

Select Board Meeting  
October 26, 2022 @ 5:31 pm  
Town Administrator Office, Town Hall

Approved: February 7, 2023

Present: Chair, Diana Szynal, Edmund Jaworski and Brian Moriarty

Also present: Fire Chief Bob Flaherty, Hannah Zahn, Firefighter/EMT; Town Administrator, Marlene Michonski

Chair Szynal opened meeting recommending the Board take Topic 3 out of order and vote on the contract for bathroom renovations. Motion made by Mr. Jaworski to accept the contract with JDR Builders, Inc. for \$24,950.00. Motion seconded by Mr. Moriarty. Ms. Szynal – abstained.  
Vote: Majority

Topic 2 taken out of order.

Fire Department Operations

Chair Szynal, recalling that the \$180,000 additional funding for Fire Department wages was for the additional coverage (per diem shifts), she asked Chief Flaherty about new full-time position recently posted. Chief stated he did explain during budget discussion that budget was funded for a full-time position. Explaining the need to hire a full-time employee is a result of people not taking shifts for the added coverage. Chief Flaherty outlined a proposed schedule that would include two sixteen hours shifts, basic coverage to cover eight hours from 3:00 pm to 11:00 pm and stand-by coverage from 11:00 pm to 6:00 am, confirming responders are not paid if they do not respond to call during this period. Recognizing the department cannot run on a volunteer basis, Chief believes it is time to starting hiring full-time.

Describing South County ambulance service, Chief Flaherty reported with two people and a truck, total expense is \$776,000/year. A member community's share is 26.5% @ \$377,000.

Northampton Fire Department proposes a three-year agreement, handling all billable receipts, donating ambulance and equipment to Northampton Fire Rescue.

Chair Szynal citing that the town wants to make the most informed decision, recommended presentations from South County and Northampton, looking at trend and values of calls.

Ms. Zahn indicating that the dynamics of people have changed, asked if this is about the budget. Chair Szynal questioned number of per diem shifts going unfilled and asked Ms. Zahn how many hours she covers. Ms. Zahn covers a few hours a month.

All acknowledged services are for the safety and health of people. Board expressed concern that because the additional one-time funds may be in the budget to hire a full-time employee, position may not be funded after June 30. Chair Szynal proposed having a discussion with Finance Committee. Chief Flaherty believes the health insurance budget covers an additional full-time employee acknowledging he talked to the previous Treasurer, and she said the money was put in.

Board asked to receive clarification that the Treasure's budget is funded for benefits through June 30.

6:53 pm Motion made by Mr. Moriarty that the Board convene in executive session by a roll call vote pursuant to MGL. Ch. 30A, §21a. #2 to conduct a strategy session in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collect bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel; and further, Board will not return to open session. Mr. Jaworski seconded the motion. Jaworski -aye; Moriarty – aye; Szynal – aye

Respectfully submitted,

Marlene Michonski  
Town Administrator