

Draft Minutes
Marlboro Special Select Board Meeting
Thursday, January 2, 2025

Attendees: Molly Welch – Chair; Jeff Skramstad – Vice Chair; Kate Kirkwood – Member; Andrew Richardson – Road Supervisor; Nick Morgan – Town Admin/SB Assistant; Forrest Holzapfel – Town Clerk; Evan Wyse – Asst Town Clerk/Delinquent Tax Collector/Lister; Rebecca Sevigny – Treasurer; Lynn Scheuermann – Asst Treasurer; Mary Sargent – Zoning Administrator.

BEGIN ZOOM RECORDING:

Call to Order @ 3:07pm

Sign Guidelines of Conduct - Done

Regular Select Board Meeting Agenda

Identify Any Changes to Agenda: None

Scheduled Business (*Note: Times are approximate -early arrival-15-20 minutes- is suggested*):

Unscheduled Open Public Comment: Rebecca & Lynn presented the Board with a counterproposal on their 2025 offer from the Select Board. The Select Board accepted the proposal and advised that they would review it and discuss it in an executive session at the 1/9/25 regular Select Board meeting.

New Business

2025 Budget Review: (*Please note: for those wishing to hear the detailed discussions, they are available on the Marlboro Soundcloud page. A link to this page can be found on the Select Board Page of the Marlboro Website (<https://marlborovt.us/boards-minutes/select-board/>). Also, the budget in full will be presented in informational meetings on 1/11/2025 & 2/22/2025.*)

- *Review of General Town Budget & 2024 “Spend”* – Rebecca & Lynn went through line items of the Town Budget, noting the 2025 budgeted numbers with comparison to the 2024 “spend”/budgeted amounts for reference. The Board made several suggestions on adjustments to the 2025 budgeted amounts (both up and down), and specified areas that need clarification and further information. A couple of areas that drew special attention included:
 - Cost of the recycling center, tasking Nick to see if there were other “haulers” that may be more economical.
 - A need to be more aware of the use of legal services and their concurrent costs, especially concerning many issues regarding Zoning. After discussion with Zoning Admin, Mary Sargent, and a review of 2024 legal fees expended, including outlining some areas that will take future legal help (Towers, PUD, and Potash Hill), all agreed to initially put \$6,500 in the budget for Zoning related legal fees. Regarding legal fees for the town in general, due to the expected need for legal review of many of the town policies being rewritten, it was agreed to put \$3,000 under the Select Board, and \$500 under the Town Admin to handle any possible HR type issues.

At this point the meeting was paused briefly in order to transfer “hosting” of the meeting and the recording from Nick to Kate, as Nick would not be able to handle these functions for the entire meeting.

After the brief break, the meeting continued to review the 2024 “spend” and the 2025 budgeted numbers for the Town specific (i.e. not Highway Department expenses) line items.

As discussion continued, Nick advised he had to leave shortly, so, the discussion of the town budget was paused, and Nick was called on to present his information. After which the Town Budget discussion continued.

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Budget Review (continued)

