

**Town of Milton
Board of Selectmen Special Meeting
Monday, January 27, 2014
Milton Town Hall
5:30 PM**

Members in attendance: Chairman Tom Gray, Robert Bridges and Michael Beaulieu.
Others in attendance: Elizabeth Dionne Town Administrator, Kimberly Ladisheff Recording Secretary, Nick Marique, Rachel Cote, Kathy Wallingford, Brian Boyers, Pat Smith, Michelle Beauchamp, Chief Richard Krauss and Betsy Baker.

Public in attendance: Jeff Lord, Richard and Judi Lover, Nancy and Dennis Wing, John Katwick, Mary Conant, David Hall, Jeff Everett, Chris Albert, Les Elder, Larry Brown, Russell Neal, Pam Smith, Michael Bernier, Don Dunton, Gail Pennell and Donna Nelson.

Chairman Gray called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Chairman Gray explained the meeting was to answer questions due to the comments and concerns in regard to the financial operations of the town that has been being talked about on social media. He then asked if anyone had questions for the Welfare Director as she had a prior commitment. No questions were asked. He then opened to general questions.

Judy Lover – asked about the handouts. Tom stated they were the warrant articles including the budget. He explained the other sheet was the 2013 vs 2014 tax impact comparison, what the tax increase would be if all articles passed.

Richard Lover – stated he does not do social media and asked about specific comments. Tom explained there were comments in general about being concerned about what the rates are.

Larry Brown – stated he was at the public hearing on budget and an indirect example was the \$240,000 in salaries for the PWD and the question was how can anyone get that salary? It was explained that was the total line for several people's salary and how you can't get that response on social media.

Jeff Everett – asked questions about the bridge fund. Tom stated rather than putting a separate warrant they decided to increase the article for the Maine/Milton bridge repairs.

Chris Albert – asked if each employee's salary was broken down. Tom stated each department has their own salary line but salaries were lumped together.

Pat Smith explained about the PW proposed salary line of \$253,662. In that number it also includes overtime for snowplowing. They have data they collect each year and do an average of 18 storms per year. He averages approximately \$1890.14 in overtime per storm which is about 34,000 and is included in this line.

Russell Neal – stated he was convinced the town needs a new fire station but he is not convinced that we need a \$2.7 million one and asked if there was any plan to do anything to convince people to build it.

Nick stated the tax rate will only be raised 78 cents per thousand. Nick stated when they received the money 2 years ago they started the planning and decided the best way to go was to get a construction manager with an architect. They told them what they needed which

dictates the size based on fire code. It made sense to finish the entire thing now as it will cost more in the long run. Mr. Russell feels they need to put all costs out there to convince people.

There was much discussion, many comments and suggestions from the public as to how to get this information out there so the people can be educated and to get other people to support the new building. Selectman Bridges explained that they have had 7 meetings on the new fire department and no one came. There were many questions as to why the exact amounts for the fire station aren't posted. Nick stated he hasn't put amounts out there because if too many people got ahold of it when the project goes out to bid contractors will have it and their proposal will match our budget and we want it to come in under budget.

Donna Nelson – mentioned some of the people you need to convince are not following social media. She suggested picking out a few of the critical reasons why it costs so much and explain some of those principles the way a lay person can understand.

John Katwick – stated it was obvious people aren't getting the right information or people wouldn't be asking these questions. If we don't pass this budget he thinks services will be getting cut and there is no question we need a fire department.

Tom McDougall – stated in referring to social media he asked how many people have written a letter themselves to the media. He stated it's not necessarily solely up to the Fire Chief and the community has to get behind him. He mentioned sending out a flyer and Tom Gray told him we have a voter's guide.

Les Elder – stated if the Selectmen as well as the budget committee feel as strongly about the budget and warrant articles as he knows they do it's only fair that they go out and promote it otherwise we will end up with a default budget.

Chief Krauss – stated if the residents go on social media and say "this is what I learned at the Selectmen's meeting tonight" it will go a lot further than if he or Nick or the Selectmen do it, because if they did it, it would sound like they were trying to sell them something.

Nancy Wing – stated if anyone was not aware and there are issues they would like to discuss there are 2 Facebook sites people can go to - Milton NH and Our Milton Home. They can discuss anything and they do provide links.

Chairman Gray thanked everyone for coming out tonight.

MOTION by Bob B. to adjourn. Seconded by Mike Beaulieu. Meeting adjourned at 7:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Kimberly Ladisheff
Recording Clerk

Chairman Tom Gray

Robert Bridges

James Michael Beaulieu