



Town of Paxton
Board of Selectmen
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Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

Meeting Location: John Bauer Senior Center 17 West Street, Paxton, MA 01612

Members Present: John F. Malone, Chairman
Peter Bogren, Jr, Vice Chairman
Julia N. Pingitore, Clerk

Carol L. Riches, Town Administrator

Attendees: Attendee List

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Audit Review

- Dan Haynes from Scanlon Associates was present to go through his review of the town's 2013 audit. A copy of the presentation is filed in the Selectmen's office. Open discussion followed after the presentation.
- **(PB)** On page 42 of the audit you mentioned a few times about having a formal investment policy and that we have \$800,000 uninsured.
- Dan Haynes replied that at this point that amount is ok. Those numbers will fluctuate at different times during the year. What you should do is monitor your compliance with that policy, and look at where you have your funds. At this point Mr. Haynes went over the Management letter which is also filed in the Selectmen's office. Additional comments by Mr. Haynes were made in regards to some new revisions coming forward for GASB. Additionally the Town may want to look at putting AMC into the OPEB. On a final note as the water enterprise generates more funds the Town may want to charge some indirect funds and The Town may want to look at raising the threshold for the Recreation Revolving fund.
- Mark Love – Finance Committee member commended the auditor and the Board of Selectmen for taking on a new auditing firm and that the auditors went above and beyond what they needed to do.
- **(PB)** This change was brought about on the recommendation of Frederick Goodrich.
- **(JM)** The Finance Committee has done a great job over the past few years, and it hasn't always been easy. He thanked the financial team and the auditors for doing a great job.

Wachusett Regional School Committee Representatives

- Barbara Renzoni and Joe Scanlon were present to discuss the recent school budget that was just voted in
- Barbara Renzoni stated that the school committee did vote on and except a budget for the school. Nothing is locked into place at this point, but we voted on a budget because we needed one. The amount of information that is available has been in abundance and everything so far has been very transparent. The state aid could still change, but it could take up to two months before we have final numbers from them. Paxton is the only town that has had an increase in enrollment this year, so this will mean that our contribution will increase as well.
- **(JM)** How is school choice handled?
- Joe Scanlon replied that it is allocated to the district as a whole, and it stays in the school choice revolving fund.
- How many schools are included?
- Joe Scanlon commented that they all where. School choice funds have to be used to the benefit of the student.
- **(JM)** If school choice is what is driving up enrolment for Paxton then does Paxton get an added teacher?
- Joe Scanlon replied that if school choice is driving enrollment then we will look at teacher to student need.
- **(JM)** Does Paxton pay for preschool?
- Joe Scanlon replied that yes the part of the foundation budget comes from the town and part from the state.
- **(JM)** Do the parents pay for the tuition as well?
- Joe Scanlon replied that yes, the assumption is that the tuition is covering the full cost, but it is not. One third is from each the parents the town and the state.
- **(JM)** requested to have the enrollment numbers for the preschool from Mr. Scanlon.
- **(PB)** The total budget is up 1.4%. I'm worried about sustaining both the school and town's sides of the budget. We are \$300,000 in debt right now with the full use of our Free Cash.
- **(JP)** I agree with Peter. This is tough position to be in. Maybe a better model is needed as to how we apportion these types of changes.
- **(JM)** We cannot continue to fund what we have. How do you determine the RASA number?
- Joe Scanlon replied that the RASA number is the last number that is figured in the operation. It is the amount needed to fulfill the budget. You will see that it is described in the Regional Agreement that way.
- **(CR)** Inquired as to what the next step is in this process?
- Barbara Renzoni replied that now we wait to see if the numbers are changed by the state, and then work from there. I do feel that the transportation number may come down.
- Joe Scanlon added that if the state numbers change then we will meet again.
- Deirdre Malone Town Treasurer asked if the school choice students are affecting our transportation costs.
- The school choice students get to school on their own, or if they are transported it is at the discretion of the Superintendent as long as additional cost is not incurred.

- **(JP)** The possible change in state aid does not look huge for Paxton. Our population only went up 1% but our contribution is going up 4%.
- **(JM)** We are being penalized for attracting people into our town, and because of the population we are getting hit with higher costs. There are a lot of inequities that happen.
- Joe Scanlon replied that the regional agreement can be looked at every year if all five towns agree that a change should occur.
- **(PB)** School choices pays \$5,000 for a \$10,000 education
- Joe Scanlon replied that we take in twice as much in revenue compared to what we are paying out. The School committee is currently working on this issue of school choice.
- Jeffrey Kent came in front of the Board to express his concerns about the increase in the School budget and the wellbeing of the town overall. I would ask that the Board go back to the School Committee and direct them to put the budget back. I feel as a town resident we are not given enough choices on the budget. I am concerned over the growing trend of expenses to be able to live in Paxton.

Request from Sweet pea for signage on the Town Common

- **Motion (PB) seconded (JP) to allow Sweet pea to place a sign on the common for their upcoming fundraiser. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Request from the Lions club to use the Town Common

- **Motion (PB) seconded (JP) to allow The Lions Club to use the Town Common area during their Town wide Yard sale event on June 7, 2014. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Meeting Minutes

- **Motion (PB) seconded (JP) to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from March 4, 2014. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Town Administrators Update

Town Departments

- **DPW:** We are currently working with CHA Design /Construction Solutions on the Holden Road project. Two informational meetings have been held to date and a public hearing will be held later in the year. Conceptual plans can be found on the Town's website under DPW.
- **RML:** The Ribbon Cutting for the new passenger lift takes place on Saturday, March 22nd at 1pm.

Other Items

- I completed the Subsidized Housing Inventory for DHCD this past week to include The Hills at Paxton Village. This should be accepted and increase our current list of subsidized housing which currently stands at 0.75%.
- **Paxton Days:** Paxton Days is on June 14th and we have been approached by SC Management, the company running The Hills at Paxton Village to be the main sponsor which we appreciate and will enable us to provide more free

entertainment throughout the event. Republic Services our waste management company has also offered financial support for the event.

- Bay Path Vocational High School students are working on renovating the bathrooms at the Town Hall.
- I have a request from Donmarie Desrosier that she would like to become a member of the Historical Commission.
- **Motion (PB) seconded (JP) to appoint Donmarie Desrosiers to the Historical Commission. Unanimous, all in favor.**

Town Administrators performance appraisal

- (JM) We will update the headings and then distribute it to Julia and Peter so they can turn them in by next Thursday. Then it will be presented at the next meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 31, 2014 at 7pm.

Adjourned Meeting at 8:50pm, Unanimous all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Graf-Parsons, Administrative Assistant

Documents filed with Meeting Minutes:

Agenda

Attendance list

Audit presentation

Management Letter

Documents from the Meeting filed in BOS office:

Town Administrators Update

Peter Bogren, Jr.
Chairman

John F. Malone
Vice Chairman

Julia N. Pingitore
Clerk