

MEETING OF THE NORTH BROOKFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN

AND

THE NORTH BROOKFIELD BOARD OF HEALTH

Date: July 24, 2013 @ 6:30 PM

Location: 215 North Main Street

Board of Health Office

Selectmen in Attendance: Richard Chabot, Bob Smith and Mary Walter

Finance Committee in Attendance: Robert Locatelli for Eric Hevy, Chairman

Board of Health members in Attendance: John Alphin, Edith Hubacz and Cathy Strandberg

Minutes of the Board of Selectmen

Mr. Alphin opened the joint meeting at 6:30 pm.

1. Transfer Station Reduced Hours

Mr. Alphin stated that he wanted the Selectmen to know that the signs indicating a reduction/change in the hours of the Transfer Station/Recycle Center with the statement "due to budget cuts" were going to be modified excluding that statement. Mr. Alphin explained that the Board of Health (BOH) had been considering this reduction for some time for other practical reasons such as early darkness in the winter months and low traffic levels. A one hour reduction in the hours with a 4 pm closing on Saturdays was decided by the BOH Members for Fiscal 2014.

2. Fiscal 2014 Budget Issues

Mr. Alphin asked to be brought up to date on the specific cuts that were made in the BOH budget by the Selectmen and the Finance Committee prior to the Adjourned Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Smith read from an email from BOH member John Alphin (Attachment 1) which stated that the cuts should be taken from the following line items as recommended by the BOH Clerk.

BOH Education	\$100
BOH Advertising	\$300
BOH Purchase of Services	\$1500
BOH Clerk's Salary	\$1,000
Total	\$2900

Mr. Alphin was under the impression that \$3,000 had been cut from the BOH budget. Mr. Smith clarified that it was agreed at a joint meeting of the Finance Committee that the salary of the BOH clerk would not be cut making the total BOH budget cut \$1900.00.

Mr. Alphin then presented a BOH budget analysis (Attachment 2) that he had done using input from the Town Accountant (Attachment 3). Mr. Alphin stated that his intent in the analysis was to demonstrate the complicated nature of the BOH budget. He specifically pointed out mandated costs relative to the closed landfill that affected the Transfer Station/Recycle Center budget by \$17,361 in Fiscal 13. Mr. Alphin repeatedly emphasized the fact that the Transfer Station/Recycle brings in more revenue than it has expenses but the Landfill costs distort the accuracy of the total budget figures (revenue vs. expenses). The group had a lengthy discussion on the matter, which included the subject of insufficient funds to cover the cost of bags.

Mr. Smith proposed that there be a meeting to restructure the BOH budget between a member of the Finance Committee, the Town Accountant and Mr. Alphin to properly identify and appropriate funding specific to the Landfill rather than relying on the BOH revolving fund to cover these expenses, which is the current practice.

3. BOH 3% Raises

The Selectmen raised the issue of 3% raises granted to BOH employees while submitting a level funded FY 2014 budget on 12/20/12 (Attachment 4) as stated in the Fiscal 2014 Budget Guidelines (Attachment 5). The June 18 FINCOM budget reduction was made by the BOH as described in the June 10 email to the BOS (Attachment 1 of these minutes). The email also indicates a reduction in Purchase of Services of \$2,280.00 to cover salary increases in the original BOH budget submission. Mr. Alphin defended the BOH decision to set the salaries of employees according to MGL. He praised the performance and dedication of BOH employees and emphasized their endurance through a long period without salary increases. He also stated that he feared losing employees to surrounding Towns. Mrs. Walter mentioned that 5% salary increases had been given to all employees in 2012 when funding was available due to the level of Free Cash certified. Mr. Smith stated that 3% raises had been considered during the budget process, but current revenue and local aid projections and the Town's budget deficit prohibited across the board raises. He further stated that all Town non-union employees deserve wage increases as well as the BOH, but that at the present time it is not possible to make that commitment. He emphasized that if the budget can be balanced with available funds after certification of Free Cash, raises will be considered. He further asked the Board in fairness to other non-union employees reconsider their decision on the increases, and level fund the salaries for FY 2014. Mr. Alphin argued that the BOH clerk's responsibilities were more than that of the average clerk and that the salary increase was deserved. Mrs. Walter stated that she had previously recommended that, if this was the feeling of the BOH, that they should consider reclassification of the job. Mr. Chabot stated that a decision needed to be made regarding the raises. The Board (Mr. Alphin, Ms. Strandberg and Ms. Hubacz) agreed to transfers reducing

salaries to the FY 13 level and increasing purchase of services at Town Meeting in the fall. Mr. Smith stated that these transfers would contribute to correcting the bag shortage problem.

The BOH agreed that it would be explained to their employees that 3% raises would be given only if all non-union employees were given raises.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM.