

IPSWICH BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Meeting of Monday, January 29, 2018
Ipswich Town Hall, 25 Green Street

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30A, §§ 18 - 25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk and delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held on Monday, January 29, 2018 at 7:00 pm in Meeting Room A.

With a quorum present, William Craft called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm

Selectmen present: William Craft, Chair; Nishan Mootafian, Vice-Chair; Linda Alexson, Edward Rauscher; William Whitmore

Also present: Robin Crosbie, Town Manager; Alexys Parsons, Recording Secretary

Not present:

Abbreviations used: BOS - Board of Selectmen; TM - Town Manager; SC - Screening Committee; ACO – Animal Control Officer; SPP – State Pilot Program

Public Information: Agenda; Meeting Packet

Welcome / Announcements

Mr. Craft sent a special thank you for all of Mr. Muldoon's diligent and fortitude work covering all the various Board/Committee meetings in Town.

Mr. Craft noted that Kristen Grubb's "Ipswich Watershed Association" presentation was a featured article in the Globe North on Sunday, January 28, 2018. Mr. Craft thanks Ms. Grubbs and the Watershed Association for their hard work.

Citizen Queries:

None.

Screening Committee – Report/Update:

Mr. Whitmore stated that he and the Screening Committee (SC) met on Friday, January 26, 2018 and overall, the SC currently has 36 applicants but are working on narrowing the list down to people they are interested in interviewing. The Consultant, Bernie Lynch, will be reaching out to those candidates. Mr. Whitmore noted that the committee is making way and working well together and are coordinating future meetings in the next week or two. Mr. Whitmore has three questions for the Board in reference to how they want to see the list of candidates, that being: is the BOS looking for the SC to rank each candidate, what type of timeline/turnaround time for Board to interview candidates after the SC finishes screening the candidates, and candidate references. Mr. Craft stated that he prefers for candidate list to be unranked so the Board has a chance on their own, to look through backgrounds and resumes to begin to develop a personal relationship. Concerning timeline, Mr. Craft stated that the Search Consultant has presented a schedule and recommends staying on that schedule as much as possible.

Ms. Alexson stated that the original expectation of the SC is they should just be screening candidates and then the BOS would provide recommendations, from there, the consultant would take over the rest of the process. Mr. Craft, Mr. Rauscher and Mr. Mootafian agree that the list of candidates should come to the Board unranked and recommends a Pro/Con list of each candidate. Mr. Rauscher stated that the turnaround time/candidate reference checks are usually done later in the process and that the job of the SC is done after the process of screening applicants. Mr. Craft recommends to not do reference checks until candidates are considered finalists and it was noted that part of the Consultant's job is to check those references. Mr. Craft recommends the SC come up with a short synopsis of each

candidate's qualifications for the Board to review. Mr. Whitmore stated that there are a great mix of candidates and will keep the dialog moving on this with the SC and will provide information to the Board as the SC moves along.

Interview of Interim Town Manager Candidate(s)

Due to Sarah Johnson illness, she was not able to attend tonight's meeting, so the Board proceeded to interview Jim Engel.

Mr. Jim Engel, 360 Linebrook Road, was present to interview for the interim Town Manager position. Mr. Engel has been active in a lot of different areas in Town and his experience represents the various qualifications for the interim TM. Mr. Engel served as a member of the BOS for 15 years over a 17 year timeline and served as Chair for five of those years with 30 Town Meeting experiences and has previously work for three Town Managers. Mr. Engel stated to have a lot of experience with Capital projects in Town such as the Library Expansion project, Middle and High School projects, Turbine project, Electric Distribution program and Zoning/Land Use. He has a Bachelor's Degree with a study in physics and has about 50 years' experience in high-tech industries. Mr. Engel's work experience includes; engineer for 15 years, then finished as President and CEO with 35 years experience for a high-tech company and in his experience, he became familiar with labor law adjustments.

Ms. Alexson asked Mr. Engel if he would be able to provide objective evaluation/opinion of the current situation in Town Hall and in response, Mr. Engel stated objectives would be difficult due to his history and experience with the BOS as it is difficult to come into a community without prior exposure and work part time for only two to three months, but he would be able to evaluate the government as long as the Board would be able to provide some guidance. Ms. Alexson inquired how much time in a given week would he be available, Mr. Engel replied that he would be available for the part time position they are looking for.

Mr. Whitmore inquired, as a CEO of the high-tech company, how was Mr. Engel's role as a supervisor with his employees, in response, Mr. Engel stated to have a broad spectrum of people who had been hired by him, reported to him and terminated by him throughout the years. Mr. Whitmore asked if Mr. Engel was interested in becoming the full-term TM and Mr. Engel replied that he has talked about this during the SC meetings and he determined that he would want some longevity in terms of the new full time TM (not a three or six year term) and stated that it would not be right for him to be TM as he would not be willing to commit that kind of time.

Mr. Craft asked Mr. Engel how he would be able to balancing the interim TM role with being the Town advocate for various projects and programs and in response, Mr. Engel stated that he expects to remain active in various Town issues and would be able to balance all. Mr. Rauscher inquired why Mr. Engel would want this interim position for the Town, Mr. Engel replied that this is a place where he can make a contribution when needed and likes doing things that benefit the Town.

In closing, Mr. Engel said that this is a part time position of about twenty hours a week in the office above and beyond the agreement of night meetings. Mr. Engel feels comfortable with the level of compensation that has been presented is fair and would be able to commit as the interim through the end of May of 2018 and will serve at the BOS will.

