

**TOWN OF WINCHENDON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2017
Town Hall, 4th Floor Town Manager's Office
109 Front Street, Winchendon, Mass.**

Present:

Barbara Anderson, Chairwoman
Audrey LaBrie, Vice-Chair
Michael Barbaro
Austin Cyganiewicz
Amy Salter

Keith R. Hickey, Town Manager
Linda Daigle, Executive Assistant

List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- Town Manager Memo regarding Discussion on Personnel Change in FY18 Budget (attached)
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Executive Session under Exemption No. 3 to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the Chair so declares and to reconvene into Public Session for the sole purpose of adjournment. The subject is FY2018 staffing.

Chairwoman Anderson called Executive Session to order at 8:40 p.m.

The Town Manager spoke about how challenging the FY18 budget is that he is developing and that he is trying to be more productive to save money. He believes there is an opportunity to outsource a position in the Community Development office as outlined in his memo. The approximate savings of \$26,840 may not be much money but the FY18 budget is going to be difficult. He has to increase the transportation cost of the school in the amount of \$165,000. The School Department did not give the correct number for transportation costs which has been underestimated again. He raises the point explaining how he loses a lot of flexibility in having to absorb that \$165,000 as the Town is responsible for transportation cost of the school. He also noted that the cost to send a student to Monty Tech is also going up a bit. The Board noted the school needs to address the school busing needs as one bus cost \$30,000. Mr. Hickey noted he has had conversations with Supt. Haddad. They have a five year bid based on a certain number of vans, shorter buses and regular buses. If they modify the number, that will reflect in the cost. Mr. Hickey mentioned there would most likely need to be a Special Town Meeting to transfer money from the Town's budget to transportation cost in FY17.

Mr. Hickey stated he is trying to find ways to save in the budget. He has had good success in bringing Montachusett Regional Planning Commission back in the fold. They have been a good partner helping with the CDBG grant, applying for the next CDBG grant and another grant to help with the RHI building to be redeveloped as well. They have been successful in getting grants. The staff doesn't have the ability to administer the three large grants. He has had conversations with the MRPC Executive Director. Currently some of the administration is handled downstairs and some by MRPC. They can manage the entire grant program.

He explained how last year he budgeted 100% of the two salaries in the Community Development office in case the grant wasn't awarded. We are getting some administration cost as revenue to us now that is unanticipated revenue and will go into our free cash. Tonight he was seeking the Boards feeling on potentially eliminating a position in Community Development outsourcing to MRPC and also to hire a part-time clerk, eighteen to nineteen hours a week, to provide support staff to the Director of Development. The projected net annual cost savings is \$26,840.

This will not be a popular decision, but a business decision. He wanted to make the Board aware that MRPC can begin this next week. There are obviously contractual obligations with the employee like accrued vacation time. If the Board is supportive of moving in this direction, he'd like to do this sooner rather than later. He has funds in the FY17 budget to cover the accrued time and possibly a severance package. Selectwoman LaBrie asked what was in the contract. The Town Manager replied accrued vacation, no severance time. The employee could bump a less senior person whose job they could perform.

Mr. Hickey noted that MRPC manages grants and provides support at no charge to us. They have put together a database of available commercial properties in the region, assisted with the Phase I and II Streeter and Poland School Brownfield projects, are reviewing design standards for the downtown area and will review potential zoning changes and make recommendations. It makes sense financially to be a bigger partner with MRPC. They will deal with invoices, prepare warrants, submit all paperwork to the appropriate grant authority in a timely manner and ensure it satisfies the requirements of the program. Ms. Murphy can focus solely on Community Development and is supportive of this direction.

Selectman Barbaro noted there will be unemployment costs to factor in. Chairwoman Anderson wants to ensure that there is enough service to help people to fill out the applications and that people will still get the help they need. Mr. Hickey suggested office hours for staff members to be in the office during a specific time to help people fill out applications. He was confident MRPC would be willing to have special office hours.

Mr. Hickey concluded that he did not need anything formally from the Board this evening and just wanted to bring this matter to their attention.

Selectman Barbaro moved to adjourn Executive Session; Selectwoman LaBrie seconded. By roll call vote of all aye, Executive Session adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Selectman Barbaro moved to adjourn Public Session; Selectwoman LaBrie seconded. By a vote of all aye, the meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Linda Daigle
Executive Assistant