- *Select Board, Town Administrator, and Town Commissions/Committee Budgets* – Nick presented the budget numbers for the Select Board, the Town Administrator/SB Assistant Department, and the budgetary requests (or lack of requests) of the Town Commissions and Committees, including: Tree Warden, Conservation Commission, Energy Commission, Hogback Preservation Commission, Planning Commission, and the DRB. Of note, it was determined that rather than placing the funds needed to raze the First Aid Building on Hogback, under the HPC, to place this expense under the Town’s Building and Building Maintenance account, also placing the funds for Mold Remediation in this same account.
- *Review of General Town Budget & 2024 “Spend” (continued)* – Discussion of the 2025 budget and the 2024 “spend” continued considering each line item, including payroll. At the end of the review of the Town Budget, there was a brief discussion on how to work with the School Board when Town Officials are doing work specifically for the School Board. Kate noted that she would advise Nick to put this on the agenda for one of the March 2025 meetings.
- *Forrest Holzapfel – Town Clerk 2025 Budget Request* – Forrest presented his information including an allocation for elections; further noted that the Town Clerk Department does bring in revenue for the town from fees; noting that a portion of these fees around \$170/month goes to the digital land records which have been a boon for everyone; there will be some small expenses applied to the preservation fund for maintenance of Town records; current contracted expenses for town office will remain the same this year, but new contracts will be coming in 2026 but does not expect large increases; and finally noted the fees from dog licenses.
- *Evan Wyse – Listers* – Evan reviewed the lister’s plans including salary (held steady except for COLA); and increase in hours from 9 to 10 hours per week due to Potash Hill work and the State’s appraisal of that land; further noting a small amount for legal fees as there is an increase in issues that may need legal counsel; reviewed the amount and cost of software to do the job. Evan briefly discussed the decision to have the State handle the Potash Hill appraisal, with legal issues being handled by the State’s Assistant Attorney General. The decision to move in this direction will be beneficial as the State will be able to act as a neutral party and cut off any potential issues between the Town and Potash Hill. There was also a discussion of the townwide reappraisal and how by handling that themselves the Listers have saved the town significant funds and that currently there is a significant amount of money in the “reappraisal fund”. An actual start time for the reappraisal is still somewhat in flux as the State is reviewing the laws and changes are expected. Evan noted that at some point more time (hence funds) may be needed by the Listers but does not see that in 2025.
- *Evan Wyse – Delinquent Tax Collector* – After a discussion on the status of the Delinquent Taxes since Evan took over (good), discussion turned to compensation, and how since taking over Evan has taken an hourly salary, not the 8% of Taxes recovered that had been the system in the past. There was discussion on how the regulations on this work and he noted that he was tracking his time in order to provide data to make a decision. As the discussion continued, it was clear that a decision be made on method of pay for the Delinquent Tax Collector and what benefits Evan in his tri-role (Head Lister, Asst Town Clerk, and Delinquent Tax Collector) should qualify for. No decision was made at this meeting, and it will be worked on over the next few meetings.

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Budget Review (continued)

- *Mary Sargent – Zoning Administrator* – Before discussing the budget, Mary asked the Board to consider getting the Zoning Administrator a “smartphone”. The Board noted that this could be discussed at the 1/9/25 or a later meeting. The discussion included a re-noting of the increase in Legal expenses, and also revolved around the job that John Marinelli was doing in an assistant role. Mary noted that he was doing a great job on DRB minutes, and that the Planning Commission was potentially looking at him to do their minutes as well. Rather than continuing this “non-budget” discussion the Board asked to table this part of the discussion to a future “regular Select Board Meeting”. Mary presented her proposed budget numbers, which the Board felt were within an acceptable range and asked Rebecca to incorporate them into the Town’s budget.
- *Andrew Richardson – Highway Department* – Andrew reviewed his budget for ordering gravel for the upcoming year, noting that in 2024 he was under budget and wanted to do a similar order for 2025 that he did for 2024. Andrew discussed the equipment account and its various line items, including protective gear, registration and inspection, and equipment rental. Andrew suggested removing some items from the account, such as equipment rental, as they are covered in the town budget.

There was further discussion on various financial aspects of the Highway Department’s operations, including: insurance coverage; some reconciliation discrepancies (attributing it to QuickBooks not being fully reconciled at the end of the year); adding, recategorizing or removing certain items for better tracking; increasing the budget for certain shop and maintenance supplies; review previous items to provide a more accurate budget based on 2024 actual expenses; and a major concern was upgrading and replacement of radios for the Road Crew to facilitate communications (note – this will be reviewed at 1/9/25 meeting so as to move forward if so deemed necessary).

There was a brief discussion on generating a “capital fund”, which it was agreed would be discussed further.

The Board agreed to review the Highway budget in more detail at the 1/9/25 meeting in preparation for the informational meeting on January 11, 2025.

Motion Adjourn @ ~6:15p (Passed unanimously)