

TOWN OF SEABROOK

SELECTMEN'S SPECIAL MEETING

JANUARY 13, 2020

Present: Aboul B. Khan
Theresa A. Kyle
William Manzi

10:00AM

Mr. Khan opened the meeting at 10:23AM.

WARRANT

The warrant was read into the record by the board members.

Article 5 - Bond Radio Equipment - Police Department

Mrs. Kyle said this is a very important article for our police department. Chief Walker spoke and stated that the current radios are obsolete and this article is imperative to give the department the tools they need. The quote received is a comprehensive quote in order to better serve all areas in town. This item is not a want it is a need for the department.

Article 6 - Operating Budget

Mrs. Kyle said it is what it is and she is willing to pay more in taxes in order to get the services and the good work from our employees. Mr. Manzi said they have done everything they could to flat line the budget in order to stay in line with the board's goals for 2020. Mrs. Kyle said working with the unions they were willing to give some things up to stay within the goals of the board and thanked them for that. Mr. Khan said they worked hard to stay within the set goals.

Article 7 - SEA Contract

Mrs. Kyle thanked the union and employees for working with the board. Mr. Khan said this is the largest union that includes water, DPW, sewer and the secretaries. This union fell short last year and he hopes the voters will vote in favor of this contract.

Bill Cahill spoke and thanked the board for working with them and he feels they came to a good agreement in 2020 with no tax impact for the taxpayers.

Mr. Manzi said this is a one-year contract with no impact in 2020. Starting in January 2021 there is a 50 cent per hour increase. There were no changes made to the healthcare costs in this contract and this union has not had a raise in 3 years. They do currently share in the cost of health care and it is done on a dollar basis not a percentage.

Article 8 - SPA Contract

Mrs. Kyle said our police department is the best and is an important department. We are a border town that requires extra care and they are there all the time. She encourages all voters to vote in favor of this contract.

Bill Cahill said they have gone without increases and benefits since 2018 and they are a dedicated group. He said it is important to pass this contract and in this day and age it is hard to recruit individuals.

Mr. Khan said we have been losing officers to other communities and we don't want to do that. The contract needs to pass in order to help in retaining the employees.

Mr. Manzi said it is difficult to fill the positions and said we need to be somewhat competitive in the pay structure in order to recruit and retain employees.

Chief Walker spoke and said they are in a competitive market and the employees see this so in order to retain and recruit it is important to have voter support on the contracts.

Mr. Khan said many communities do not need to go through town meeting vote. When our recruits are hired they go through training that the town pays for so when they move to other communities it hurts the town.

Mr. Manzi said this is a one year contract and in 2021 would receive a 2.5% increase in salary. Bill Cahill pointed out that these unions have not had an increase in 3 years and even with the increase in 2021 it is less than 1% which is less than the consumer price index. Mr. Manzi said this union does contribute to the cost of health care.

Mrs. Kyle pointed out to the taxpayers that the town isn't paying for training of the officers and then they leave as she has only seen a couple move on and the majority of our officers are dedicated employees.

Article 9 - SFA Contract

Jeremy Wright spoke and is asking for support on this contract. The last year of the contract there is a 3% increase in salary. Mr. Manzi said it is a 3 year contract and the 3% increase in salary is in the third year. This union does contribute to the health care cost. Mr. Khan said this is an important contract and we appreciate the work they do and urge the voters to vote in favor.

Notes will be added to each of the contract warrant articles.

Article 11 - Information Technology Capital Reserve Fund

This article is an important one in order to stay current in the technology world to get information out. This article would be creating the fund and in future year's money would be added.

Article 12 - Town Building Capital Reserve Fund \$40K

Mr. Manzi said this was created last year the town is looking to start funding this to enable the board to use the money for when projects come up in future years.

Article 13 - DPW Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund \$50

This is the same as article 12 but the money to be spent will need to go back before the voters.

Mr. Khan said if anyone has any questions regarding the articles they can contact the town manager's office during office hours.

There was discussion from the board on whether to continue reading the articles or just mention the articles that were not on the warrant previously. Mrs. Kyle said in her opinion the board and the budget committee have already gone through the articles and recommended them so feels it is a waste of time.

Article 16 - Construct New Wells \$143,727

Mr. Manzi said this is a continuation from a previous article and it is to reauthorize the money as the 2 years is up.

Article 17 - Centennial Street Pump Station \$100K

Mr. Manzi said it is important that this article is understood as there are frequent complaints on the issue here. He believes that Curtis has come up with a solution that will correct it.

Mr. Khan said he feels as a board member it is his job to inform the voters about the articles no matter how many times they hear the information.

In the notes if it states article is in capital improvement plan remove "submitted or approved by the planning board".

Article 22 - 4 New Firefighter Positions

Mr. Khan would like the note clarified regarding the four months in 2020.

Article 23 - Communications Equipment EOC office \$50K

The board would like to have this article indicate it is for the emergency management department.

The fire chief would like to speak to articles 21, 22, 23 & 27. Mr. Manzi said the provision for the fire engine would be the same type of provision that they had for the ladder truck. The ladder truck is paid for and owned so the taxpayers would only be paying for one truck. The chief would like to add the mileage of 70,000 to the note section of the fire engine article. He said the fleet is old and it needs replacing as they are out of service age which would also affect the ISO rating. The chief explained how the ISO rating also affects the entire town on the fire end of it.

