

# **Town of Oakham**

Board of Selectmen

Regular Session

Minutes of February 7, 2022

**Present:** Lucy Tessnau-Chairman, Don Haapakoski-Vice Chairman, Brad Taylor-Clerk

**In attendance:** Maribel LaRange-BOS admin asst, Priscilla Johnson-principal assessor, Amanda Carroll, Diane Peterson, Andrea Letendre, Paul Rochette, Steve Lebarre, Alan Flagg, Susanne Shays, Stephen Dollinger (via phone), Aaron Langlois BOH/Public Nurse, Lisa Taylor-Town Treasurer/Collector, Samantha Bodine-Librarian Director, Tom Hughes, Vin & Barbara Piucci

**Meeting opened at 6:01 PM by Chairman, Lucy Tessnau**

**Approve Warrants:** Brad made motion to approve warrants for WR16- 2/7/22, Lucy 2<sup>nd</sup>. Vote was Brad-yes, Lucy-yes. (Don did not vote as he's signing the warrants in the absence of the Town accountant).

**Approve Minutes:** Wave minutes as they are not completed.

**Board of Assessors clerk candidate, Andrea Letendre:** Diane Peterson along with other members from the assessors' board presented Andrea Letendre as the candidate they like to fill the clerk position with a start date of 2/11/22. Don made motion to appoint Andrea Letendre as the Board of Assessors' Clerk. Appointed until 6/30/22. Brad 2<sup>nd</sup>, Lucy all in favor.

**Board of Health clerk job description:** Aaron Langlois, BOH chair, presented the BOS with a job description for a BOH clerk. The BOH has never had a clerk and this would be a new position. Aaron came up with the job description with information he's gathered and the knowledge he has for BOH and what it entails/requires. Aaron said for the BOS to make any changes see fit to the description.

Aaron said the two other members of the board are not interested in doing the clerical tasks of the BOH. Brad asked what do they do? Aaron said they do monthly meetings, recycle day, and enforcing the BOH policies.

Don made motion to except the BOH clerk position at an hourly rate of \$17.28, until filled, Brad 2<sup>nd</sup>, Lucy all in favor.

**Town Treasurer/Collector Budget:** The BOS along with members of Fincom reviewed the treasurer/collector's budget requests for FY23 presented by the Treasurer/Collector, Lisa Taylor. Lisa went through her budget and explained the bigger line items. Lisa asked for a 2% increase in salary. Lisa requested an increase from 40,000 to 72,000 employee group insurance.

Currently the Town has 3 full-time position all in the Highway Department. Paul Rochette from Fincom, suggested that be increased to 90,000 due to future full-time position for police officer, that would make 4 full-time positions for insurance coverage. Employee pays 30% of the insurance, employer 70%.

Don asked if the new software has maintenance fees, Lisa does not know as this conversion was led by the town account. Lisa will have to continue to pay for current software as she hasn't had any training on new one yet.

Susanne Shays from Fincom made the observation that line item, Treasurer/Foreclosure Expense is listed in two places, under Treasurer/Foreclosure Expense and under the Treasurer/Collector. This line item will be removed from under the Treasurer/Collector.

**Fobes Memorial Library Budget:** The BOS along with members of Fincom reviewed Fobes Memorial Library's budget requests for FY23 presented by Librarian Director, Samantha Bodine. Samantha is asking for a \$4,430 increase on Library/Part-Time Wages which would allow the library to be able to pay 100% of its staffing costs from the town budget. It would also increase the library's staff pay to bring them to minimum wage. The director and assistant director will not receive a raise for FY23. Although Fobes Memorial Library answers to the Trustee of the Library, the Town of Oakham funds all the wages for all the staff. Although Samantha level funded Library/Building Maintenance at \$4,650.00 and Library/Office Supplies at \$2,000 it is a concern that they are too low. Samantha also requested a capital expense of \$2,000 to purchase a new computer for the library. The library's computer will be 2 years out of warranty at the end of FY22, and the computer management company has alerted them that they will not provide another year of service without replacing the computer. Samantha stated that the library's printer is not working properly. Stephen Dollinger suggested looking into getting a new printer. Alan Flagg stated that both the computer and printer can be capital expense request.

