

**Town of Milton**  
**BOARD OF SELECTMAN SPECIAL WORKSHOP MEETING**  
**December 8, 2020**

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Members:** Andrew Rawson (Chair), Claudine Burnham, Matt Morrill (via phone)

**Staff:** Ernest Creveling, Town Administrator, Patrick Smith, Karen Brown

**Public:** Chief Richard Krauss, Fire Chief Nick Marique

Andrew Rawson, Chair, opened the public session at 6:05PM.

**1.) Pledge of Allegiance:** Andrew Rawson, Chair, led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**BUDGET WORKSHOP**

**2.) Police Department 2021 Highway Safety Grant Application and Vote to Accept Grant Funds in accordance with NH RSA 31:95-b in the amount of \$4,779.00**

Mr. Rawson made a motion to accept the Highway Safety Grant and accept grant funds and grant approval to allow the Chairman to sign the application. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor; the motion passed.

**Local Government Efficiency Task Force:**

It was announced that Dave Pratt had submitted his resignation from the Efficiency Task Force. Mr. Rawson thanks Mr. Pratt for his service.

Mr. Rawson made a motion to accept Mr. Pratt's resignation. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor; the motion passed to accept his resignation.

It was noted that with this resignation there will be two open positions. However, the members are asking to fill only one position to have an odd number of task force members. Kimberly Dawson-Boulanger was recommended to be added to the task force.

Mr. Rawson made a motion to accept Kimberly Dawson-Boulanger to the Efficiency Task Force. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor; the motion passed.

**3.) Wage Plan and Implementation**

The purpose at this meeting was to review and discuss the plan in order to move forward and develop a warrant article. Mr. Rawson opened this up for questions and discussions.

Mr. Creveling explained he had made corrections to some formulas to ensure consistency across all the steps. The changes are reflected in the revised chart. There was also some reorganization to ensure document flow.

Mr. Creveling is asking for permission to work with the Chief and the town's legal advisor to clear up any confusions for public education, specifically around wording changes to add simplification and easier explanations.

Mr. Rawson thanked everyone and recognized all the hard work and effort that had gone into this effort. He noted the importance of having this retention plan's main purpose will be to hire and retain the best employees and is hopeful the public will agree.

Department heads stressed the importance of implementing this plan as currently it is difficult to fill positions as they are not receiving applications for posted positions. The town has also experienced qualified employees who are leaving positions for other communities due to higher wages available elsewhere.

Chief Marique questioned the language in the plan specifically around the five-year plan review. He recommends this review process be every year or every other year. He would like to see more flexibility in the plan review process to ensure the plan stays current and does not fall behind other communities. Chief Krauss stated the wording can be changed to have the reviews every 2-3 years instead of the 5 year. Mr. Morrill recommends a plan re-evaluation every three years. Once the wording and other changes are corrected, the plan will be available for residents.

#### **4.) Tax Cap and Impact on Operating Budget:**

Mr. Creveling explained the current Tax Cap adopted for 2020 by the petition warrant article reflects a January-January timeline. This has caused much confusion. Working with the town attorney it is recommended the BOS adopt a more practical CPI based on October-October timeline.

#### **5.) Warrant Article Consideration & Discussion:**

The following warrant articles will be put forward:

Article 1: Operating Budget

Article 2:

Article 3: Employee Retention Plan

Article 5: Highway and Road Construction - it was noted that this did not pass last year and does set the town behind in road maintenance. Milton does receive grants from the state to help offset costs. However, these are block grants and are received in quarterly payments. Mr. Rawson stated it is imperative that we take care of our infrastructure and some roads are in bad shape. The committee acknowledge the expense of maintaining roads and infrastructure.

Article 6: Bridge to Capital Reserve Fund

Article 7: Municipal Building Capital Reserve Fund - It was noted in the near future the town hall will need a new roof, furnace and this article will help to fund replacement and upkeep. Chief Krauss also noted the police department driveway will need replaced in the near future.

Article 8: Boat Ramp Replace and Repair- Set at \$5,000 it was noted that no amount will be raised by taxation, all monies come through the unassigned fund balance and from gate revenues.

Article 9: Milton Free Public Library Capital Reserve Fund - \$20,000

Article 10: Technology Upgrade: \$1,500

Article 11: System Upgrade: \$2,500. This will be used to add another layer to the existing GIS.

Article 12: Eradicate Invasive Species: \$5,000. Mr. Rawson noted that last year's amount was \$10,000 and he would like to see this increased back to that amount. This is a huge issue and has immediate and future ramifications on the economic impact on the town. It was explained this amount was dropped to the \$5,000 level because all the original monies had not been previously used due to received grants. This amount can be changed at a deliberative session so it was agreed to keep the amount at \$5,000.

