

FARMINGTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Tuesday, January 6, 2015

Chairman Ryan Morgan called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. with the following members present: Andrew Buckland, Joshua Bell, Stephan Bunker and Michael Fogg. Town Manager Richard Davis, Town Secretary Linda Grant, Treasurer Diana Young, Police Chief Jack Peck, Fire Rescue Chief Terry Bell and Deputy Chief /Budget Committee Chairman Clyde Ross, Parks & Recreation Director Steve Shible and Assistant Director Matt Foster, Public Works Director Denis Castonguay, Shop Manager/Chief Mechanic Jonathan Alexander and Foreman Jim Kiernan, Code Enforcement Officer Steve Kaiser, Channel 11, and members of the press and public were also in attendance.

ITEM 1: Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Chairman Ryan Morgan led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ITEM 2: To Review the Following Proposed 2014 Departmental Budgets:

A) Treasurer / Clerk

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Treasurer/Clerk budget in the amount of \$242,884, which is an increase from 2014 of \$7,659, or 3.26%. Treasurer Diana Young was present and explained the increase in the COLA, Workers' Compensation, Health Insurance, Legal/Advertising Contractual Services line items, and decrease in the Elections line item.

B) Cemeteries

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Cemeteries budget in the amount of \$73,748, which is an increase from 2014 of \$185, or 0.25%. Diana Young explained that there were no overages in the 2014 budget and the 2015 increases were projected minor adjustments.

C) General Assistance

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 General Assistance budget in the amount of \$25,000, which is an increase from 2014 of \$2,000, or 8.70%. Mr. Davis stated that there was an overage in the 2014 budget and the clerk has, at his request, adjusted the 2015 budget accordingly, in part due to the State changes in food allowances for younger people. Mr. Davis clarified for Michael Fogg the Town's obligation by State Statute to provide assistance.

D) Assessing

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Assessing budget in the amount of \$79,500, which is a decrease from 2014 of \$47,104, or -37.21%. Mr. Davis explained that the decrease is due in large part to the retirement of the assessor and the contracting of an assessing service.

ITEM 2: To Review the Following Proposed 2014 Departmental Budgets: (Cont.)

E) Code Enforcement

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Code Enforcement budget in the amount of \$151,166, which is a decrease from 2014 of \$1,364, or -0.89%. Code Enforcement Officer Steve Kaiser was present and explained that the adjustments made in this budget were based on 2014 expenditures to date. Mr. Davis pointed out that not all of the 2014 expenditures shown on the spreadsheet are correct and will be updated once the year end process is complete. Ryan Morgan generated a brief discussion regarding upcoming proposed changes in MUBEC.

F) Police

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Police Department budget in the amount of \$1,245,337, which is an increase over 2014 of \$51,772, or 4.34%. Mr. Davis pointed out that this budget is very much personnel driven, and asked Chief Jack Peck to explain the upcoming department personnel challenges and the proposed solution and cost to retaining all fourteen officers on the department. Chief Peck explained the non-renewal of the department's MDEA officer's contract, and his proposal to absorb the pay of that officer's position into the 2015 budget by creating a Utility Officer position. The title "Utility Officer" was discussed, with the general consensus of the Selectmen being that the title should remain as Patrolman. Chief Peck explained other increases, most of which were based on 2014 expenditures to date, but also included the replacement of several bulletproof vests, the Taser Assurance Program for the new Tasers, and increase of the storage capacity on evidence.com, which is video storage for the officer's body cameras. He pointed out that the decreases in certain line items are largely relative to his proposal to retain a Patrolman's position. Mr. Davis pointed out that the Town is looking into bringing more of the maintenance work on vehicles in-house so there may be an opportunity to reduce that line item in the future. Reduction and balance of the Vehicle Reserve line item was discussed, with Chief Peck explaining the availability and utilization of funds from the Drug Education Reserve account, which has an approximate balance of \$24,000.

