

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING  
MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2016  
6:30PM AT TOWN OFFICE BUILDING  
240 SPRINGFIELD STREET, WILBRAHAM, MA  
MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Chairman Robert J. Boilard (presiding); Selectmen Susan C. Bunnell and Robert W. Russell; and Town Administrator Nick Breault.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairman Boilard asked all to join the Selectmen in the Pledge of Allegiance. He announced that the Board of Selectmen would meet with several Department Heads to discuss their Departments' budget requests, particularly in regard to additional staffing. He further explained that the meeting's purpose and discussion today was an effort for the Board of Selectmen to obtain more information relative to the Town Departments' budgetary requests, most of which would increase the Departmental budgets above Fiscal Year 2016's Departmental budget numbers. Chairman Boilard informed the audience that the Town was currently in the budget development phase of the annual fiscal process. He then announced that the Selectmen will meet with each Department Head in the order that he or she arrived to tonight's meeting. With that being said, Chairman Boilard invited Karen Demers, Director of the Public Library, to join the Selectmen.

**APPOINTMENTS WITH THE BOARD**

FY'17 Budget – Various Town Department Heads

*Wilbraham Public Library*

Director Demers hoped that if the Board's decision was not to allow this position request to be funded in Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, she expressed interest to have the request considered in future years' budgets. Director Demers said that the Library experienced staffing restructuring this past year. She explained the staffing changes at the Library. Director Demers said the clerk position was not rehired. The staffing changes recently altered a position from a Grade 8 to a Grade 4. For this reason, Director Demers pointed out that there are enough monies to fund another position. The new position would have a different function in FY 2016 than the former position. The proposed position would encompass a twofold area of tasks, to include referencing and marketing. She explained why there is a need at the Library for this type of position. She highlighted the various functions the position would be charged with, specifically in the area of marketing. Director Demers explained that this position relates to the Town as a whole; whereas, it was identified in the Vision Taskforce's survey that the community would like to have more information about the Town events, etc. For these reasons, she is requesting monies to fund this part time position in the FY 2017 budget. Director Demers clarified that this proposed position is not technically an additional position at the Library. Director Demers indicated that this restructuring does not increase the Library's budget. The Library's budget would still be maintained under the current budget figures in FY 2016. She offered to answer any questions from the Selectmen.

Selectman Russell asked how difficult it would be to fill a part time position, such as the one Director Demers' is requesting. Director Demers said that it would not be hard at all. She explained her reasoning by providing an example of hiring for a similar position at another library. Selectman Russell asked if this position would help Director Demers with the Library's weekend schedule. Director Demers responded yes, the position would be scheduled to include shifts on the weekend rotation. She provided an overview of the staffing schedule on nights and weekends and expressed how this position would help the Library.

Selectman Bunnell asked if the position was approved, would Director Demers be seeking someone who was an expertise in both areas (i.e. referencing, marketing) that the position would entail. She then stated that it was her opinion that it would make sense to look for someone with media expertise, more so than library experience. Selectman Bunnell also inquired if Director Demers thought it would be effective to oversee the media of certain Town Departments' daily events. She then simplified the question and asked Director Demers how she saw the position functioning in regards to social media for the Library and Town. Director Demers responded and explained her outlook on the position. Selectman Bunnell asked how the scheduling of staffing on nights and weekends would work for employees who do not work an alternative schedule, such as the proposed position. Director Demers said that, historically, the evening shifts are scheduled from 3:00pm to 8:00pm, which allows for two hours of overlap time where the night-shift employee would be working at the same time as the day-shift employee. Selectman Bunnell then asked what the position's percentage of time would be dedicated to Library program as opposed to the Library's branding, media, etc. tasks. Director Demers responded.

