

Town of Milton
Board of Selectmen Meeting
November 4th, 2019
Milton Town Hall
Workshop Session

Board of Selectmen Attendance: Chairman Ryan Thibeault, Vice Chair Erin Hutchings, Andy Rawson, Town Administrator Ernie Creveling, Recording Clerk; Danielle Marique

Public Attendance: Nick Marique, Rich Krauss, Tom Gray, Michelle Beauchamp, Betsy Baker, Karen Brown, Pat Smith, Dennis Woods, Bob Carrier, Tammy Smith, Larry Brown.

Meeting call to order

E. Hutchings welcomed all in attendance reciting the pledge and opened the workshop session.

Budget Progression Discussion:

E. Creveling stated the current 2020 default figure is \$51,624 less than 2019 approved budget with the department proposed figure being \$105,083 greater than the 2019 approved.

R. Thibeault expressed concern with the Town being in a tough spot and will be very difficult to bring the proposed budget down closer to the default figuring without extreme repercussions taking place afterwards.

E. Creveling stated the proposed budget reflects the original 3 new full time positions being removed as previously requested with the board's option of continuing with warrant articles for each of the positions.

Explained the reasoning for the additional employee under code enforcement allows greater attention and time allotment on processes and procedures for the associated work. Stated the adjustment for the administrative assistant is an addition of two hours to the current board of selectmen approved time however currently being within a default the adjustments to hours worked has not continued thru the budget as of yet.

A. Rawson relayed question from the Budget Committee's recent meeting regarding mileage and liability for use of personal vehicles. E. Creveling stated typically one's personal insurance covers the individual. A. Rawson questioned Town Clerk/Tax Collector Beauchamp specifically her mileage and travel line being at such a higher amount. M. Beauchamp questioned the use of two vehicles as Town Hall employees only have the one town vehicle. P. Smith stated the second town vehicle is available to town use if it is not in use by his cleaning crew from 6am-2pm Monday –Friday.

A. Rawson stated the budget committee is configuring their recommended budget much differently than what has been presented and drastic adjustments have been proposed resulting in a joint meeting taking place for full awareness and explanation. E. Hutchings questioned why the budget committee did not provide their to date suggestions and material to the entire board and town administrator as the board provided to the budget committee earlier in September. N. Marique expressed concern with the process the budget committee is following to develop their budgetary configurations as past spending to calculate predictions is a flawed process. M. Beauchamp expressed concerns with view of the budget committee. E. Hutchings expressed support and gratitude to each department and their dedication to their work and their budget preparation, stating no one better knows what it takes to operate their departments other than themselves.

P. Smith questioned how many default budgets the town has operated under in the past. E. Creveling stated there have been 7 default budget years in the last 12. P. Smith stated the town is providing the same services without any budget or salary increases. Departments provide and perform as they need to meet each job and task. Stated if there are severe cuts to the budgets as rumored and portrayed by the budget committee there will be services as well as employment that will result in elimination.

D. Woods stated the budget committee had previously compiled a list of questions that are still in need of
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answering and that they discussed preliminary cuts and expectations at their workshop November 1st however the material and discussions were not intended to be brought to the selectmen until a later date. E. Hutchings stated the board of selectmen representative performed as should and supplied the board with necessary information as expected. E. Creveling stated the questions brought forward to him were answered and provided to not only the budget committee chairman but the board of selectmen and the department heads as well. T. Gray questioned if the departments have presented to the board of selectmen as well as the budget committee and questioned why the budget committee questions were not asked then. E. Creveling stated joint board/ committee presentations occurred two months ago and very minimal questions were brought forward to his office. B. Carrier stated the budget committee was concerned with salary increases and the justifications brought forward and still require some clarification. R. Thibeault expressed concern with the process the budget committee is performing and it being unnecessary and an insult to department heads and the work and dedication they provide to the town.

R. Thibeault stated the board is in agreeance of the current proposed budget and wait for the budget committee to continue with a joint meeting to discuss their proposals further.

E. Creveling questioned the board's wishes on the full time position warrant articles. A. Rawson stated putting the positions on under warrant article it shows the tax payer's where the help is needed in town. R. Krauss suggested a town wide retention plan going forward. R. Thibeault stated there is always a constant challenge to come out of a default and provides extreme strain on departments. There is a higher need to keep focus on current employees as they know the needs of the departments and operations. Recommended a step plan warrant article to help and assist with paying current employees appropriately. Board consensus to continue with a town wide retention plan warrant article.

P. Smith questioned how the board would like departments continue and prepare for 2020. R. Thibeault expressed it not fair for the board to decide how departments spend their budgets however remain mindful the constant possibility of default budgets. Board consensus to have department heads meet with Town Administrator Creveling to develop a plan of January 1 with an assumption of worst case scenario of a default budget or lower.

B. Carrier explained the cemetery budget being a self-supporting budget and questioned the need of an actual operating budget. B. Baker stated there was a past warrant article giving ownership of the cemetery to the town. R. Krauss stated there must be money in the operating line to be able to expend from. D. Woods stated his presumptions of budgeting this fashion is a result of artificially inflating the tax rate. E. Creveling stated gross budgeting does not raise the tax rate.

B. Baker requested the budget committee advise all department heads and staff of their next planned meeting for discussion purposes and full involvement.

R. Thibeault moved to adjourn the workshop session. E. Hutchings seconded. 3-0

Next Board of Selectmen Meeting Date:

Monday November 18th, 2019

Respectfully submitted;
Recording Clerk,
Danielle Marique

Chairman Ryan Thibeault

Erin Hutchings

Andy Rawson