G) Fire Rescue

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Fire Rescue Department budget in the amount of \$401,513, which is an increase over 2014 of \$21,458, or 5.65%. Chief Terry Bell was present and explained the increase in this budget, which is largely due to the per diem personnel services. He also reviewed the 2014 increase in fire/rescue calls. Deputy Chief Clyde Ross was also present to help answer any questions the Board might have. Chief Jack Peck reported that Chief Bell and the per diem personnel have offered to set up the Police Department's new cruiser this year for free. He stated that there may be some initial setup costs, but there will certainly be a savings, as it cost \$3,700 for last year's cruiser set up.

H) Parks and Recreation

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Parks and Recreation Department budget in the amount of \$152,740, which is a decrease from 2014 of \$262, or -0.17%. Parks and Recreation Director Steve Shible was present and explained the staff changes, potential advertising expense(s), repairs to the gazebo floor and fence at Meetinghouse Park, and repairs to the field house at Hippach Field, which costs will be matched by the Mills Trust Fund. Assistant Director Matthew Foster was also present to help answer any questions the Board might have.

ITEM 2: To Review the Following Proposed 2014 Departmental Budgets: (Cont.)

D) Community Center

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Community Center budget in the amount of \$112,211, which is an increase from 2014 of \$6,330, or 5.98%. Director Steve Shible further reviewed the Wages line item which is the larger part of the increase in this budget. Mr. Davis stated that it is his intention to have discussion of the course of action to be taken for Steve Shible's replacement on the next agenda so that it will be known how to budget the Salary and Wage line items while still in the budget process. Refinishing of the floors of the middle section of bleachers was also briefly discussed.

J) Public Works

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Public Works budget in the amount of \$1,269,060, which is an increase over 2014 of \$215,973, or 20.51%. Mr. Davis explained that the increase is in large part due to the proposal to add two full-time year-round positions back into the budget and eliminate the two seasonal part-time positions. Public Works Director Denis Castonguay was present and explained the department's staff and equipment needs and challenges. Foreman Jim Kiernan and Shop Manager/Chief Mechanic Jonathan Alexander were also present to help answer any questions the Board might have. Mr. Davis pointed out that research done by a manager in another community this past summer on Public Works Department budget comparisons in the State showed that Farmington is approximately \$200,000 less than comparable communities. Adding the two full-time year-round positions back into the budget will make up that difference. Mr. Davis explained that the increase in the Vehicle & Equipment Reserve line item is due to the inclusion of the new loader and holder lease payments provided either of those pieces of equipment is not paid off this year as was previously discussed.

K) L.O.R.A.P.

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 L.O.R.A.P. budget in the amount of \$158,324, which is a decrease from 2014 of \$14,676, or -8.48%. Mr. Davis stated that less funding is expected from the State this year. He handed out and, with the assistance of Public Works Director Denis Castonguay, reviewed a sheet listing the 2015 paving requests. The Selectmen and Mr. Davis encouraged Andrew Buckland, as a State Representative, to question the continuance of the reduced percentage of L.O.R.A.P. funding now that gas prices are lower. Upcoming legislation regarding excise tax was also discussed.

L) Five Year Road Program

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Five Year Road Program budget in the amount of \$233,000, which is an increase over 2014 of \$100,000, or 75.19%. Joshua Bell generated a discussion regarding what projects could be delayed another year if this budget was not increased. It was the general consensus of the Selectmen to present the budget for voter decision. Budget Committee Chairman Clyde Ross contributed to the discussion.

M) Public Works Reserve

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Public Works Reserve budget in the amount of \$5,000, which is the same amount as budgeted in 2014. He explained that this account is used to fund any issues with the Public Works garage.

ITEM 2: To Review the Following Proposed 2014 Departmental Budgets: (Cont.)

N) Recycling

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Recycling budget in the amount of \$78,138, which is an increase over 2014 of \$7,690, or 10.92%. Denis Castonguay explained the increases in the Wages, Motor Fuel and Equipment Reserve line items. Mr. Davis asked Mr. Castonguay to take a second look at the Equipment Reserve line item to see it could possibly be decreased to \$4,000, as it was last year.

O) Administration

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Administration budget in the amount of \$241,946, which is an increase over 2014 of \$6,413, or 2.72%. He stated that any increases other than those in the Personnel Services line items were based on 2014 expenditures to date.