Chairman Boilard asked if the proposed position would lessen the need for outside, temporary staffing from being scheduled on Sundays at the Library. Director Demers stated no. She said that this matter is being addressed with the Town currently; and until it's settled, she is unable to address the question. Town Administrator Breault further explained Director Demers' response and the situation at hand. He indicated that the nature of the matter could only be discussed within executive session at this time. Chairman Boilard asked why Director Demers was working on a night shift. Director Demers informed that she was attempting to maintain consistency in the staffing schedule. Chairman Boilard asked if there was some way to restructure the schedule so that Director

Demers was not working a night shift. She responded that there was a possibility. Chairman Boilard further verbalized his concern regarding Director Demers working on night and weekend shifts.

He also acknowledged his understanding that when the Library's IT personnel changed positions from the Library Department to the IT Department, the monies for the position shifted from the Library's Department's budget to another Department's budget. Selectman Bunnell asked a question about the monies for the position that shifted to the IT Department. Thomas Sullivan, Assistant Town Administrator of Budgeting and Finance/Treasurer/Collector, responded and informed that that monies in FY 2016 budget for the IT position at the Library are not currently in the FY 2017 budget. Discussion ensued.

Selectman Bunnell asked if the Library Department's budget figure would be lower than last fiscal year's budget figure. Director Demers stated that it would be 4.5% below last year's budget. She pointed out that if the proposed position would be funded in the FY 2017 budget, the Library budget would still be 2.7% below last year's budget. Treasurer Sullivan advised the Selectmen that the Town should avoid any issues which would impede State aid from being allocated to the Library. He explained how it can be addressed in the budget to avoid any issues. Discussion ensued again.

#### *Central Dispatch*

Shirley Rae, Dispatcher Supervisor from Central Dispatch, requested funding for a part time position to cover an eight-hour shift per week at Central Dispatch. She stated that the position would not offer benefits and does not qualify as a union position. She indicated that she is requesting the proposed position because it's deemed best practice for Central Dispatch and 911 to have two dispatchers on duty for every shift. Currently, there is only one dispatcher scheduled on Sundays. She explained Central Dispatch's staffing schedule. She requested that this position be scheduled to work on Sunday's shifts. She further explained that there is only one dispatcher on Sundays to handle the calls, which the majority of the calls are of a medical nature.. These types of calls tend to be time consuming. She said that when medical calls are received, the services provide are slightly different than other 911 service calls. She further clarified her point. Supervisor Rae indicated that part time dispatchers are often recruited for full time dispatch positions in other communities. She mentioned that there may be an employee retiring from Central Dispatch in the next year as well. She elaborated on her difficulties in filling vacant shifts at Central Dispatch. She reviewed the pay rates in Central Dispatch as well as training and administrative aid provided to the Police Department for certain administrative tasks. Supervisor Rae reiterated her request for an additional, part time position in Central Dispatch.

Selectman Bunnell asked if Supervisor Rae was requesting \$10,000 for the proposed, part time position and additional \$10,000 for overtime. She then asked if Supervisor Rae expected to have a net of overtime pay in the FY 2017 budget. Supervisor Rae stated no. She explained that she has a salaried position; therefore, she is not paid overtime. Supervisor Rae indicated that it may save the budget some monies; however, the position would provide a service in Wilbraham that is most needed. She did clarify that she could not say that the position would save monies in Central Dispatch's overtime budget. Selectman Bunnell asked what the current overtime budget level was at Central Dispatch. Treasurer Sullivan indicated that Central Dispatch receives monies from the State to assist in covering overtime costs. Supervisor Rae said that Central Dispatch receives support and an incentive grant from the State, for the amount of \$49,000. The monies received from the State can be utilized to cover overtime costs. Treasurer Sullivan stated that there was about \$45,000 allocated to the General Fund for overtime costs this year. He further pointed out that monies set aside in this fund for overtime costs in the FY 2017 budget were increased to \$55,000. He said if you add that figure with the state grant amount Central Dispatch receives, you will get a true picture of the overtime costs in Central Dispatch.

Selectman Russell asked if there are going to be additional training costs associated with the proposed position. Supervisor Rae said that Central Dispatch receives a state grant that covers training expenses. She explained the costs of the training and continuing education requirements that are placed on Central Dispatch employees in order to comply with State regulation.

