afternoons either.

Jim Aguiar

He says his office continues to be busy. The Tyvek house has been taken down.

Regarding the quonset hut that came down during the winter, the Insurance has settled. It will be coming down, but not all of it. A couple of other buildings that have damage have been secured, but it will be mid to late summer before anything further is done with those due to insurance backups.

Chief Roderick

Rescue service air packs repairs are being done. There will be an aerial ladder test this Saturday. He says he doesn't foresee any problems, but will let you know.

Graduations concerts, etc., with schools coming up. Powder puff football game this weekend. Our guys donate time for this. There is also a faculty vs. student basketball game which has been moved to High school this Friday night. A lot of charity fund raising events going on.

The Cow Chip fireworks permit has been sent. Selectmen usually waive fee for the fireworks permit. Please keep this in mind. He adds that he is very busy.

Chief MacDonald

Cow chip festival at end of month. He states he has an upcoming meeting with the Lions club to set up emergency exit and such. We will meet with them before it starts. No parking signs will be set up along 138 and Center Street. Two guys will be hired by Lions for Saturday night. He says he will put extra coverage on within the town. The Sheriffs van will be brought in, because of people coming from surrounding areas. He adds that he will let the Fire Chief and Building Commissioner know when his meeting with lions will be.

Chairman Cronin asks about calls for commuter hours on Pleasant Street regarding speeding. He says "yes" and Forest Street is also a concern. They say motorists are traveling at 50 miles per hour. He says he does not think that is the case, but will put something together for morning and afternoon hours. This has worked well in the past. Traffic signs previously mounted on trees have been put on posts by the Highway Department. They have put the signs on posts on Park Street, due to complaints by residents.

Chief Roderick says he has one other thing regarding Forest Street and the condition of the road due to gas main work. The gas company told us when we had the meeting here it would be repaired. They promised to go through the town and repair the areas of pavement that they have previously worked on. They have a big upgrade project throughout several towns.

Carol Beauregard

She states that she had left a package about the solar farm on Williams Street. They would like to meet with you about going into a pilot program or face value program next week. There are 6 solar farms in Fall River. 3 are on pilot program, 3 are market value. The thing with the market value program, you need appraisals for market values and then, 9 out of 10 times they will apply for abatement. On pilot programs they pay one third of market value. They have a meeting Monday night in the Town of Mendon. If you would like to get together I will be available.

Selectman Menges says he would like to see what a pilot program looks like. Carol says she might have one from another town.

Chairman Cronin asks if any in Berkley are pilot programs. She says yes.

Selectman Menges asks, "Do you have a recommendation either way."

Carol says with pilot programs - at least you know x amount of dollars each year. It is easier to set up. With the Pilot program it is the personal property not the land. Selectman Menges asks if the way it is valued is a generating company so that is at the highest property tax rate. Carol says it is but there are a lot of exemptions too. Panels, land and some of the equipment to produce. That is all tax exempt. She adds that she will set up a meeting as soon as the board gets back to her.

She goes on to say that she is in certification this year. DOR gives you evaluation plan deadlines. They want tax rates set by October 23rd. So if we have a town meeting in the fall, if it could be early October, it would make it easier.

Selectman Menges says that fall meeting should not affect the tax rate. He says we will try.

Chairman Cronin says "we'll let you know about meeting." He adds that he has questions also.

Selectman Menges adds that the Special town meeting on the 27th at town hall at 6:30 is to accomplish the last business of 2015. He goes over the warrant. He adds that it would have gone on June 1st, but it was too difficult to usher the public out of the auditorium and then have them check back in. He adds that the Town Meeting will be held on June 1st. There are two ways to prepare the warrant.

The first is that we can put down all of your requests that way they you made them, and then the Finance Committee will give their recommendations. There is a possibility the town will approve what you have prepared, even though it is in excess of Proposition 2 ½. Then we will have to call another meeting to undo what we have done.

The second way is to wait until finance committee has brought everything within the limits of prop 2 ½ and then put the reduced numbers on our warrant. With the moderator we have, they cannot be increased on the floor. We have decided to wait. Next Wednesday we will have a signed warrant. That will be the ceiling above which appropriation will not be allowed.

It is an undemocratic, paternalistic way of doing a budget, but there is a volatility in the public at the moment for increased funding of public safety. I will not say any more about that right now.

When you are talking with those that are advocating for your department, remember two things

1. The finance committee needs a cogent explanation of what you need any why. This business of taking 5 meetings and one month to explain is for the birds. The public should have had that to chew on months ago.

2. The other thing is, when you are talking with your supporters, remind them that with the school expenses we are \$330,000.00 over the levy limit. The taxes will rise two and a half percent from the budget and on top of that, the bonds for the police station. Taxes are rising.

Carol B says there was a complaint in my office, about not being able to pay the taxes. I get this all the time. I offer them to fill out the application and 9-10 of these people have applied and they are not qualified for exemptions. Same people every year. I have seen the meetings - Please do not make it sound that this town is in poverty.

Selectman Menges says there are people in this town who are in desperate poverty and are too proud to come to your office. Even if the people are not in dire straits, our commercial tax rate is preventing commerce from coming in. The capital expenses that we are facing. Some of the water structures in

town go back to 1912. We are faced with extreme challenges. When we make request for spending, we must consider everything.

Adjourned 10:44 am

Chairman Cronin thanks everyone for coming.

Respectfully submitted

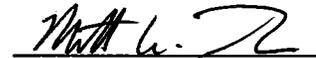
Karin Brady
Board of Selectmen



DEAN V. CRONIN
Chairman
Board of Selectmen



PATRICK W. MENGES
Clerk
Board of Selectmen



MATTHEW W. TANIS
Member
Board of Selectmen