

RAYMOND BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES 12-11-03 APPROVED 02-23-04

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chairman Harold Wood. Members present: Wayne Welch, Norman Weldy, Paul Brown and Jonathan Wood. Also present: Town Manager Richard Bates, Finance Director Michelle Clark, Police Chief David Salois, Librarian Sherry Brox, Code Enforcement Officer Richard Mailhot, and Planner Craig Wheeler.

Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen to Discuss the Budget

Town Manager Bates explained we discovered that we are in a very bad position of increasing the tax rate more than what was expected and what we are willing to ask the voters for. It looks like over \$1.00 significantly more than anticipated. He said he met with the department heads yesterday morning, and they discussed how to cut back even further so that the tax rate is more palatable. There is the understanding on the part of the department heads of things they would like to have and also consider what the taxpayers can afford. We are looking at a \$130,000.00 increase in health care, and there are also other benefits that we have no control over. One of them is the contribution to the retirement system, which took place as of July 1st in the amount of \$110,000.00 and that includes some smaller things.

Michelle Clark explained the spreadsheet she prepared for the Board referring to the numbers in the budget and the recommended items to be removed from the budget to come up with a revised budget:

1) 2 nd Building Inspector	\$ 28,000.00
2) 1% Cola for all non-union employees	\$ 10,000.00
3) Impact Fee Study to be contract in 2003	\$ 6,000.00
4) Change makeup of Recording Secretary for Budget Committee, Board of Selectmen & Conservation Commission to part-time	\$ 6,000.00
5) Decreased Welfare Operating Budget	\$ 10,000.00
6) Removed proposed full-time officer and put 1 part-time back in	\$ 38,000.00
7) Town Clerk/Tax Collector computer and cash register will be purchased in 2003	\$ 1,558.00
8) Printing for zoning ballots recorded in two departments	\$ 700.00
9) Overhead door operators will be purchased in 2003	\$ 3,000.00
10) Exterior door for Town Office will be purchased in 2003	\$ 1,500.00
Total removed from original budget.	\$104,758.00

Michelle Clark explained the estimated revenue to the Board, and she originally stated \$250,000.00 from the fund balance but she is trying to inch this down. She said that the Department of Revenue Administration said we should use less. She said that she was going to reduce it to \$150,000.00, but it would be too much of a drastic effect to the taxpayer. She said that Richard Mailhot and Kevin Pratt suggested increasing the fees. This would affect the builder more than the residents. She also said the union will get a 4% increase due to the contract and the non-union employees will get 3% instead of 4%. All employees will have 100% paid health care.

RAYMOND BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES 12-11-03 APPROVED 02-23-04

Town Manager Bates explained there is one other thing that is not in the budget for next year and that is the renovations for next door and here. We could do some in the other building. We have not worked out the details of the move to the school.

The Board discussed the health insurance costs and coverage, the fund balance, the wage and salary plan, various other items in the budget and ways of reducing the budget.

Motion by Selectman Weldy to accept the changes to the overall operating budget by decreasing it \$104,758.00 and increase the amount to reduce taxes by \$100,000.00 to come up as a total of \$350,000.00 from the fund balance. Selectman Brown seconded. Motion passed.

Motion by Selectman J. Wood to accept the insurance package for Blue Cross Two Tier Plus for \$502,943.99. Selectman Weldy seconded.

The Board discussed that other avenues are being actively pursued for employee insurance, and 100% of the insurance will be paid this year. However, next year there will be other options that will come out the same time as the union contract.

Motion passed.

Motion by Selectman Welch to accept the overall budget for 2004 of \$7,226,774.00. Selectman Weldy seconded. Motion passed.

Chairman Harold Wood thanked Town Manager Bates and the department heads for their hard work.

Town Manager Bates thanked the Board of Selectman and the Department Heads. He said it has been difficult but the employees and Department Heads worked very hard and it was a team effort to come up with a solution. He said Selectman Welch happened to be down at the station so he invited him in to their meeting, and it was very helpful to have Selectman Welch at the meeting.

Motion by Selectman Brown to adjourn. Selectman Weldy seconded. Voted unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 5:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann M. Sharpe
Executive Secretary