Chairman Boilard asked if the position was only for an eight hour shift each week on Sundays. He then asked who currently covers the shift. Supervisor Rae replied that she would cover the shift if no other member of the staff could be scheduled. Treasurer Sullivan explained that Union employees working at Central Dispatch have the right of first refusal for any open, additional shifts that offer overtime. Selectman Bunnell commented that the proposed position would increase the level of service provided. Supervisor Rae affirmed that this would be true. Chairman Boilard asked what the cost would be to have two dispatchers covering the Sunday shift. Supervisor Rae responded \$39 per hour for eight hours. Discussion ensued.

#### *Department of Public Works (DPW)*

Edmond Miga, Jr., Town Engineer/Director of DPW; Tonya Basch, Assistant Town Engineer/Assistant Director of DPW, and William Sperrazza, Superintendent of Operations, DPW, joined the Selectmen for the next discussion. Chairman Boilard asked for information on the budget requests submitted from DPW. Director Miga informed that the Department is requesting a full time position to be shared by two Divisions (i.e. Highway and Wastewater) in the DPW. Both Divisions will split the cost of the position. The funding for the position would be allocated from the General Fund and Wastewater Enterprise Fund in equal portions to fully cover the cost of the position. This position would be a Heavy Equipment Operator position.

Director Miga pointed out that the position is being requested for several reasons. He explained that the Wastewater Division has two positions; one of which is vacant and will soon be filled. He also pointed out that the Town has grown over the years. As a result, the sewer expansion on Main Street added two new sewer pump stations. The Town now has ten pump stations to be maintained, which is a sizable number. . Director Miga explained the duties required to maintain ten pump stations. He also informed that the Town has a Vac Truck, which is a \$400,000 piece of equipment, to use in maintaining the wastewater system. Director Miga explained how the truck is used for emergency calls and general maintenance of the system. According to Director Miga, the Vac Truck requires two people to operate. Therefore, when the Vac Truck is utilized, one of the positions at the Wastewater Division is on the truck and therefore that person is unavailable to maintain the pumping stations. He further explained how the operation of the Vac Truck, (due to the need of the Vac Truck requiring two people to operate,) impacts the overall function of the Town's DPW.

Additionally, the Town is required to submit annual reports to the City of Springfield and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection relative to the wastewater system. Director Miga said the job is becoming more and more involved. He said that all catch basins need to be cleaned and maintained and stormwater reports are required to be submitted to the State. The Town is required to comply with stormwater regulations, which entails best practices, such as maintaining catch basins and street sweeping. Director Miga further explained. He stated verbalized that the Department is doing the best it can to stay in compliance with state regulations; however, those include requirement for the catch basins, public education, etc. Assistant Town Engineer Basch further explained the demands placed on DPW relative to the stormwater regulations, including the State requiring documentation that all basins are cleaned as opposed to past practice required where only a portion of the Town's basins were to be cleaned each year. She shared that the basins fill up quickly with debris and maintaining all the catch basins in Town is becoming a full time job to run the equipment to keep the streets and basins clean. She clarified the demands placed on DPW by the State's requirements. Assistant Town Engineer Basch indicated that the Department was requesting the proposed position in order to help keep up with the demands being placed on the Department by State regulations.

Selectman Bunnell asked about the details relative to splitting the position between the Highway and Wastewater Divisions. Superintendent Sperrazza responded. Selectman Bunnell said it sounded as if the position would be a full time position in the Wastewater Division. Assistant Town Engineer Basch explained how the position's tasks were divided amongst the two Divisions. She explained the nature of the position's job and equipment to be utilized. Assistant Town Engineer Basch informed that when the wastewater system is not properly maintained, it requires significant funding to fix or replace parts of the system. She described how the Highway Division assists the Wastewater Division to maintain the wastewater system. Director Miga clarified what functions this position would perform and equipment to be used. He indicated that Superintendent Sperrazza researched to see how much it would cost to privatize this particular function relative to using the Vac Truck to clean basins, etc. The research showed that there would be significant additional costs and DPW employees would still be required to assist in the process. Superintendent Sperrazza explained that a private company would charge \$185 to \$200 per hour and could clean ten to twenty-four systems per day. However, there is also an additional cost for the private company to dispose of the waste removed from the system. He said that the private company would also charge a certain price per basin cleaned. Selectman Bunnell asked how many catch basins were in Wilbraham. Assistant Town Engineer Basch responded that there are 2,500 catch basins in Wilbraham. Discussion ensued.

