

TOWN OF SEABROOK

SELECTMEN'S MEETING

NOVEMBER 21, 2022

Present: Aboul B. Khan  
Theresa A. Kyle  
Srinivasan "Ravi" Ravikumar  
William M. Manzi, III

10:30AM

Mr. Khan opened the meeting at 10:33AM.

**PUBLIC HEARING - HIGHWAY SAFETY GRANT**

Mr. Khan opened the hearing at 10:34AM and read the notice into the record (see attached).

The board feels the grant is great for the department and thanked the Department of Highway Safety for the money.

Mr. Khan closed the hearing at 10:37AM.

<u>MOTION:</u>	Theresa A. Kyle	To accept the highway
Second:	Ravi	safety grant in the
Unanimous		amount of \$7899.04.

**MONTHLY MEETING - FIRE CHIEF**

Fire Chief Bill Edwards was present for his report (see attached). He said the Santa ride will be on December 19 at 4:30PM.

Chief Edwards said there is an article that has not been included on the warrant for 4 additional firefighters and he would like to know where they stand with placement of this article.

There was discussion on the chief's call and not enough manpower to cover the station. They are working under-staffed, and many injuries are occurring. Mrs. Kyle said they are at all calls even the police calls and the people in town only think about fires when they think about the fire department but there are many other factors that they go out on a call for.

There was discussion on adding additional personnel and reducing the overtime line as that is the question the people are asking. It is going to be hard to reduce the overtime with the ambulance runs without having enough staff for 2 ambulance call outs. Chief Edwards said they could have an independent study done to show how many employees are needed and then it is someone other than him saying they need more bodies. He said they could also review the study done in Hampton to see that it shows they need to add staff and we do similar call runs with less staff.

Ravi said the people in town are very happy with the services they receive. However, they do have a couple of questions such as how efficiently are they utilizing the resources they currently have? The more we can show how efficient we are, will go a long way in getting the approval for additional personnel. Chief Edwards said it is hard to be more efficient with less resources but they do everything they can with what they have.

Ravi said the fire truck follows every ambulance call and asked why couldn't it be a different vehicle so less people would be gone from the station. There was discussion as to why they send out the fire truck. Chief Edwards said they don't send a pickup as it wouldn't have what they needed at the scene. If they did they would need more time to get the fire truck out to the scene in this case, which could potentially be a lifesaving issue. Ravi said he is not criticizing the Chief but feels the more they explain it the better it will be to get additional personnel and/or equipment when needed. Mrs. Kyle said they sit here all year with the department heads, and no one comes to ask questions or get explanations. Yet at this time of year, we get all of these types of questions.

Mr. Khan proposed to the board that the article should be placed on the ballot every year until it passes as the situation is going to get worse. There was discussion on binding future boards to placing an article and the board cannot do that so it would need to be acted on each year.

Ravi asked how many firefighters they would need to make the overtime go away. There was discussion on adding 8 new employees and what the cost would be to what the savings in overtime would be. Chief Edwards said by adding just 4 firefighters there would be no savings in overtime. He said by adding 8 firefighters there would be cost savings in the overtime but not something that could be determined as it is all based on the incoming calls for service. Mr. Manzi said there is always a variable as it cannot pre-determined how many employees may be out on injury or what the calls for service may be.

Mr. Khan said over the last 10 years there has been no increase in the number of firefighters and the call firefighter list has gone down. He said Ravi is asking for a guarantee that the overtime is going to go down. Mrs. Kyle said they are looking at a business case when they are dealing with human lives and a department that has to worry about human life. She said they are supposed to run the town prudently. Mr. Khan said the people are concerned about the tax dollars but also concerned

with the services they receive from the departments. He totally supports increasing the fire department staff gradually. There is no way to quantify how much of the cost savings there would be in overtime. Mr. Khan said they could stop development in the planning board for the next 10 years.

Mr. Manzi said some of the overtime is fixed but in terms of the increase in overtime it is based on the collective bargaining agreements. If they give the firefighters an increase this increases the overtime rate which in turn for the same amount budgeted in the previous year buys them less hours. Ravi said he feels if they look at it from a business stand, they could get more public support. Mr. Khan feels that Ravi is attacking him and that he is dividing the board. Ravi said if a resident contacts him he will take the call and listen.

