

Brian Moriarty, Chair
Cindy Doty, Selectman
Edmund Jaworski, Jr., Selectman
Marlene Michonski, Town Administrator

Selectman Moriarty called the meeting to order at 6:00p.m. He announced the 350th in 2020 and logo contest. Information is available at: www.hatfield350.com or the town website.

No one was present for Public Forum.

Selectman Moriarty moved to accept the executive session minutes of 1-25-2018. Selectman Doty seconded. The motion was approved.

Selectman Moriarty moved to accept the regular session minutes of 1-25-2018. Selectman Jaworski seconded. Selectman Doty said complacent, should be complicit. The motion was approved with one edit.

POSTED BUSINESS

Financial Policy Manual – Review Financial Planning Policies

Selectman Moriarty noted the Board is doing this in sections and will vote to accept changes as a whole when it is complete. Ms. Michonski is to get clarification on DLS's recommendations. Selectman Doty will discuss her questions with Ms. Michonski. Ms. Michonski noted that some highlighted items are tasks she doesn't believe are currently happening. She will discuss this with the financial team. She said these should always be referred to like a checklist.

PVPC Letter of Agreement

Ms. Michonski explained that this is the only component of the Green Communities Energy Grant still to be executed except for the outreach portion. The \$6,000.00 that the town will pay is part of the reimbursable grant. Selectman Doty expressed that the estimate is for \$85.00 per hour to hand out flyers and put something on the website. Ms. Michonski explained that a designer is doing the pamphlet and the posters. She doesn't believe there is any room for negotiation.

Selectman Moriarty moved to approve the agreement for the education campaign project. Selectman Jaworski seconded. Selectman Doty abstained.

Building Department Permit Project Update, Kyle Scott, Building Commissioner

Mr. Scott relayed information regarding projects in town including several new residential homes, the former Center School, a new addition at Helena Chemical, Plain Road solar field. Mr. Scott said a lot of people want to move to Hatfield.

Selectman Doty asked a question regarding blasting for foundation and Mr. Scott answered that this would need to go to the Fire Department if it is in close proximity to anything. He said he would like to see more commercial development on West Street.

Mr. Scott said condos and stand-alone single family home numbers are unusual for a town this size. During town hall renovations, Mr. Scott will need office space and he may approach the veterans agent to share space. The Board thanked Mr. Scott.

OLD BUSINESS

Treasurer/Collector Appointment - Selectman Moriarty read at the February 13th meeting of the Board of Selectmen a vote was taken to notify the town clerk to post the vacancies created by the resignation of the

Treasurer/Collector on the annual town election, in May of this year, however with the recent legal opinion from town counsel regarding appointment to fill the vacancies for both the treasurer and collector for the remaining balance of the term, the following motion is recommended to rescind the Board's 2-13-2018 vote.

Selectman Moriarty moved the Board of Selectmen rescind the vote taken at their February 13, 2018 meeting to put the remaining term of the town of Hatfield town treasurer and town of Hatfield collector on the town's annual May 2018 ballot. Selectman Doty seconded. The motion was approved.

Selectman Moriarty moved to amend the Board's vote taken February 26, 2018 to appoint Edwina Palmisano treasurer and town collector until the position is filled. In accordance with town counsel opinion and according to Chapter 41 section 40 the appointment is for the balance of the term through May 19, 2020. Selectman Doty seconded.

Selectman Moriarty explained the Board can make an appointment to fulfill the remainder of a term. The Board has asked that while Baystate Municipal Accounting assisting, 2 people are needed on our accounts. Ms. Palmisano is appointed to be town treasurer/collector, in order to have a second person on the accounts. All voting in favor, the motion was approved.

Appointment to 350th Anniversary Steering Committee

Ms. Michonski noted that Anna Holhut has been attending the steering committee meetings.

Selectman Moriarty moved to appoint Anna Holhut to the Hatfield 350th Anniversary Steering Committee. Selectman Jaworski seconded. The motion was approved.