Treasurer Sullivan mentioned that the Town could create a stormwater fund. Director Miga explained that other communities are creating a stormwater utility fee to establish an account to help pay for the additional staffing required to meet the needs of the State's requirements. Selectman Bunnell commented that there is a split in handling these tasks between the Highway and Wastewater Divisions. Assistant Town Engineer Basch explained further what DPW does meet some of these demands in house as opposed to contracting out. Selectman Bunnell stated that the Town owns Jet Cleaner and Vac Trucks and then she asked whether the Town has enough staff to operate these trucks. Assistant Town Engineer Basch affirmed this to be true. Selectman Bunnell asked if the DPW employees on the team are now all licensed to run any and all equipment. Superintendent Sperrazza stated that only the Wastewater Vac and Jet Cleaner Trucks are operated by the Wastewater employees. Selectman Bunnell asked if the new position would entail training to operate the trucks. Superintendent Sperrazza said yes. Selectman Bunnell asked if the licenses to operate the equipment would be required for a person in the new position. Representatives from DPW all agreed.

Director Miga quoted an article from the Beacon to show how severe the problem is to maintain water and wastewater systems to meet Environmental Protection Act (EPA) regulations. He also pointed out that the article indicated what the costs for Massachusetts are to maintain such systems. Assistant Town Engineer Basch explained that DPW is proactively asking for this position so to meet these EPA requirements. Further discussion ensued. Selectman Russell commented about the amount of work it is for the employee who is required to check and monitor the pump stations as well as taking the equipment out in the afternoon to maintain the wastewater system. He then asked how this amount of work impacts a work day without having the proposed additional person in this new position. Assistant Town Engineer Basch explained that the Town wants to do more jet lining of the wastewater system in order to maintain the functionality of the system, which is part of the reasoning for the proposed position. She further added that it would take a whole work day to do routine cleaning of the system. The more routine cleaning of the system, the more systematic it becomes and it helps to keep the wastewater system in good condition. Superintendent Sperrazza also commented. Discussion ensued.

Selectman Bunnell asked if the representatives from DPW could explain the cost of the proposed position again. Director Miga estimated it would be a cost of \$26,000 for both Divisions. Selectman Bunnell asked if this amount included benefits. Director Miga

stated yes. Superintendent Sperrazza said the position would cost approximately \$43,000 annually, split equally between both Divisions. Selectman Bunnell asked another question. Assistant Town Engineer Basch and Superintendent Sperrazza responded. The group discussed having the proposed position commence at the lowest grade level. The group also conversed about the cost of the licensing and training required for these types of positions.

#### *Wilbraham Police Department (WPD)*

Chief Roger Tucker, WPD, joined the Selectmen to discuss his budgetary requests for FY 2017. Chairman Boilard asked Chief Tucker to explain the request for an additional police officer. He said that the budget request for this position resulted from the number of injured police officers who are currently on leave and the related overtime impact on the Department's budget. He provided more detail about his budget request. Chief Tucker stated that the proposed position is to help reduce the overtime costs resulting from injured police officers missing duty or out on sick leave, as well as resulting from police officers who take vacation time, etc.

He provided some figures from the Police Department's 2008 Staffing Study. The 2008 Staffing Study recommended staffing be at twenty-nine police officers. The Police Department is currently at twenty-six police officers. Chief Tucker pointed out that the Town has grown considerably since 2008. He indicated that filling staffing gaps in the schedule have been very difficult. He recommended that the Police Department staffing should be as the 2008 Staffing Study suggested, which recommended twenty-nine police officers as a staffing minimum.