Chief Edwards said the DPW knows how many employees it takes to plow so many roads and if the town were to add 5 more roads they could tell them how many more employees they would need to do the plowing. His department is not able to quantify those numbers, but the department has been able to hold the line. He feels if they were to get more people out to vote they could get the articles passed. He has tried breaking down the tax per household on hiring new employees, so he is willing to look at other ways to get the article passed. Ravi said they need to look for better ways to communicate.

MOTION: Aboul B. Khan

To place the article for 4 firefighters on the ballot and have the town managers prepare the article.

Ravi said if they are going to do this they should have a number that will have an impact on the budgeted overtime numbers. He will support any article as long as it is objective to the overtime number. Mr. Manzi said the initial request has always been for 4 new firefighters and it is not to reduce the overtime.

Second: Theresa A. Kyle

Opposed: Ravi

Mr. Manzi will have the warrant article ready for the next meeting.

#### **WATER SERVICE APPLICATIONS**

Mary Dade - 25 Boynton Lane

Danny Dunn - 191 Lafayette Road

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle

Second: Ravi

Unanimous

To approve and sign both  
water applications.

#### **SEWER SERVICE APPLICATIONS**

Danny Dunn - 191 Lafayette Road

J Hefferan Construction LLC. - 205 Bristol Street

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle

Second: Ravi

Unanimous

To approve and sign both  
sewer applications.

#### **ENTERTAINMENT PERMIT**

15 Pine Street LLC DBA Grill 17

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle

Second: Ravi

Unanimous

To approve and sign the  
entertainment permit.

#### **SICK LEAVE DONATION POLICY**

Mr. Manzi said he provided a memo to the board on the policy which gives four principal changes to the draft policy. He said it essentially creates a policy where none exists today. Mr. Manzi said this is not a sick bank proposal it allows a donor to donate hours.

Shaylia Wood spoke and said it isn't a secret she has been going through cancer for the last year and it's not fair to employees to have someone who is going through this come out and complete an application for time.

Mr. Khan asked if this policy was implemented would it harm her in any way? She said without reviewing the policy she couldn't say either way. Ms. Wood said if she had to go in for her recovery right now and wait for long-term to kick in, she would go without a paycheck.

Mr. Manzi spoke about the exploration for a sick bank, as Ms. Wood was referring too but that it went nowhere as the employees had concerns with the sick bank. He stated for the record and the employee Ms. Wood that "he did not do something behind the board's back" as she indicated previously. He said right now he is the only one that has the authority to approve requests and those requests have been made to him. However, without a policy he can simply answer not approved. There have been cases brought to him in hardships and he has granted those requests.

Mr. Manzi said the policy was sent to all four unions for feedback and they are all okay with the draft policy. He said they met with the union that had issues and had a good meeting. Ravi commented that he feels it is a good policy and should help Ms. Wood in her situation. Mrs. Kyle also feels it is a good policy.

Ravi commented that he did not like that vacation time was added and he would prefer it only be sick time that is allowed. Mr. Manzi indicated the recipient would be allowed to get time to be used as vacation it has to be for an emergency crisis. There will be no time given to someone to take vacation.

MOTION: Theresa A. Kyle

To adopt the policy for  
sick leave donation.

Second: Ravi

Unanimous

Shaylia Wood at this time insisted she be given the right to hand the selectmen a document that she stated to Aboul Khan "you ain't going to like it but you are going to read it" and that they would either "get it now or in the mail". At this time the Deputy Town Manager asked if the document she was handing out was about her? Shaylia said it was and that her initials were in a post on Facebook that was sent via screenshot to her. I said no it stood for "so what". There was further debate and at this time the Deputy Town Manager indicated she was getting her attorney and left the meeting.

Minutes taken by Kelly J. O'Connor.

Approved and endorsed:

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Srinivasan "Ravi" Ravikumar,  
Clerk

Date: \_\_\_\_\_