**Parks & Recreation Budget:** The BOS along with members of Fincom reviewed Parks & Recreation's budget requests for FY23 presented by committee chair, Samantha Bodine. Parks & Recreation is asking for an increase from \$4,250.00 to \$4,750.00, total of \$500.00 increase. Sam reported that the committee has increased with members and are very excited to be able to do more. Sam is also requesting an article for \$3,000 to replace the broken picnic tables that were removed from Wright Field. The \$3,000 would purchase 3 commercial grade picnic tables that would last significantly longer than cheaper alternatives.

**Web EOC-MEMA:** Tom Hughes presented to the BOS the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, which required the signature of all 3 board members as well as Tom's as the Emergency Management Department. All parties signed.

**Edna Holloway:** Edna has helped Maribel at times while the Town Accountant is on his medical leave. The BOS have agreed that Edna needs to be paid for her time. Don made motion to appoint Edna Holloway as a clerk & special town employee at the hourly rate of \$17.28, appointed until 6/30/22. Brad 2<sup>nd</sup>, Lucy all in favor.

**New Business:** Maribel presented to the BOS a 20hr training for the Springbrook software at the cost of \$3,780. The 20 hours would be for any training/help Maribel would need from Springbrook while processing the warrant payables and or anything else related to the software. There is a contract for the Treasurer that has 70 hours for training for her project in regards to the conversion. From what was told to Maribel from Springbrook there are no remaining hours on the project. The BOS would like a breakdown of the use of those 70 hours before signing a contract for an additional 20 hours. Maribel will contact Springbrook and report back to the BOS.

The BOS office received The Mass Cultural Council Contract which is addressed to the previous BOS Administrative Assistant. Maribel will contact them to update the contact information to hers. Once that is done the contract can be signed.

The BOS received letter from Wachusett Greenways with a budget request of \$1,100. The BOS would like to send whatever money they decide on as a one-time donation for that fiscal year instead of having a line item and having to keep track of the expenses and send out for payment. Don made motion to donate \$1,000 for FY23 to Wachusett Greenways as a donation, Brad 2<sup>nd</sup>, Lucy all in favor.

**Old Business:** Spectrum contract needs signature of the BOS and half the amount of the cost which is \$96,500. The remaining \$96,500 will be due when contract completed. The contract has been sent to Legal Counsel to be reviewed. The cost of the internet/cable project is being funded by ARPA funds (American Rescue Plan Act). Don made motion to encumber \$193,000 for the cable committee, Brad 2<sup>nd</sup>, Lucy all in favor.

Don made motion to encumber \$10,000 from ARPA funds for the Public Health Nurse.

Lucy contacted Paul from CMGeeks about cyber security. Lucy stated that Paul said we are all set.

Cameras are going to be installed in the Town Hall. Aaron asked if there was going to have audio. He stated that there is a wire tapping law and expectation of privacy.

Lucy asked how the Maple Street project was going. The new telephone poles are there, the old ones need to come down. Brad said to invite Kevin Currier to the next BOS meeting to explain the Maple Street project.

Lucy said she would like to put some of the Town Hall article funds that were voted on at a special town meeting for fixing of the Town Hall be used for siding on the outside. Brad said there's no sense in doing that when the current building structure is rotten. Brad also said that he hopes that when and if the Town Hall is rebuilt it's not built behind the Highway building.

**Public Session:** Aaron started by saying what a great job the Highway Department has done on our roads. He has seen one of the Town highway equipment drive by several times on his road treating them.

Aaron brought to the BOS's attention the condition of the house at the center town. Aaron said the garage doors are open and it appears to be bags of unknow content. If the property owners could at least clean up the bags and board up the garage that would be a start. Brad said that the town's building inspector did a site visit and it would cost the town about \$85,000 to tear it down.

Aaron notified the BOS that the BOH received an application for a permit but the application was not fully completed. Aaron turned in the check and it was deposited but the applicants since then have changed their minds on the permit. The applicants are now asking for a refund on the \$500.00 check. Aaron asked what the policy on refunding checks and where would it come from? Board of Health expense or where the deposit was made? Tom Hughes suggested that if it was the applicant's error there be no refund. Aaron said the Selectmen need to drive a solution for financial policy. The board will try to find a solution to this matter and will ask the town account once he is back to work from his medical leave.

**Meeting Adjourned at 9:20PM:** Brad made motion to adjourn, Don 2<sup>nd</sup>, Lucy all in favor.

Next Regular Meeting: February 22, 2022 at 6:00 PM