Chief Tucker stated that if the Police Department is not able to get additional staffing certain services, such as the School Resource Officer, will have to be cut. He explained his difficulty with the staffing schedule this year, while trying to cover the overtime with three full-time police officers out on injuries. He also described how police officers are having to swap shifts with each other in order to take a vacation as time off creates overtime, which is currently not granted. Chief Tucker discussed the minimum staffing options for the Police Department, which are the current standard staffing options. He said that a new police officer position will help provide flexibility to fill in the gaps in the staffing schedule in order to maintain the standard minimum staffing requirements. Chief Tucker talked about how he may also have to cut back the detective positions due to the current staffing circumstances if the new position budget request is not approved. Discussion ensued.

Treasurer Sullivan asked when the detective position was created. Chief Tucker responded the position was created approximately fifteen years ago as a part time position, assumed by a patrol officer at the time. Treasurer Sullivan asked if a patrol officer was replaced when the detective position was created. Chief Tucker stated no. He shared the value of having a detective and School Resource Officer and how both positions positively impact the community.

Treasurer Sullivan asked for confirmation that this position was created from a patrolmen position, which was not replaced. Chief Tucker stated yes. Treasurer Sullivan inquired if the Police Department had any other similar situations. Chief Tucker responded. Treasurer Sullivan clarified that the Police Department is down two and half patrolmen below the level the Department had in the past. Chief Tucker affirmed that this was true. Chairman Boilard asked if the Police Department had three full time officers currently. Chief Tucker stated yes; however, one of three officers is currently on light duty and not working out in the community. Chairman Boilard asked if there was any time frame relative to that particularly officer receiving a clearance to return fully to work. Chief Tucker stated that he did not anticipate a clearance for another couple of months. Selectman Bunnell asked if it's been a historical pattern for the last four years to have at least three police officers out on duty due to injuries. Chief Tucker stated yes; however, it involved different police officers over the years.

Chairman Boilard asked if the K-9 fund was still active. , Town Accountant Nancy Johnson, who was in the audience, responded to Chairman Boilard's question about the K-9 fund. She confirmed that the K-9 fund was still active and provided further detail. Chief Tucker highlighted the positive benefits of the Department's K-9 Officer's and K-9's work.

Chief Tucker mentioned that come October 2016, the Department will have two police officers retiring. Selectman Bunnell asked questions about the monies in the budget for sick leave and buy back. She also asked if Chief Tucker was able to hire a police officer immediately. Treasurer Sullivan responded. Selectman Bunnell suggested hiring a police officer right away at a lower pay scale. Chief Tucker agreed. Selectman Bunnell asked more questions regarding the finances related to various positions in the Police Department. Discussion ensued about the various expenses related to the staffing of the Police Department, including overtime expenses as well as the lag time which occurs when filling a vacant police officer position.

#### *General Discussion regarding the FY'17 Budget and Budget Requests*

Treasurer Sullivan said \$32,000 was added to the IT Department's budget for the position that impacted the Library's budget. As a result, the decrease in the Library budget was \$28,000. The Selectmen discussed how the Library's budget was behind last year's fiscal figures. The Selectmen conversed about the Library Director's request for a new position. Selectman Bunnell pointed out that the Library is down a half time position; however, the IT Department's staffing increased by a half time position. It was noted that the former Library employee working within the IT Department used to assist with the coverage of the Library's reference desk.

Director Miga announced that there has been progress on the project to repair the Red Bridge on East Street, which runs over the Chicopee River and is currently closed. He informed that the State, who is in control of the project, announced that the project's design for the bridge is one hundred percent complete. The State is scheduled to conduct a public hearing regarding the bridge project at Wilbraham Town Hall on March 24, 2016, at 6pm. During the hearing, the State will present the project to the public. Director Miga said that anyone can attend the hearing. The hearing will be for Wilbraham and Ludlow residents. Director Miga understands that the State is currently working with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation to get permission for a temporary easement so to perform construction work on the bridge in both communities. The State is also currently working on the necessary permitting process to move the project forward. The project's Invitation for Bid will be advertised shortly. However, there is no specific date as of yet. The State did indicate that the bid would go out sometime in late June.

