

TOWN OF NORTH BROOKFIELD

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen

June 5, 2015 4:30 PM

The North Brookfield Board of Selectmen met on Friday, June 5, 2015 in the Town Offices to consider a budget transfer request and to further discuss the projected FY 16 budget deficit. Present were Selectmen Eric Hevy, Mary Walter, and Robert Smith. The Meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM by Mr. Hevy.

The Board reviewed a request for a transfer within the Fire Department budget of \$2,574.45 from various Fire Department line items to the Fire Department salary account. A Motion was made by Ms. Walter, and seconded by Mr. Smith to approve the transfer request. The vote was unanimous. The transfer was approved. The request will be forwarded to the Finance Committee. (Attachment)

The Board also reviewed the June 4, 2015 revised projected Income/Expense statement and discussed ways of reducing the projected FY 16 deficit of \$424,655. It was noted that the projected deficit did not include the addition of an additional employee to the Highway Department, which had been discussed at previous Meetings.

Since several of the FY 16 Departmental budget requests were above level funding (which had been requested in the original budget guidelines), it was proposed that all budgets be level funded, which would reduce the deficit by approximately \$131,673 and reduce the projected deficit to approximately \$292,938. To further reduce the deficit, a possible additional 4% reduction to all General Town Government budgets was also discussed. In the course of the discussion, it was noted that of the projected total FY 16 Town budget of approximately \$14.3 million, only approximately \$2.1 million of that amount could be considered for reductions since debt and interest payments, employee benefits (including health insurance), veterans' benefits, the Bay Path assessment, etc., could not be reduced. In these discussions, it was assumed that the School Department would also be level funded in FY 16. These realities left few options for reducing the projected deficit.

After a lengthy discussion and review of the budget numbers, it was decided to recommend level funding all General Town Government budgets, with the exceptions noted, reducing the deficit by approximately \$131,673 and to give further consideration to an additional 4% reduction in those budgets. However, it was noted that such a course of action would seriously affect the ability of Departments to function. It was also noted such a reduction could have serious consequences for the State grants

received by both the Library and Senior Center. Such a reduction might also place the Library's certification in doubt.

It was agreed, however, that the needs of the Highway Department could not be overlooked, and that an additional employee would be recommended for FY 16, along with minimal additions for veterans' benefits and the Town Park. The Town Collector's request for a postage machine would also be recommended. In total, these additions would add approximately \$38,000-\$39,000 to the budget.

Members of the Board agreed to again review all line items and figures discussed at the Meeting over the weekend prior to the planned Meeting with the Finance Committee on Monday, June 8, 2015 where final recommendations for a FY 16 budget and plan to eliminate the projected FY 16 deficit would be discussed. (Attachments)

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 6:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Smith