

**MINUTES OF THE
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
April 20, 2009**

Present: First Selectman Scott Lingenfelter, Vicki Spellman, Brian Fitzgerald and Timothy Reynolds. **Absent:** John Smith. Selectman Lingenfelter called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Town Hall upper level conference room on Wednesday, April 20, 2009.

Authorization for funding for Farmington Valley Greenway

Town Engineer, Gerry Turbet was present requesting an increase in the up front funding of \$225,000 which is available for the Farmington Valley Greenway project. This matter was tabled at the last Selectmen's Meeting because of a question of where the up front funding would come from. Selectman Fitzgerald made a motion to take this matter off the table and put it on the floor for discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote. Mr. Lingenfelter told the Board that it comes from the General Fund, which would be reimbursed to the Town from the Grant.

Selectman Reynolds made a motion that the Board of Selectmen recommends to the Board of Finance that the town authorize the up front funding of up to \$225,000 for the Farmington Valley Greenway Project. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

(Selectman Smith entered the meeting at this point).

Finalization of the Budget:

The Board of Finance at their last meeting recommended that the Board of Selectmen cut \$50,000 from our portion of the Budget and also recommended that the Board of Education cut \$200,000. Mr. Lingenfelter said he approached all 5 Unions on the Selectmen's side and requested that they entertain the idea of taking a 2.5% increase as opposed to the 3.5% negotiated increase they have in their contracts. The response from the Unions was no. Mr. Lingenfelter suggested cutting one hour per week from all Town Hall Union members. Since the Police Dispatchers are a 24/7 operations, they will not be cut. Also the Assistant to the Chief of Police states specifically in her contract that she has set hours. Therefore Mr. Lingenfelter recommendation would be to reduce the Town Hall Union which is primarily the people who work in Town Hall and 230 Mountain Road and the Assistant to the Senior Center and Mini Bus Drivers.

Selectman Fitzgerald said the Board of Finance was recommending spreading the cuts out as evenly as possible, so that some group is not getting more of the impact from the cuts than the others. Mr. Lingenfelter said that it does appear that one group is taking the brunt more than other groups, but if you look at the big picture, a few years ago we laid off two highway workers, and this year we are not replacing a worker who is no longer working there. In the Police Department he is recommending a reduction in the Police payroll and benefits line item by more than \$5,000. A casual part time firefighter was not

replaced in the Fire Department. But Selectman Fitzgerald argued on Department levels over time, yes, however, on the individual levels, no, some are getting hit much harder and others are getting away without anything. The Town Hall Union is being told that they

are taking the hit for the whole rest of the group and this is one of the things we tried to avoid early on. We stated early on that we were not going to cut the Executive Group salary increases to make the Budget go through. Whatever was going to happen, it would be as evenly as we could over the entire group of employees. He still wants to do that and spread out the cuts evenly. Therefore, he proposed to cut the salary portion of each department. That is \$5 million dollars, so 1% of that is \$50,000.

Selectman Spellman said the thing that bothers her is that back some years ago everybody in private industry took the cut from the top on down at the same percentage and no jobs were lost. She is not seeing the same thing happening here. It appears to be all of the backs of the employees who work at the Town Hall and not those who are in charge of those departments. Mr. Lingenfelter said the Executive Group already does pay more for its insurance benefits and put in extra hours for no additional compensation while all the Union employees will be getting a 3.5% increase in their hourly rate. The Executive Group increase will also be cut to 3.25% increase.

Selectman Fitzgerald made a motion to recommend to the Board of Finance to reduce the payroll line items of each and every department under the authority of the Board of Selectmen's Budget by one percent (1%), with the corresponding benefit reduction (FICA, etc). Discussion followed the motion. Mr. Lingenfelter said just for clarification in case it comes up, are we reducing it after the negotiated 3.5% increase by 1%, or are we giving a 2.5% increase, because that will be a totally different figure. The reply was a reduction of after the 3.5% increase. Discussion continued for some time, when Mr. Lingenfelter called for a vote. ***Mr. Fitzgerald, Mr. Smith and Ms. Spellman voting in favor with Mr. Reynolds and Mr. Lingenfelter voting opposed. Motion carried 3-2.***

Mr. Lingenfelter said we have one outstanding issue with the budget and that is the Executive Group payroll. He recommends the 3.5% increase prior to the reduction, spread out equally across the group. All Selectmen agreed.

Adjournment: There being no further business, Mr. Reynolds made a motion to adjourn. The motion was approved by unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Christine Koren
Transcribed by tape recording.