Chairman Boilard announced that the Hampden Wilbraham Regional School District (HWRSD) School Committee will be voting on the HWRSD budget on Wednesday night. Treasurer Sullivan will present the Town's budget to the public on Wednesday night as well. Chairman Boilard spoke to HWRSD Superintendent of Schools and members of the HWRSD School Committee to try and pin down the HWRSD budget numbers. Treasurer Sullivan shared a conversation he had with Beth Regulbuto, HWRSD Associate Superintendent of Schools, about the impact on the HWRSD's budget. He shared the information he received from Ms. Regulbuto with the Selectmen. Discussion ensued.

Chairman Boilard commented that the Town no longer has \$360,000 revenue available for the HWRSD. Therefore, he cautioned that the HWRSD should not build a foundation on monies, which are not recurring. Chairman Boilard stated that he does not want to see the Town handcuffed in the future to provide additional funding to the HWRSD that is above the required assessment. He shared his concerns about the rising health insurance costs the Town will face in the future. Overall, he pointed out that it limits what Wilbraham can do operationally. Chairman Boilard asked what the Selectmen would like to do with regard to offering monies to HWRSD. The group discussed the various scenarios of funding given to HWRSD; and its impact on the Town's operating budget. The HWRSD budget gap is \$879,000, excluding the \$360,000 from Wilbraham. Selectman Russell asked about the HWRSD's Excess and Deficiency account. Treasurer Sullivan responded. He pointed out that merging of the Hampden and Wilbraham middle school level would help reduce HWRSD's expenses. Chairman Boilard asked where the Selectmen want to go with this issue. He said that if Wilbraham funds the full amount of \$360,000, then all the Department Heads' requests will not be funded in FY 2017. Treasurer Sullivan detailed the monies which the Town would have left if the Selectmen agreed to fund the additional monies requested by HWRSD. Treasurer Sullivan suggested prioritizing the requests; and determining what the Selectmen would like to do relative to the requests and the HWRSD budget. The group discussed what to recommend to the HWRSD relative to the additional funding being requested from Wilbraham. Chairman Boilard asked, again, what the Selectmen wanted to recommend to the Finance Committee for a fiscal figure to offer HWRSD.

The Selectmen discussed the HWRSD's budget gap; the proposed middle school unification and how it would help in alleviating the HWRSD budget gap. Selectman Bunnell said that it is her inclination to move forward with the higher number, \$360,000, with the understanding that the Town may not be able to offer those additional monies in the future. Selectman Russell commented that he did not want the HWRSD to assume that the Town will continually provide additional monies above the Town's annual HWRSD assessment. He highlighted the position that the Town is in as a result of having to provide additional monies to the HWRSD, such as not being able to hire new employees that are needed.

Treasurer Sullivan mentioned that the HWRSD can cut their budget prior to Town meeting. However, the District is unable to add additional monies to the budget. Selectman Bunnell reminded all that it's the Finance Committee's decision as to what to offer the HWRSD for budgetary monies. Discussion continued on this matter amongst the Selectmen. Chairman Boilard suggested offering \$250,000 to the HWRSD.

The Board talked about the Department Heads' requested positions' salaries and for confirmation that the salaries included all costs, (i.e. benefits). They also discussed various scenarios relative to the State's budget, specifically with regard to the State's allocations of Local Aid and School funding. The Board looked at the figure in the Town's Free Cash account. The Selectmen compared various scenarios and differing fiscal figures to hypothesize what such variances and scenarios would impact the Town's FY 2017 budget. Selectmen Bunnell and Russell were leaning toward offering HWRSD the full amount of \$360,000. Selectman Russell asked Chairman Boilard why he was choosing a figure below \$360,000. Chairman Boilard said that offering only \$250,000 will provide the Town with a bit of cushion. He further added that the figure would offer more opportunity to fill gaps in areas of where the Town's needs are. He also commented that it gives HWRSD an understanding as to where the Town is on this matter, and provides an opportunity for HWRSD to attempt to reduce its budget. Selectman Bunnell advised that Wilbraham would be providing a 2.36% increase from last year's contribution to the HWRSD Budget, if the Town offered the \$360,000. Further discussion ensued.

