

**TOWN OF CASTLETON  
SPECIAL SELECT BOARD MEETING  
Minutes of JANUARY 15, 2018  
TOWN OFFICES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** R. Combs, J. Bruno, R. Spaulding, J. Leamy, Z. Holzworth

Meeting called to order by Chairman J. Bruno at 6:00pm.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION - Personnel {1VSA §313 (a)(3)}**

**MOTION:** J. Leamy made a motion to go into Executive Session for Personnel with Chief Mantello and the Board. Seconded by Z. Holzworth. All in favor. Motion Carried.

**MOTION:** Z. Holzworth made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 6:30pm with no action taken. Seconded by R. Spaulding. All in favor. Motion Carried.

**MOTION:** Z. Holzworth made a motion to go into Executive Session with Chief Mantello, Union Rep and S. McDermott. Seconded by R. Spaulding. All in favor. Motion Carried.

**MOTION:** Z. Holzworth made a motion to withdraw his previous motion to go into Executive Session. Seconded by R. Spaulding. All in favor. Motion Carried.

**MOTION:** Z. Holzworth made a motion to go into Executive Session with Chief Mantello, S. McDermott, D. VanDuesen, Union Rep. And the Board. Seconded by R. Spaulding. All in favor. Motion Carried.

**MOTION:** Z. Holzworth made a motion to exit Executive Session at 6:55pm with no action taken. Seconded by R. Spaulding. All in favor. Motion Carried.

**CONTINUATION OF BUDGET**

J. Bruno asked if the new total general budget is 8% less than last year.

M. Combs said. No, "The last line states that there is a break down of the highway portion of it and everything else, so if the numbers are still accurate from the 2<sup>nd</sup> draft, I don't know if they are for the 3<sup>rd</sup>, because I just pulled out the things you that you motioned to remove. The highway budget is level and there is an 8% reduction in the rest of the budget, but it probably doesn't reflect those "what if's", taking out the loan payment and reserves."

J. Bruno restated that the answer to his question was yes, the budget is down 8% from last year.

M. Combs replies, yes, from the number in the column.

## **PAGE 2 - SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARYR 15, 2018**

R. Combs stated that was kind of misleading in a way because when you add highway and everything else together, that's the \$3.122 number, the overall actual budget is down 5%.

J. Bruno stated that the numbers are more important than percentages, the budget is down \$167,404.00 from last year's budget.

R. Combs stated that \$192,000 was eliminated due to having no town office payment, so therefore, it's really up by \$35,000.00.

J. Bruno stated the budget is really increased by \$35,000.00, which is about 1%.

J. Bruno asked if the issues with salaries have been resolved.

R. Combs stated he went and talked to the town accountant, (M. Combs). You have to go back two years ago when the budget for FY ending 2017, we increased salaries in the budget 1% and then last year in the budget we increased 1% again, because of no union contract. When in June of 2017 we gave non-union employees 2.25% and again after beginning of new fiscal year another 2.25%. The actuals went up more than the budget did. So, this year what the town accountant did was she took the actual numbers and when you compare those to last years budgeted number their up 4.5 or 6%. When in reality it's up 2.25%.

M. Combs presented the Board with an information sheet regarding wages and increases. It was a simple document, representing one line of the payroll. It was not taken out of the budget specifically. It's the way the the spreadsheet is created.

J. Leamy stated that the increase was 4.50% over two years and the increase now is 2.25%. He noted that there are a lot of departments that don't have that 2.5% reflected. Some have 4%, some 5% in the highway budget.

M. Combs noted that the program rounds up and/or down, so the numbers shown may not be accurate.

J. Leamy was concerned about the discrepancies or raises from 0-11%.

J. Bruno asked who is getting 11%.

M. Combs asked J. Leamy who it was and she would explain.

J. Leamy replied that it was the assistant to the accountant.

M. Combs stated it is done with formulas.

**PAGE 3 - SPECIAL SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 15, 2018**

J. Bruno noted that the accountant has a 5% increase.

M. Combs said her increase is 4.76%.

M. Combs stated that some numbers reflect changes in personnel.

M. Combs tried to project changes with the Police Dept., as the Chief's current contract will end during the fiscal year.

J. Leamy stated that the Union will get a contract and the rest of the employees will get the same increase and benefits, but then, some non-union employees said they were not satisfied with that and negotiated on their own to the Town Manager, and in some cases threatened to quit, which was passed on to the Board. The elephant in the room was the union contract. Prior to June 30, 2017, the Board encumbered money and gave non-union employees retroactive raises. That sets everything out of whack. Now it's an individual situation, when someone gets 4% and others get 2%. We are trying to get back on an even path. If everyone gets 1% raise that costs the town \$8,000.00.

J. Bruno stated there is quite a range of increases in salaries.

J. Bruno asked what the \$2,300.00 the difference in increase in the town accountant budget from last year, that's 5%.

R. Combs stated because if you go back, the increase was 2.25%, not 1%.

M. Combs stated these percentages just represent the increase in a budget number or decrease from over the prior year. If reality does not equal your budget then it doesn't matter what the increase or decrease is from the budget.

J. Leamy stated that he is bothered by the discrepancies in the salaries and the bad feelings you get among the employees. I would go for a flat increase for the full time people and discussions about raises for part time people.

M. Combs noted that the actual increases that are being budgeted for are being based on either what we know now or assumptions that were given to me regarding union employees.

M. Combs offered to do screenshots of the formulas she uses in order to convince the members that she knows what she is doing.

R. Spaulding stated he never said that M. Combs did not know what she was doing and asked her not to put words in his mouth.

**PAGE 4 - SPECIAL SELECT BOARD MEETING OF JANUARY 15, 2018**

M. Combs stated that no one was willing to come to her and ask her about it.

R. Spaulding replied that he works 2 full time jobs and does not have time and has been barked at a couple times and is not going to put up with it anymore.

R. Combs noted that expenses are \$35,000.00 over what they were last year.

R. Combs stated that the budget reflects a 2.25% increase in the full time employees, no one is getting 5% or 4% and no one is getting 0%. The budget says zero but that's not what the actual payroll says.

J. Leamy replied that is what you have to raise from taxes.

**MOTION:** J. Leamy made a motion that full time workers eligible for medical benefits receive a 3% raise and the part time people who are not eligible for medical benefits receive a 2%. Seconded by Z. Holzworth. All in favor. Motion Carried. R.Combs- Abstain

J. Bruno agrees that it is a good compromise and raises should be consistent across the board.

**ADJOURN**

**MOTION:** Z. Holzworth made a motion to adjourn at 7:45pm. Seconded by J. Leamy. All in favor. Motion Carried.

Respectfully

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Approval

V. Waldron