The Board recessed from 8:25-8:30 P.M.

Chairman Morgan asked the Selectmen to move to and review Item 2X so that Farmington Public Library representative Richard Morton might leave sooner.

X) Contracts / Public Services

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Farmington Library appropriation request in the amount of \$146,666, which is an increase over 2014 of \$2,895. Richard Morton was present on behalf of the library and explained that although the library is still running at a deficit, the 2014 appropriation has made that deficit a lot less. He reported that two projects that they were able to complete in 2014 were some electrical issues and the lining of the chimney. Mr. Morton stated that endowment and fund raising funds for the most part cover the operation and maintenance of the library, and the appropriation request equates to salaries and the expense of salaries.

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Gay Cemetery appropriation request in the amount of \$900, which is the same amount as requested in 2014.

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Franklin County Animal Shelter appropriation request in the amount of \$14,744, which is an increase over 2014 of \$776. Mr. Davis explained that the increase is due to the projection of the per capita going from \$1.80 to \$2.00 on July 1, 2015.

Richard Davis reported that the total increase in this budget is \$8,671, or 5.64%.

P) Committees & Events

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Committees and Events budget in the amount of \$6,800, which is an increase over 2014 of \$300, or 4.62%. Mr. Davis explained the increase in the Special Projects account, which the Selectmen discussed.

ITEM 2: To Review the Following Proposed 2014 Departmental Budgets: (Cont.)

Q) Municipal Building

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Municipal Building budget in the amount of \$87,951, which is an increase over 2014 of \$6,530, or 8.02%. Mr. Davis stated that most of the increases are based on 2014 expenditures. He also reviewed the Land and Property line item which includes funding for sealing of the parking lots and installation of a four-head heat pump unit.

R) T.A.N.

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 T.A.N. budget in the amount of \$5,000, which is an increase from 2014 of \$2,000. Change of the fiscal year was briefly discussed.

S) Other Protections

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Other Protections budget in the amount of \$472,833, which is a decrease from 2014 of \$6,283, or -1.31%. He reported that the Insurances amount is lower this year due to being on the first year of a three year contract.

T) Debt Service

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Debt Service budget in the amount of \$155,170, which is a decrease from 2014 of \$3,243, or -2.05%. Mr. Davis stated that this account is less because as the debt is paid down the principal and interest payments become lower. Stephan Bunker asked that a footnote be added on the spreadsheet with the end year of each loan. Michael Fogg generated a brief discussion regarding paying off debts from the Unassigned Fund Balance to save interest, and the process for reimbursing that account. Mr. Davis pointed out that this is only annual debt service, where the overall debt would be close to a million dollars.

U) Legal Reserve

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 Legal Reserve budget in the amount of \$15,000, which is a decrease from 2014 of \$3,000, or -16.67%. Mr. Davis suggested that the Selectmen may want to make an adjustment in this account once the year end expenditure amount is known. He also explained what this account is used for.

V) ADA Reserve

Town Manager Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2015 ADA Reserve budget in the amount of \$1,000, which is a decrease from 2014 of \$1,500. Mr. Davis stated that there are no known projects to be expended from this account this year.

W) Transportation Advisory Committee

Town Manager Richard Davis stated that the balance in this account is carried forward from year to year.

ITEM 3: To Discuss Other Business

- A) Michael Fogg generated a discussion regarding the Capital Improvement Plan and Reserve account use authorization.
- B) Ryan Morgan reminded the Selectmen that there is a Warrant to be signed.
- C) Ryan Morgan reported that he is not running for re-election this year, but for anyone who might be interested in running, the papers are now available for this seat opening from the Town Clerk. He also clarified that the annual Town Meeting will be held at the Community Center on Monday, March 23, 2015 starting at 7:00 P.M. Richard Davis commended Mr. Morgan on a job well done, and stated that he will be missed.

There being no further business to come before the Board, **Stephan Bunker moved to adjourn at 9:30 P.M.; Andrew Buckland seconded.**

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 5 MOTION CARRIED

Minutes respectfully submitted by Linda H. Grant.

Stephan M. Bunker – Secretary