



BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

July 13th, 2015

6:00 pm

Plympton Town House
New Meeting Room

Approved.....7.27.15

Present: Selectmen; Mark Russo, Colleen Thompson, Christine Joy & Town Coordinator Dale Pleau
Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm.

Mr. Russo opened the meeting with ground rules and a moment of silence.

Fire Department Staffing Models:

- Mr. Russo opened the meeting by stating next agenda item is a controversial topic. His hope for tonight is to have a serious thoughtful discussion. Everyone will get a chance to speak their mind but first we will hear from Fire Borsari. Chief Borsari will speak about the new staffing model he wants to implement and how it will fit into his department's current budget. Mr. Russo wanted to make clear that tonight is only a forum; BOS may or may not vote on any decisions. With the "Strong Chief law", Chief Borsari has the power on his own to make staffing decisions for his department.
- Chief Borsari gave a brief overview of the operations of the Fire Department. Increased call volume is showing a need for an increased full time staff. The current model is unsustainable and beginning to break down. One of their main issues is the difficulty in staffing calls during peak times, which are day time hours. There are more increased calls and fire department has fewer volunteers. With his new proposal it will get ambulances and trucks out the door in timely fashion, which is his main priority. The new model will staff one additional full time firefighter and two part time firefighters. Chief Borsari discussed and reviewed this proposal with Town Accountant Barbara Gomez and new model will stay in budget. Currently there is only 1 full time firefighter and the rest are all on call firefighters. Adding more staff during the day will make department more efficient. When a call comes in during the day and it has to go out to all on-call firefighters there is an uncertainty of who will show up. Most on-call firefighters have full time jobs. Chief Borsari concluded his proposal and Mr. Russo opened up the floor for discussion. Chief Borsari fielded questions from BOS and audience.

Chief addressed audience concerns about staying in budget. He stated they are in budget for this year but he cannot predict future. Trend is showing more volume, with that comes increased costs. There also are numerous forced federal mandates that the department needs to comply with. Unfunded mandates are a constant problem that the department faces.

Mrs. Joy asked if the benefits for newly hired employees will be in budget. Chief Borsari said yes, at Town Meeting the insurance line was increased to cover these benefits.

Ms. Thompson asked if the Fire Department ever had a close call (calls coming in, staff turnout, and arrival time of department). Chief Borsari said yes. That is why he is trying to achieve a reasonable level of service for the Town of Plympton.

Ms. Thompson asked what the Fire Chief sees for future equipment needs. Chief Borsari said department has a need for new air packs. The current ones are from 1994 and beginning to break down. The cost in total for new air packs is about \$140k. He has put in for a federal grant two times but has gotten turned down. He will apply again for a grant this year. Air packs are a heavy ticket item, but a necessity.

Finance Committee member Susan Ossoff questioned Chief Borsari on the new ambulance. Her understanding was when the new one was purchased we would be running one vehicle not two. Chief Borsari responded that they always determined to keep the second one if it wasn't a huge cost to maintain. Vehicle was bought and paid for so department should utilize it as a backup truck. Second vehicle is beneficial to keep for additional calls, which has happened in the past about 8 or 9 times. The cost to maintain backup is \$2500. Ms. Ossoff asked Chief Borsari for a five year projection of calls. In future will we need full time night staff? Chief Borsari stated with new staffing model proposal they built in one call per night. He cannot provide her with five year projection. Fewer volunteers are coming in the door and that is a problem.

Audience member asked if the Department can recruit volunteers by soliciting with signs; it seems to have worked in the Town of Carver. Chief Borsari stated that they are constantly looking to hire staff, they have tried signs in past and can try again in future. The hope is to get well trained candidates.

Deb Anderson asked for total of ambulance receipts from last year. Mr. Borsari could not provide her with a figure but confirmed the billing is going out a lot quicker now, usually in about 1-3 days.

Art Morin stated that he is not anti-firefighter, however why is this new staffing model now being brought up 60 days after Town Meeting? This topic should have been addressed and discussed at Town Meeting. He believes this is a back door attempt. Chief Borsari stated it is indeed not a back door attempt. Current model is failing. Department needs to move in a different and cost effective direction. It's a reasonable solution to help control cost.