Selectman Russell stated that he was comfortable recommending \$250,000. Chairman Boilard suggested recommending \$260,000 just to make it an even. The Board decided to create a priority list relative to the budget requests. Treasurer Sullivan recommended implementing a stormwater fee fund. Chairman Boilard said that in the past, the Town voted down a meal tax and it took two or three times before the Community Preservation Act was voted into being. Chairman Boilard pointed out that the Town is not generally in favor of increasing fees. Treasurer Sullivan pointed out that the State offered local communities the option of implementing a meal

tax because the State was decreasing Local Aid funding. Selectman Bunnell commented that it's not just Wilbraham residents who eat at Wilbraham restaurants. She further added that if the meal tax was implemented the Town would be receiving revenue from people who do not live in Wilbraham through this particular tax.

The Board agreed to offer \$260,000 to HWRSD. Chairman Boilard agreed to contact Martin O'Shea, HWRSD Superintendent of Schools about the figure.. Treasurer Sullivan asked for clarification on the figure being offered. Chairman Boilard and Selectman Bunnell stated \$260,000.

Chairman Boilard informed that the Finance Committee was seeking input from the Board relative to the Department Heads' budget requests related to hiring. The Board decided to speak to the Chairman of the Finance Committee and Town Accountant individually on this matter. The group discussed the figures, and the inclusion of benefits within those figures, for the proposed positions. Selectman Bunnell asked for more information about the upcoming police officer retirements. Town Accountant Johnson responded. The group discussed the costs associated with the new hires, upcoming retirements, as well as the expenses related to the time gap that occurs between the retirements of employees and hiring of new employees to fill the vacant positions. The Selectmen wondered if this additional expense was factored into the proposed FY 2017 budget figures. Treasurer Sullivan confirmed that it is included in the calculations..

Suzanne McLaughlin, reporter from The Republican, asked several questions regarding the Town's FY 2017 Budget and the HWRSD's fiscal assessment for the Towns of Hampden and Wilbraham. The Selectmen responded to her questions.

*Materials Referenced: FY'17 Budget Workbook, dated March 7, 2016, submitted by N. Breault, Town Administrator; Wilbraham Middle School Capital Project List, dated February 25, 2016, submitted by N. Breault, Town Administrator, and Public Library Fact Sheet, n. d., submitted by K. Demers, Director of Wilbraham Public Library.*

**NEW BUSINESS**

Authorization to Hire Waste Water Technician

Chairman Boilard stated that this position is not a new hire. The position is currently vacant as a result of a recent retirement. He then asked if there were any questions or discussions. No questions or discussion were offered. For this reason, Chairman Boilard asked for a motion.

**MOTION: Made (Bunnell) and seconded (Russell) to approve the hire of a waste water technician, effectively immediately. Approved 3-0.**

*Materials Referenced: Authorization to Hire Form submitted by H. Dane, Human Resource Coordinator, relative to Wastewater Technician.*

The Selectmen decided to prioritize the various budget requests from the Department Heads. The Selectmen would then submit their recommendation regarding the budget requests to the Finance Committee. Chairman Boilard mentioned that the Selectmen will be signing the contract with the contractor for the new Police Station's construction. He said hopefully the Town will see some movement soon relative to the new Police Station building project.

Having no further business, the Board of Selectmen adjourned at 9:03pm.



Candace Ouillette Gaumond  
Administrative Assistant to the TA/BOS



Robert J. Boilard, Chairman



Susan C. Bunnell, Vice Chairman



Robert W. Russell, Clerk