Article 13: Creation of Capital Improvement Planning Committee: This new committee is being suggested to remove the capital improvement endeavors from the Planning Board which consumes a lot of the Board's time. This committee would have 5 members including a representative from the Planning Board.

Article 14: Milton Towne House Special Revenue Funds: This would ensure that revenues received at the Towne House would remain with the Towne House and kept separate from general funds. Ms. Burnham questioned who maintains the building? While this is considered a town property and falls under BOS control, there is a committee that manages the property.

Article 15: Tax Cap Amendment: This would replace the current January-January CPI with the recommended July-July CPI.

## **6.) 2020 Encumbrances:**

Mr. Creveling reported he does not have any specifics to report at the current time, but plans to report at the December 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.

Chief Krauss reported a request to purchase programmable signs for improved communications to the public. He is getting quotes for a speed trailer that would include a message board. In addition, he will be quoting a sign board that could be used for town events, emergency notifications, etc. According to Fire Chief Marique, a moveable sign would qualify for a grant. Mr. Rawson agreed that these signs would be effective, with multiple uses and would be a benefit to the town. He also stressed the need to remain frugal with expenses and keep taxes low. Chief Krauss questioned if GOFEEER funds would be used for mobile sign age, and if yes, are there any funds still available? Mr. Creveling noted that there is ~\$35,000 left in GOFEEER. Mr. Morrill agreed that the signs are a very good idea and hoped that a grant could be received to help pay.

Chief Krauss will do research for presentation at the December 21<sup>st</sup> BOS meeting. Mr. Creveling will clarify if GOFEEER could be used for this expense.

Chief Krauss reported that Cruiser 1 needs replaced. The cost will be \$60,000. Currently there is \$72,000 in the detail account. If this was purchased through this account, \$12,000 would be left in the account which would leave this account in a precarious situation. He is requested to pay for the equipment portion through the operating account and the car out of the detail account. Mr. Rawson suggested using monies out of the revolving account and increasing the amount through the detail account. While Chief Krauss is concerned about using an increased amount through the detail account, he believes this is a workable alternative.

Fire Chief Marique reported there will be a \$3,500 expense for a uniform purchase.

Mr. Creveling will have the MS4 Contract information prepared for the December 21<sup>st</sup> BOS meeting.

#### **7.) COVID 19 - Employee Travel Policy and Guidelines**

Mr. Creveling explained that the state had issued new guidelines earlier this month. Questions arise over consistency amongst town departments when having to deal with direct or potential exposure.

Both Chief Krauss and Fire Chief Marique indicated that these departments have their own specific policies and set of guidelines in place as defined by the state. Chief Krauss stated while it's important to have as much consistency as possible, it should be noted that each case is going to be different and best handled on a case-by-case basis.

Most questions are regarding the pay status of an employee if they travel outside of New England for personal reasons. Chief Krauss recommends the travel policy should align with state guidelines. Ms. Burnham recommends following state guidelines and adding an addendum for pay status during quarantining. Mr. Creveling will add state guidelines to current town policy, add the pay status during quarantining section, and add a purpose statement and bring to the December 21<sup>st</sup> BOS meeting.

Mr. Rawson made a motion to add the pay status during quarantining requirements to the existing town policy (town policy is aligned with state guidelines). Ms. Burnham seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor; the motion passed.

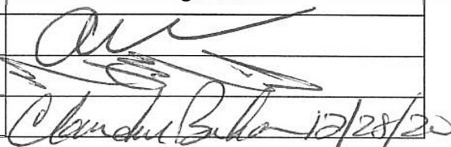
#### **8.) Head Start Building on Industrial Drive:**

As discussed previously, because they are no longer utilizing the building located on Industrial Drive, the Strafford CAP is planning to vacate the building by June 30, 2021. In November the BOS toured the building to begin discussions around future possible uses. At this point, according to Mr. Creveling there is not enough information currently to determine the best uses for the building. He will continue to review the past history and information to help in the decision making process.

#### **9.) Adjournment:**

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Mr. Rawson motioned to adjourn the public meeting. Ms. Burnham seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor; the motion passed. The public meeting was adjourned at 9:00PM.

BOARD MEMBER	PARTICIPATION			APPROVED ON <u>December 28, 2020</u>			
	Physically Present	Attending Remotely	Absent	YES	NO	ABSTAIN	Signatures
Andrew Rawson, Chair	✓			✓			
Matthew Morrill, Vice Chair				✓			
Claudine Burnham,	✓			✓			