

## TOWN OF NORTH BROOKFIELD

### Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Monday, June 1, 2015

The North Brookfield Board of Selectmen met on Monday, June 1, 2015 in the Town Offices to discuss the FY 16 budget and ways of reducing the projected deficit. The Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Mr. Hevy. Also present were Selectmen Mary Walter and Robert Smith.

Various options for reducing the deficit projected on the May 7, 2015 revised financial statement of approximately \$378,755 (adjusted for anticipated level-funding of the School Department and elimination of the second police cruiser) were discussed.

Four options for the FY 16 budget and the deficit were discussed at the outset. They ranged from level-funding all budgets to level-funding with selective additions to key Departments in need of additional personnel and/or other funding. All of the proposals either reduced the projected deficit, or added to it. Other options were then discussed. (Attachment)

It was noted that, in part, the projected FY 16 shortfall was a direct result of the FY 15 deficit, which was eliminated only with the use of available 'free cash' and stabilization funds.

A possible 'formula' approach to reducing the deficit was also discussed in detail. However, it became clear that a percentage-based reduction in General Government budgets would require reductions, before adjustments for several critical needs in key Departments, of over 8%, which was not considered possible. Several budgets contained line items which cannot be reduced or eliminated, such as debt and interest, group insurance and other benefits, the Bay Path assessment, etc. which reduces the amount subject to any 'formula' reduction to \$2.0-\$2.5 million, or approximately half of the General Government budget request. A complete reduction of the deficit, therefore, would require budget cuts of approximately 20%, an approach which everyone agreed was not possible.

After a lengthy review of FY budget requests, it was ultimately agreed that members of the Board would again individually review all budget requests and develop recommendations regarding the deficit. The Board agreed to meet again on Friday, June 5, 2015 at 4:40 PM at the Town Offices to make recommendations on a final FY 16 budget. A Meeting with the Finance Committee, it was also agreed, would be scheduled for Monday, June 8, 2015 at 6:30 PM to seek the input of the Committee.

It was unanimously agreed that work on a FY 17 budget framework, with the Finance Committee, would have to begin over the summer months, since it was unlikely that the Town's finances would improve. The proposal will be discussed with the Finance Committee at the June 8, 2015 Meeting.

There being no further business before the Board, a Motion was made by Ms. Walter, and seconded by Mr. Smith, to adjourn the Meeting. The vote was unanimous. The Meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Robert Smith