

Minutes

Town Of Marlboro Special Select Board Meeting

Wednesday, January 25, 2023, 6:00pm

Attendees: Aaron Betts, Chair; James Agate, Vice-Chair; Molly Welch, Member; Nick Morgan, Select Board Assist. /Town Admin; Andrew Richardson, Road Foreman; Linda Peters, Treasurer; Andrea Howe, Assistant Treasurer; Jeff Skramstad, Adrian Segar, Andrew Frost, Kathryn Kirkwood – residents.

Call to Order: 6:05pm

Special Select Board Meeting Agenda

Identify Any Changes to Agenda - None

Scheduled Business

Unscheduled Open Public Comment - None

New Business

Review, discuss, and make decision on Salary issues for Highway Department

Andrew requested the Select Board to consider providing Robert Germon an increase in salary commensurate with his vast experience in Roadway work, his expertise is general maintenance and care of Highway Department equipment and tool, and his highly positive attitude and work ethic.

Jim Agate proposed a suggestion that in order to put this increase into context that a new position could be created (Assistant Road Foreman). General discussion ensued where it was put forth that such a new position designation would really not provide a solution and simply acknowledging that Robert's experience (20 years) and expertise warranted the increase. Molly suggested that perhaps the raise could be positioned as a "merit increase". Instead of the \$26.00 per hour amount, other levels of \$24.00 and \$25.00 per hour were proposed.

Resident Andrew Frost asked if there were job descriptions for the Highway Department and Nick noted that yes, indeed, there were descriptions for the Road Foreman and the Road Crew.

After the discussion was concluded a vote on creating a new "Assistant" position was moved. Motion to create a new Highway Department position of Assistant Road Foreman and place Robert Germon in that position (Agate/Welch – motion defeated 1 Aye – 2 Nay)

The sense of the Board was that some form of raise was indicated, and to determine the amount, Molly suggested voting on a motion for each amount, starting at the \$26.00 figure and working down. The Board agreed this was a good idea and the following motions were voted:

Motion to increase R. Germon salary to \$26.00 per hour (Betts/Welch – Motion denied – 1 Aye – 2 Nay)

Motion to increase R. Germon salary to \$25.00 per hour (Betts/Welch – Motion passed – 2 Aye – 1 Nay)

As the \$25.00 per hour amount was approved, no further motions were needed.

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Review, Finalize, & Approve General Fund and Highway Department Budgets (including discussion of the purchase of a new Grader) for inclusion in the 2023 Town Meeting Warning.

The Board reviewed both the General Fund Budget and the Highway Department Budget provided by the Town Treasurers. It was generally noted that these numbers are “budgets” that have some flexibility in them and are based on past performances and best estimates.

Aaron noted that the General Liability Insurance numbers showed some fluctuations over the past few years and asked if they were correct. Linda assured the Board that the numbers were provided by the Town’s Carrier (VLCT) and were correct, and Andrea noted that the 2022 number was much lower due to credits that the Town received as well as fluctuations in staffing.

Another area that raised some questions was the Gravel and Stone expenses. Andrew noted that there were indeed increases in costs, but also noted that costs were higher due to the increase in the number of projects planned for 2023 and the quality of the stone needed for these projects to be handled correctly.

In discussing the Highway Department Budget, the issue of purchasing a new grader was brought up. It was generally accepted that with the age (20 years) and number of hours (9,000) of the current grader, the purchase of a new grader was a priority. Continued use of the existing grader could lead to extensive repairs and costs.

The cost of the new grader is not included in the Highway Budget for 2023, with Linda indicating that as the purchase would be achieved with a loan, with the loan payments coming out of the “Equipment Account”, there would be no impact the actual 2023 budget. Andrew noted that he has done extensive research pricing a new grader (including trade-in of the current grader) and that he has worked it out that any order placed could be cancelled up to the day of delivery with no financial penalty.

Linda is currently evaluating loans and Nick is investigating using the Vermont Municipal Equipment Loan Fund as well as other potential State and Federal funding options.

As no firm action is indicated and there is no impact on the budget, no motion was put forth, but the sense of the Board was to proceed with investigating opportunities and bring the issue to a vote once all details were set.

A vote on the Highway Department budget was tabled until the 1/26/23 meeting where the Highway Budget would be approved as part of the Town Meeting Warning approval, the Board moved to approve the General Fund Budget: Motion to approve the 2023 General Fund Budget of \$420,000 (Betts/Welch – Passed unanimously).

Motion to Adjourn @ 7:38pm (Betts/Agate – Passed unanimously)