Selectman Moriarty announced that the regular portion of the meeting would end at this point. The time was 6:36pm.

The meeting was reopened at 6:42 and Selectman Moriarty said it would be a working session with the Finance Committee

Ms. Sharon Strzegowski, Treasurer/Collectors office said 3rd and 4th quarter bills will go out next week and both will be due in May. Also, excise tax bills are due March 5th. Finance Committee members discussed the possibility of having free cash by town meeting and a Special Town Meeting. Replenishing the stabilization account was also discussed.

Mr. Williams asked about compensating Ms. Palmisano, Ms. Strzegowski and Baystate. Selectman Moriarty met with Mr. Cole regarding the proposal about their options. There is \$24,000. in salary accounts for Ms. Strzegowski and Ms. Palmisano. Money for Baystate should be handled at Annual Town Meeting.

DPW Director-

Selectman Jaworski asked about cemetery wages for people to mow grass. Mr. Williams explained that mowing used to be contracted out but was very expensive. Personnel to do this work were discussed and also, a new mower is purchased every other year, which helps get a good trade-in value.

Ms. Michonski noted that individual departments have their own office supplies line. Selectman Moriarty agreed there is better accountability that way.

Finance Committee members discussed DPW expense, professional services and facilities management and public buildings lines. Mr. Genovese said somethings got to give as he is asked to level fund from year to year to year. Mr. Genovese noted an energy grant application. Responding to a question from Ms. Rider, Mr. Genovese said there are 6 cell phones in DPW.

DPW is to come back. Mr. Robinson asked that the accountant be present when Mr. Genovese comes back.

Assessors

Ron Punska, Scott McCoy, Stan Pitchko, Jenni Dawson

Ms. Dawson distributed new budget sheets. Mr. Pitchko explained \$21,150.00 for professional services is Patriot Properties.

Specialized use consultants, specialized work is for periodic cases when people are not satisfied with abatements, may go to Springfield or Boston. Wages were discussed and the regarding the 2% COLA included, Mr. Williams said this will be an overall decision. Mr. Pitchko took exception saying we're on time, on budget with these services to the town. He said that custodial is paid more and Ms. Dawson has been doing the job for 10 years in January. He said he would forego his own increase to put it into Ms. Dawson's pay.

Police Department –

Chief Dekoschak asked to replace the sheets in the packet and he distributed a new salary sheet which includes a 2% COLA with exception of Officer Ruddock for whom he is asking to go to 21.50. Chief Dekoschak is also asking for 2% on his personal contract. He noted that full time employees are making less because of an 8% insurance increase. Expenses and training costs have gone up as have computer maintenance and repairs, and dues – all costs he can't control. The Chief said we have the lowest paid patrolman in 3 towns. Selectman Doty said anybody with a contract doesn't get a COLA. Mr. Williams disagreed saying everybody gets a COLA here. The Chief said he would rather see his guys get something.

Fire Department - Chief Stephen Gaughan and Deputy Chief Bob Flaherty

Fire Chief said he still needs people during the day. He gave figures saying we're on the verge of 100k/year in revenue. He said the average call is \$700.00 and he has had to give away 10 calls in the 1st month. He discussed funding and staffing and reported there were 150 fire calls, and 250 emergency calls. The backbone of the department is volunteers, but said 2 people can't put a fire out. He offered to give back \$13,000.00 of his salary so he can hire someone so there will be a second person on duty in town 4 days/week. He said he also does blood pressure clinics, and talk to kids in schools.

Selectman Moriarty said this is one of the departments that can generate funds. The yearly pump test was discussed. Training was also discussed. There is now a code in payroll for training.

Selectman Doty asked about emergency management being backed out from the Fire Department/Ambulance. Selectman Doty said she gives back money every year. Fire Chief Gaughan gave back \$18,000.00 last year and has 52% left in his budget.