Susan Ossoff suggested that BOS bring in an independent consultant to look at the department. Someone other than the Town Accountant and Chief Borsari should review current situation. Town Coordinator Mr. Pleau stated this is a good idea but a consultant will run about 5-10k and we don't have that money in our budget. Ms. Ossoff asked Chief Borsari to submit a five year plan to the Finance Committee.

More discussion/questions continued with audience commenting about Chief's decision and how it should be up to town and not solely him.

Mr. Russo appreciated everyone's comments and viewpoints. Chief Borsari can decide staffing issues for his department; he came to BOS to seek input. Town Accountant looked at this very closely and said Chief Borsari can do this and it works within budget. New proposal model seems pretty well thought out and Mr. Russo believes Chief Borsari should give it a go.

Ms. Thompson stated that with the "Strong Chief Law" Chief Borsari has every right to do this. It is his call. Years ago the town voted to implement the Strong Chief Bylaw. At next Town Meeting everyone will have an opportunity to review this model. This year will be a testing period. A strictly on-call department doesn't work anymore for this town.

The BOS took a 5 minute recess at 7:35 pm. Meeting resumed at 7:40 pm.

Historical Commission:

- Jon Wilhelmsen from the Historical Commission was present. He wanted to advise BOS that the Historical Commission recently received two demolition applications. The addresses of the historical homes are 3 Forest Street and 6 Cross Street. He will keep BOS up to date on permits.

Open Space Committee:

- Linda Leddy and Rick Burnet from the Open Space Committee were present. Two weeks ago they addressed BOS on a questionnaire that they needed to complete for Phase 1 of the Environmental report on Parsonage Road. They are requesting BOS to sign off on questionnaire so they can send it in and complete Phase 1 of study.

VOTE: Mrs. Joy made motion that BOS authorize Open Space Committee to submit completed questionnaire to finalize Phase 1 of the Environmental report. Second Ms. Thompson. 2/0/1. Mr. Russo recused.

Tri-Town Studio:

- Nothing new to report. Legal agreements are still being reviewed.

BOS goals and priorities:

- Ms. Thompson stated that she is looking to form a Public Safety Building Committee. Committee will focus on the exact site of building, campus, landscaping and parking of new site. She is looking to add residents of Plympton to the committee. Currently the list of interested members is Robert Karling, Nancy Butler, John Wilhelmsen, Dale Pleau, Jim Mulchahy, Chief Dillon, and Chief Borsari. Art Morin in audience also volunteered to join the committee.
- Susan Ossoff was in audience and spoke as a private citizen. She reiterated that there definitely needs to be citizen input on committee and public needs to be aware of the decisions made by future Public Safety Committee.
- Mrs. Joy is focusing on creating a D.O.R committee. After reviewing D.O.R report she has outlined all the tasks that need to be reviewed and completed. John Traynor has expressed interest in joining the committee.

Town Clerk Report:

- Town Clerk Tara Morrison announced that there will be an unexpected election on November 3rd 2015 due to the passing of Senator Kennedy. This is for the 2nd Plymouth /Bristol district. The primary will be held on October 6th, 2015. Papers are available for nominations; for more information please visit the Town Clerk's office. Tara will post an official memo and also post memo in the local paper.
- After reviewing appointments it appears Roxanne Whitbeck has two titles that could be combined into one appointment. Veteran's Burial Agent and Veteran Services Director. Tara would like BOS to approve both positions to be combined under one title.

VOTE: Mr. Russo made motion to combine both Veteran's Burial Agent and Veteran Services Director under one title. Second Ms. Thompson. 3/0.

- Tara also advised BOS of the Town Green Renovation Committee which was formed in 2012. The committee dissolved in 2013. Tara asked BOS if they would like committee to be active. BOS agreed to keep Town Green Renovation Committee dissolved.

