

Minutes of the Selectmen's Meeting January 8, 2019

Members Present: Lynn Sweet, Chairman, Bryant Scott and Scott Young

In attendance: John Hall, Donna Reed, Glen Foss, Scott Clark, Greg Messenger, Brian Monahan, Fire Chief Scott Whitehouse, and Police Chief Mike Richard

The Selectmen's Meeting was called to order at 5:23PM.

The Selectmen reviewed and approved payment of 2018 bills. Board members read and approved minutes from the December 18, 2018 Selectmen's Meeting. The Selectmen signed the letter of acceptance for the 2017 audit.

Representatives from Center, Caverly and Crown Point cemeteries were in attendance to discuss their request for the Town's contribution to the maintenance and upkeep of the 3 cemeteries. In 2018, the Town's contributed \$2000 to each cemetery association for mowing and maintenance. In the 2019 budget, they are requesting a contribution of \$3000 each. The amount of acreage to be mowed in each cemetery was discussed and expenses as well as income were reviewed. Their request was taken under advisement by the Board. The contribution to the 3 Town cemeteries will be presented as a separate article in the warrant. Representatives from the 3 cemetery associations were encouraged to be available at Town Meeting to answer questions.

Fire Chief Scott Whitehouse met with the Board to discuss his proposed 2019 budget. He would like to make working for Strafford's Fire and Rescue Department more attractive to potential employees. Several suggestions were discussed; at the very least he would like to offer a competitive pay rate. They discussed the difficulties he has in finding per diem EMS help; other surrounding towns find themselves in a similar situation. At this point he has at least 2 nights a week with no coverage. Chief Whitehouse reported that the department has responded to more calls in 2019. He will make some adjustments in his operating budget to more accurately reflect actual expenses. He is hoping to soon begin working with an architect on the plans for the Crown Point Station. The Chief's warrant article requests were reviewed and discussed. Last year the Town voted to raise and appropriate \$50,000 to be placed in the Capital Reserve Fund for a future purchase of a fire truck. The truck that is to be replaced is a 1992 truck. Looking ahead to the future lease/purchase agreement, all agreed that a greater appropriation is necessary in 2019. The department has been strong on maintenance of the all engines the Town has purchased.

Police Chief Mike Richard reviewed his budget requests with Board members. His operating budget reflects a new line item for computer maintenance. The wage summary includes a 2.8% COLA increase as well as an increase in insurance costs. He and the Board discussed the difficulties filling part time officer positions. Instead of employing part time officers, Chief Richard would like to hire an additional full time officer in 2019. With that in mind, Chief Richard stated he believed they could postpone the purchase of a new cruiser this one year. He will however, request funds be placed in the Police Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund for a future purchase.

At this time a motion was made by Lynn Sweet and seconded by Scott Young to enter into a non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (e). Roll call was taken as follows:

Lynn Sweet – Aye, Bryant Scott – Aye, Scott Young – Aye

The Board entered non-public session at 7:15M.

A motion was made by Lynn Sweet to leave non-public session and seconded by Bryant Scott to return to public session. Roll call was taken as follows:

Lynn Sweet – Aye, Bryant Scott – Aye, Scott Young – Aye

Public session reconvened at 7:35PM.

No votes were taken during the non-public session.

A motion was made by Bryant Scott and seconded by Scott Young to seal the minutes of the non-public session. Roll call was taken as follows:

Lynn Sweet – Aye, Bryant Scott – Aye, Scott Young – Aye

The Selectmen will contact a property owner over a concern for a possible automotive business and to inform him that the Building Inspector make a visit to look over the situation.

A Beach Manager for the 2019 summer season has been hired; he will begin securing lifeguarding staff as he works with the Selectmen's Office.

The Selectmen's Office will look into a report of cutting on the scenic portions of Evans Mountain Road. Some trimming and cutting had been approved.

There being no further business to bring before the Board, it was moved by Mr. Scott and seconded by Ms. Sweet to adjourn the meeting. By unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 8:02PM.