Town Administrator

Ms. Michonski went over several budgets including Animal officer, property and general liability insurance and the copier lease which is soon expiring. She said the cost of paper, and equipment repairs might be included in the lease line. For insurance, she said we have property & general liability, workman's comp and police/fire liability. We had to pay out some deductibles.

John Novak, HCTV Station Manager presented a level-funded budget. He is paid from an enterprise fund with a grant via Comcast through a fee on users bills. He said the studio which was half built by the school 15 years ago now has old technology. He has estimated prices for updating the equipment. We have twice as much money as he is requesting so it won't impact the budget. The City of Springfield tried to allocate their Comcast money into the general fund and got in trouble with the FCC. His machinery and software licenses, etc, all come out of his budget. We do have to spend a lot of this money because they will want to see how the money is spent. Maybe some money could be reserved for an office/work area at the back of the stage for phase 3.

Ms. Michonski went over insurance costs for FY19, saying \$140,000.00 is not an increase. She said that IT was at a shortfall last year. She then explained the 15 hours of service per month through Paragus as

provider chosen by HCOG's IT service bid. Paragus, Normandeau and VTS website come out of this budget. Selectman Moriarty suggested working together with the school to get volume discount for planned computer purchases. Mr. Williams said replacing computer isn't considered a capital expense.

Legal expense because of housing court and town counsel were mentioned. Ms. Michonski said for the last 2 years there's been a deficit in office supplies partly because ink cartridges are costly. She will try to secure a laptop so budget changes can be made during meetings.

Town Administrator-

Level funding professional services was suggested. Selectman Moriarty asked does the town want to combine the treasurer/collector positions, and does the town want to make them appointed. He said if all that passes we don't have to continue with Baystate. As long as the Board has the authority to make that appointment a cost comparison can be done. Baystate doing A/P was discussed. Selectman Moriarty said it will be great to have people on board who can get it done. Outsourcing payroll was also recommended. Mr. Williams said the town should get finances in order once and for all and go a year being alright, then we can look at what we're doing.

Ms. Michonski is to put \$30,000.00 back in Town Administrator Expense. She said that Wilma Davis picked up the task of doing data entry for Mr. Geser. She attends Planning Board and Conservation Commission meetings. Ms. Rider suggested taking \$2,000. From selectmens' expense funds.

For Vet's Benefits and Hampshire Council of Governments we have no choice. Ms. Michonski said Rec Committee is a revolving fund but we should still be authorizing a budget. Inspection Services and Planning Board are level funded.

Regarding Historical Commission's requested increase for farm museum repairs, we will ask if CPA funds are a possibility.

Mr. Genovese is to come back to the next meeting. Finance Committee requested the next meeting be at the Fire Department training room or with the use of a borrowed projector.

Ms. Michonski said DOR will be here tomorrow. Mr. Robinson said the accountant should be walking us through the spreadsheets. Ms. Michonski plugged in the governor's numbers, and met with the accountant and assistant assessor.

Mr. Williams said some projects are going on in town. Steibel-Eltron is going to do lots of projects if the sewer goes in.

Regarding the snow and ice deficit spending Mr. Williams said we've done this right 14 out of 15 years. Mr. Genovese has already spent \$90,000. Ms. Michonski briefly discussed potential solar projects on Plain Road, and also Szwazlowski's on North St. A payment in lieu of taxes (pilot) agreement in N. Hatfield was discussed with Selectman Moriarty.

Tuesday, March 6th, will be the next meeting. Ms. Michonski said that Mr. Cole has asked the Board of Selectmen to handle things with internal personnel when new processes are put into place.

Ms. Rider distributed minutes of previous Finance Committee meetings. Mr. Robinson moved to approve Finance Committee meeting minutes of 2-13 and 1-31. Mr. Williams seconded. All voting in favor, the motion was approved.

Selectman Moriarty moved to adjourn. Selectman Jaworski seconded. The motion was approved. The meeting ended at 9:28pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ki J. Eno, Executive Assistant