

**Town of Castleton
Special Select Board Meeting
Minutes of December 5th, 2013
Castleton Town Offices**

Members Present: Wenger Rehlen, Thomas Ettori, John Hale, Ed O'Shea

Members Not Present: Cristine Smith

Others: Charles Jacien; see attached list

The meeting was called to order at 6:07 by Chairman T. Ettori.

2014-15 Budget Discussion

Town Manager Jacien presented the budget worksheet. He stated that about 46% of the budget is controlled by payroll and benefits. The bottom line increase is about \$246,000, which amounts to an increase of around 8 cents on the tax rate. A summary of discussion is as follows:

Legislating: Town Manager Jacien stated this is up about \$3000. A line item is included for notebooks because of the town clerk going to an electronic system. Workman's comp insurance and casualty and property insurance are up as well.

Chairman T. Ettori asked why \$500 was added to the board secretary line item. Town Manager Jacien stated that is based on the number of meetings.

Conducting Elections: Town Manager Jacien stated that there will be additional elections, so there will be an increase, but the town clerk has not completed the various line items yet.

Collection and Distribution of Funds: J. Hale noted about a 4% increase from the last budget.

Auditing: E. O'Shea asked if the rate was high. Town Manager Jacien stated that it is not. M. Combs noted that this goes out to bid every 3-5 years.

Tax Collecting: Town Manager Jacien noted the increase in postage. Chairman T. Ettori questioned the small decrease in benefits.

Planning and Zoning: Town Manager Jacien noted that this carries a part time zoning administrator at \$18/hour.

General Government Buildings: J. Hale asked about the increase in rent. Town Manager Jacien stated that it is related to now paying rent on the land as well.

Police Department: Town Manager Jacien stated that this budget carries the chief and 3 full time officers. He stated that the "cops" grant obligated the town to keep a third full time officer for an additional year, and that obligation will expire 6 months into the budget. The board will have to decide whether to keep this officer or not.

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Chairman T. Ettori asked why the part time line item is up \$15,000. Town Manager Jacien stated that this includes a part time detective at 20 hours per week and a special officer at 20 hours a week.

Fire Department: Town Manager Jacien stated that he would check into the increase in repairs for vehicles.

Highway: Town manager Jacien stated that the budget carries a supervisor, 3 full time personnel, and 1 part time personnel. The budget also includes crushing and an increase in pavements. He also noted that salt prices are coming down.

Sidewalks: Budget includes streetscaping.

Bridges: Float Bridge is the major project.

Town Mechanic: The Capital Improvement Fund has been reduced.

Constables: Town Manager Jacien stated that there is a proposed increase in personnel services and that the constables are looking for the town to cover their vehicles with liability insurance.

Transfer Station: Town Manager Jacien stated that he hopes to put running water to keep the dust down, accounting for the \$15,000 increase.

Recreation: Town Manager Jacien stated that the Crystal Beach budget is up due to proposed improvements.

E. O'Shea noted that youth sport is down. Chairman T. Ettori questioned the increase in payroll at Crystal Beach. E. O'Shea stated that it seems everything is being cut but Crystal Beach. He states something should be done more for adult recreation, etc. He stated that Crystal Beach may not be able to break even, but what is happening now is not working. He questioned whether Crystal Beach should be under the direction of the Recreation Commission since it is too big a job.

Town Manager Jacien stated that the board can discuss the budget further at the December 16th and 23rd meetings, looking toward a January 6th, 2014 deadline.

Chairman T. Ettori suggested not refilling the full time highway position. He also stated that he wonders if the constables should pay for half their liability insurance since it covers them all year. M. Combs questioned whether that becomes a taxable fringe benefit.

Chairman T. Ettori stated that the board could consider the treasurer position being paid hourly rather than salaried. He also stated that the personnel level in the police department would need to be discussed.

W. Rehlen suggested scaling back paving.

P. Graziano urged the board to try and make the budget as level funded as possible.

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M. Combs noted that some of the increase is related to salary levels not being reflected correctly from last year's budget.

Adjournment

MOTION

J. Hale made a motion to adjourn. W. Rehlen seconded. All in favor. So voted. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 P.M.

Date of Approval