

**Select Board  
February 26, 2024  
Meeting Minutes**

**Public present:** C. DeFalco, J. Freeman, J. Freeman, C. Jambora, D. Contois, R. Corriveau, Chief W. Beaudry, M. Egan, J. Ballou  
**Members present:** M. Kelly, A. Soto, P. Vandal

Chair M. Kelly called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. All in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. M. Kelly announced that the meeting is being recorded.

**Meeting Minutes**

**MOTION:** A. Soto, to accept the February 12, 2024 minutes.

**SECOND:** P. Vandal

**VOTE:** ALL IN FAVOR

**New Business**

**FY2025 Budget Reviews**

Fire Department



The Board reviewed the budget for the Fire Department. M. Kelly specified that the review was just to ask questions and the Board would not be approving anything. It will be for the Town Meeting to decide on individual line items. Chief Contois went over changes for the FY2025 budget. Salaries, per the Finance Committee's recommendation, will increase by 4% while the remainder of the budget items will remain unchanged. The new item on the budget is Fire Radios. The Chief put a \$5000 budget line item in to replace 2-3 Fire Radios a year. The radios have a 10-year life span and this would prevent a \$60,000-70,000 warrant article to replace them all at once, every 10 years. The wage budget appears to be a large increase (49%) but the Flea Market duty wages are being moved from the Flea Market revolving account to the Town Budget. When included in the Flea Market revolving account directly, those resources have to be dedicated to the Flea Market and cannot be used for any other emergency in town. By moving the money to the Town Budget, those funds are able to be used, if needed, for emergencies beyond the Flea Market. M. Kelly made the point that the money would be the same, it would just be an accounting process. The money is not lost to the taxpayers. Chief Contois said the Fire Department reviewed the number and decided to reduce it from \$12,900 to \$10,500 by changing coverage from Tuesday to Sunday, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. The hours were extended from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m., to deal with continued traffic, but the Monday shift and Thursday and Friday night shifts were removed, reducing the overall cost. The detail will include one officer to run the incident, three people on the first engine, and one person to bring the tanker.

Chief Contois asked if the Board wanted to talk about the transfer request with the Finance Committee and said they wouldn't know what the number would be until June. M. Kelly said no because it was not on the agenda.

A. Soto asked if the Fire Department had tried for any grants. Chief Contois said the Fire Department has used some grant money but grants are not a guarantee, this money would be. The Fire Department's pagers were purchased with grants. The Fire Department gets \$3000 from DCR (Department of Conservation and Recreation), matching their own \$3000, which is used for portables. A. Soto asked if the grants were State or Federal. Chief Contois said all grants were State and that the Fire Department does not qualify for a lot of Federal grants because the equipment is too new and well-maintained. Chief Contois said that because the Fire Department does things the right way, it hurts them to get grants. A. Soto suggested reaching out to Congressman Neal's office. P. Vandal abstained from the discussion. No action was taken.

#### **Set Date, Time and Location For Special Town Meeting**

M. Kelly said the Board wanted to go with May 8th as the date for the Special Town Meeting [to approve moving forward with the municipal offices project and to approve the transfer of funds in order to move forward] and suggested holding it at the Elementary School because the Town Hall is now permanently closed until the windows are addressed. M. Kelly then recommended holding it at 6 p.m. P. Vandal agreed. A. Soto asked if there was a number for the funds to be transferred for schematic designs of the municipal offices project. M. Kelly said the town floor would make the decision as to the number.

MOTION: A. Soto, to set a Special Town Meeting for May 8th at 6 p.m. held at the Brimfield Elementary School cafeteria for the transfer of funds for the Building Committee.

SECOND: P. Vandal

DISCUSSION: M. Egan said the specific municipal offices project option was still being discussed so there was not an exact number yet. A. Soto asked if clickers would be used. M. Kelly said he believed they would be. M. Kelly said he asked T. Cofske to give Town Moderator M. Frazier the information about the Special Town Meeting.

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR

#### **Building Committee Chair, Michael Egan – Coordinate Preview of Public Informational Presentation to Select Board Regarding Options for Future Town Offices**

M. Egan said the second topic was a preview for the Select Board about the two information meetings. One will be held at the Senior Center on April 1st at 11 a.m. The first will be on March 25th at Brimfield Elementary at 6:30 p.m. M. Egan said he wanted to piggyback off of the Select Board meeting. M. Kelly said, if it worked with the other Board members, he would hold the Select Board meeting at 5 p.m. M. Egan said the Building Committee wanted to preview the information meetings with the Select Board beforehand to go over what is going to be discussed and see if the Select Board wanted to change anything. M. Kelly asked what day April 1st is. M. Egan said it was a Monday. J. Freeman asked if the

two information meetings would be the same. M. Egan said they would be. M. Egan said the next Select Board meeting would be March 11th and asked if they could do it then. M. Kelly said to let T. Cofske know and they could put it on the meeting agenda. M. Kelly went on to say that it looked to be good but he wanted to check with the two Select Board members who were not in attendance to make sure everyone was involved in the process. M. Egan said the Building Committee wanted to send out postcards with the dates for the meetings and a second postcard sent out with the voting process. P. Vandal asked when the postcards would be sent out. M. Egan replied that he hoped by the end of this week. M. Kelly said the first one needs to go out soon. P. Vandal said they need to check with the other two Select Board members first, before sending out the postcards, in case there was any discrepancy. M. Kelly concluded that if there was any issue, he would have T. Cofske reach out to M. Egan.

#### **Town Hall Closure - Reminder**

The Building Inspector has said that the Town Hall will remain closed until something permanent is done with the windows. The Town Hall is normally closed from October until the start of April, and plexiglass was used to cover the windows for the winter, but it will not reopen on April 1st as intended. The closure will impact the location for elections and Town Meetings.

#### **Newly Installed Exterior Lighting at Town Annex Building – by TRSD Electrical Students**

The lights on the exterior of the Town Annex were replaced because many were broken or not working or did not cast enough light. The Electrical Inspector brought students from Tantasqua to do the work. The Select Board wants to put together a thank you for all the work they have done. The Building Inspector also sent a picture of the students posing with the lights. No action was taken.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: P. Vandal, to adjourn the meeting.

SECOND: A. Soto

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR

The meeting adjourned at 6:27 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Christopher DeFalco



Martin J. Kelly, Chairperson

**MEETING MATERIALS:**

- Posting 2-22-2024
- Meeting Minutes February 12th
- Fire Department FY2025 Budget
- TRSD Electrical Students photograph