Future BOS Meeting schedule:

- Monday July 27th at 6pm. BOS Open Meeting
- Monday August 10th & August 24th at 6pm. BOS Open Meeting

Town Coordinator:

- Town Coordinator Dale Pleau would like to institute a monthly department head meeting. He would like one BOS member to attend these meetings. Mr. Pleau would chair meeting and it would be formatted like a round table discussion. Mr. Pleau would also like to head up a monthly financial team meeting. Mr. Russo thinks this is a great idea.
- Mr. Pleau commented that Ms. Thompson flagged an invoice from Service Masters for carpet cleaning of old Treasurer's office and saved the Town House \$411. The invoice can be covered by insurance that was in place to remediate the old Treasurer's office.
- Mr. Pleau informed BOS that he received a letter from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation and they enforced a new federal mandate. It is a Nondiscrimination Assurance Requirement. There are penalties if Plympton does not comply.

VOTE: Mrs. Joy made motion for BOS to authorize and sign the Massachusetts Department of Transportation Nondiscrimination Assurance Requirement. Second Ms. Thompson. 3/0

- Mr. Pleau met with IRC (Solar Roof Systems) regarding the Dennett School roof. They have provided us with a proposal. They are offering us a PPA (power purchase agreement) for 10.5- .12 cents an hour with no escalator. They will install solar panels on roof, guarantee and service the roof for 20 years. IRC estimates to save Plympton about 42k a year in

electrical costs. Mr. Russo asked if we are limited to a certain amount of PPA's. Mr. Pleau said yes we are. If we proceed with IRC we can't go ahead with PPA from Blue Wave. BOS will review proposal and will discuss at next meeting. Mr. Pleau informed BOS that IRC can attend a BOS meeting to do a presentation on solar proposal.

- Susan Ossoff spoke as a private citizen. She questioned Mr. Pleau on which roofs were to be included in project. She was part of the School building committee which repaired and replaced roofs on schools. She has concerns if solar panels can be placed on current roofs.
- Resident in audience, Rick Jackson asked Mr. Pleau what happens if IRC does not save us 42k a year in savings and figure comes in lower than that. Mr. Pleau communicated that Plympton doesn't have to put any money up front so we won't lose out on any funds.

Correspondence:

- Plympton-Halifax Express
- Letter from Honor Chandler to BOS regarding By-law Article XXIX Unlawful Disposal of Refuse
- Memo from Plympton Police Department – Reorganization of Plympton Police Executive Board
- Letter from Police Chief Dillon welcoming new Police Intern Melanie Harvey
- MMA welcome packet for Christine Joy
- The Beacon
- Kopelman & Paige litigation documents

Minutes:

*Mr. Russo stated that Linda Leddy from the Open Space Committee wanted to clarify and amend minutes from June 15th 2015. Minutes should state that Ms. Leddy checked with a Town Official regarding taxes on Parsonage Road and **not** with the Town Treasurer as reported in minutes.*

VOTE: Mrs. Joy made motion to approve 6/29/15 BOS meeting minutes as amended. Second Mr. Russo. 3/0

New Business:

- Mr. Russo wanted to address audience and get the word out that there is one alternate seat available on the Zoning Board of Appeals.
- Mrs. Joy has drafted a meeting minute memo for all boards/committees and commissions. BOS approved memo and Selectmen Assistant Kristen will send to all boards/committees this week.

- Ms. Thompson addressed Maple Street again and asked Mrs. Joy if she would be willing to vote to remove Maple Street off the list of proposed Public Safety Building sites. Mrs. Joy suggested that Ms. Thompson bring this to the newly formed Public Safety Building Committee so they can vote on removing Maple Street as a proposed site. Ms. Thompson agreed with suggestion.

Meeting Adjourned 8:45 pm.

Respectively submitted,



Kristen LeVangie
Board of Selectmen, Assistant

All Meeting Minutes are sent electronically to Town Clerk's Office and are posted on the Town website. A paper copy and electronic version is on file with the Selectmen's Office.

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SELECTMENS' ASSISTANT: Selectmen.assistant@town.plympton.ma.us