Article 22 - 4 New Firefighter Positions

In 2003 there were 16 firefighters they added 4 bringing the department total to 20. No new firefighters have been added since 2003. There is a 70% increase in calls for service since 2012 and have been using the same number of employees. New businesses are being added in Seabrook which brings in more calls for service without any additional manpower making it difficult to keep up.

Mrs. Kyle said they have recommended this article and said it is important for the voters to really look at this article and vote in favor. Mr. Khan said if they cannot provide the public safety services they are going to be neglecting the residents.

Article 23 - Radio Equipment EOC Office \$50K

Chief Edwards said they asked for this last year as a bond but it did not pass the voters. This equipment is used to do the drills with the power plant. This new equipment would be available if they were to lose communication with others. Chief Edwards said there are no grants available to replace radios. Mr. Manzi said they could use funds from the communication fund for this article. It is not currently structured this way but if the board chooses it can be restructured.

Mr. Khan said the fund was established without having to go before the voters for expenditure. Mrs. Kyle mentioned the town was given money back from the state that was unrestricted and asked if that money could be sued towards this purchase. Mr. Manzi said if the board wants it could choose the communication fund which has about \$80K or the state funds that are unrestricted. Mr. Khan said if they use money for this item he would like to see some of it used for the police department locker room that wasn't passed last year.

There was discussion on the unrestricted local aid given to the town. Mr. Manzi will provide figures to the board with some recommendations as to where the funds could be used. Mrs. Kyle would like to have a non-public meeting to discuss the options. Mr. Khan indicated it would need to be done in public.

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle To take \$50K out of the
Second: Aboul B. Khan unrestricted local aid
Motion passed 2-0 to fund the radios.

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle To take \$100K out of the
Second: Aboul B. Khan unrestricted local aid
Motion passed 2-0 to fund the locker room.

MOTION: Aboul B. Khan To see if the DPW needs
Second: Theresa A. Kyle any public safety
Motion passed 2-0 equipment.

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle To remove article 23
Second: Aboul B. Khan from the warrant.
Motion passed 2-0

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle To remove article 24
Second: Aboul B. Khan from the warrant.
Motion passed 2-0

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle To have legal counsel
Second: Aboul B. Khan review before approvals.
Motion passed 2-0

Board took a break at 12:20PM. Board reconvened at 12:45PM.

Article 25 - Police Capital Reserve Fund \$35K

Chief Walker said this would be for needed equipment going forward so they would not have to ask the voters for a large sum of money at one time.

Article 26 - 2 New Police Officer Positions

Chief Walker spoke to this article and how the calls for service now are requiring 2 officers where in the past it was only one officer. This is a need article not a want and trying to keep it to a minimum when asking the voters to support. Even with the addition of the 2 officers they are still behind where they should be with this level of calls for service.

Mrs. Kyle touched on impact fees going forward to help with the cost of these items. Mr. Khan said they should look into this

again and suggested starting the conversation in a board meeting and then pass it along to the planning board.

Mr. Khan commented they haven't increased the number of police officers since 1993 and with the town growing the way it has and still is they need to have this in public safety. Mr. Manzi said when you leave the department with this size it is harder for the employees to take time off and you cannot tell employees they cannot have time off.

Article 27 - SCBA & Turnout Gear Capital Reserve Fund - \$40K

Mr. Manzi said this is for 2 different mandatory purchases that will be purchased at two different times. This article requires that any expenditure go back before the voters for approval. There was discussion on changing this article to allow the board to expend the funds.

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle
Second: Aboul B. Khan
Motion passed 2-0

To make the Board the agents to expend funds on this article.

There was discussion on having a town hall type meeting with the Chief's present to answer any questions from the public regarding the articles on the warrant. Chief Walker suggested holding coffee with a cop here at town hall where they could have all department heads here as well to have open discussions.

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle
Second: Aboul B. Khan
Motion passed 2-0

To have the meeting room available to hold coffee with a cop before the election including department heads and any public resident who may have questions.

Chief Walker would like to request funds of \$6168 to have the floors done at the station and also to replace the sign out front at \$8000. The electronic radar signs that are fixed to an actual post cost \$9997 and are solar powered (located on Route 1A and Railroad Avenue). Mr. Khan feels this list should be discussed with the town manager and he can bring forward for approval if he feels the purchases are warranted. Mrs. Kyle said in her opinion they should spend it as it is less than \$25K. Mr. Manzi said since it is not on the warrant it is something that can wait as there is no deadline. He would also like to see the board authorize the expenditure of the gas pumps for \$48K as the system needs to be replaced.

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle To authorize the
Second: Aboul B. Khan expenditure for the gas
 Motion passed 2-0 pumps to be paid out of
 the unanticipated funds.

MOTION: Aboul B. Khan To remove article 20
Second: Theresa A. Kyle from the warrant.
 Motion passed 2-0

Mr. Manzi will provide a memo to be read at the meeting on February 4 as to what the money was spent on. He will check with DPW to see if there is anything that is needed in that department.

Petition Articles

These articles were submitted by residents and by law they are required to be put on the warrant.

Chief Walker spoke to the school resource officer article and said that the 2 officers asked for is a need by the department. He would like an additional resource officer in the future but it is a want not a need at this time. Additional dispatchers in the building and officers on the street are where the focus is. Mrs. Kyle said there should be more involvement with the current resource officer before they look to hire an additional one.

January 20 is the next board meeting which is the last one before deliberative session.

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle To adjourn the meeting
Second: Aboul B. Khan at 1:37PM.
 Motion passed 2-0

Approved and endorsed

 Ella M. Brown, Clerk

Date: _____