Vote: Ms. Alexson moved, and it was seconded to appoint Mr. Jim Engel as Interim Town Manager. The motion carried unanimously.

Under discussion: Mr. Craft will work with Mr. Engel on appropriate compensation (acceptable by general consent).

FY19 Budget Review: Information Technology:

Greg Parachojuk, Information Technology Department was present to discuss the IT Budget to the Board. Mr. Parachojuk stated that this IT Department serves the Town and its Utility Departments. This department currently has two full-time as well as 1 part-time person working 14 hours a week. Concerning maintenance support, web hosting increased as the Police Department went to a higher speed and because of an increase in storage for the Town website, GIS Zoning Layer Maintenance was added to all of the services and hub for communications. Presently, they support 11 buildings as well as around 140 people and all the equipment in all of those locations. Mr. Parachojuk stated that an additional IT person will be needed because he would like to maintain and improve IT in general through reducing costs and making operations easier and faster. It was inquired if the Town needs more common usage or should the Town make IT a larger more robust program and Mr. Parachojuk stated that he would like to migrate more towards the cloud and less services that are internal therefore requiring less time spent updating. Email will be migrated to the cloud (Microsoft Platinum) which fits right in our platform. It was noted that the Capital plan has funds for the Open Source System that is open to hacking and they are hiring a company during the migration to help with moving the data due to having to keep the service in place to avoid any gaps.

Mr. Rauscher inquired if IT had another half time person where would we focus those man hours and in response, Mr. Parachojuk stated that it would be best to focus on cyber security (which is under the capital budget) as this department needs to assess where they are vulnerable, which would have a lot to do with network security as well as monitoring the Town's firewall systems to check for "bad guys" by stopping them in a timely manner. Moving to an email system that is cloud based would work with the different departments by finding out their needs to improve their systems.

Mr. Rauscher inquired about the expenses and repairs, and what is not included in the payroll module, and in response, Mr. Parachojuk stated that the server is not in-house anymore and these are all different modules that they have. Training and creating electronic forms are extra charges because someone has to be paid to create these forms/templates and that the maintenance contracts are to maintain to software, allow support, and provide us to change upgrade to the next level.

Before making a motion, Ms. Crosbie advises that the BOS wait and see the entire budget as the BOS and TM need to identify what other support is needed for the IT department and if more money is required, where will it come from and if so, how much?

Vote: Mr. Whitmore moved, and it was seconded to support the existing budget with contingency that a pro form could be changed. The motion carried unanimously.

FY19 Budget Review: Fire Department:

Jack Ferrell, Interim Fire Chief and Andy Theriault, Deputy Fire Chief were present to discuss the Fire Department budget with the Board. Ms. Crosbie noted that the BOS is aware that there was a shortfall and the Town had to reduce the salary for the Fire Chief. There is an artificial shortfall of \$12,000 in the Fire Chief's salary and if the Town has a full-time chief in 2020, his/her salary will have an additional \$12,000 plus COLA factored in. Mr. Ferrell stated that this is a very mundane and ordinary budget as 95% to 96% of the budget is for personnel cost, which is supported by the collective bargaining agreement. The collective bargaining is the hole that needs to be filled in the budget and this year's budget includes a new collective bargaining agreement (year two of contract). Ms. Crosbie stated that she does not feel confident in the numbers as they have not been correctly reflected for 2018 so that salary increases maybe smaller than presently reflected.

Ms. Crosbie asked Mr. Theriault to explain more about the staff meeting concerning staffing and equipment. Mr. Theriault described when Mr. Ferrell left in June of 2014, he returned three years later and everything has moved forward and the Deputy Chief's position is now in place. Mr. Theriault stated that he received a large grant of \$160,000 for new breathing packs and it was noted that the radio system has been overhauled from the original Kenwood Systems, now utilizing a heavy duty Motorola model. The kitchen and bathrooms have been remodeled and the turnout gear has provided staff with a second set so they will have a dry set which is great for the safety of the department.

Ms. Alexson mentioned the flooding of Jeffrey's Neck Road and inquired who makes the decision to place an apparatus on the Neck, and in response, Mr. Ferrell stated that the Fire Department has a policy as they cannot house a piece of the apparatus out there. There are certain standards as to why firefighters aren't sent out on a call, for example, 60 mph winds during a fire, potentially having to leave them and equipment during a Category 3 storm and the main concern is protecting the fire fighters. Ms. Alexson also inquired about the barn at Pony Express and could the Fire Department utilize it for training to save the Town some money on demolition and in response, Mr. Ferrell stated that there are too many safety issues to do that but it was noted that vacant buildings have been utilized for search and rescue.

Mr. Whitmore inquired how important is it for the Deputy Chief to have an administrative vehicle and in response, Mr. Ferrell stated that this vehicle would have maps, tools, equipment, and other supplies needed for the Deputy Fire Chief and it was noted that this would not be in a personal vehicle. The Chief and the Deputy Chief report to certain situations at the same time and this vehicle could respond with medical aid and this would be considered a staff vehicle with command functions.

Mr. Rauscher inquired about the reasoning for hiring a Deputy Chief, and in response, Mr. Ferrell stated this position assists in the operations in/out of the fire house and is also an administrative function to free the Chief up. The hours of Deputy Chief are from 7:00 am to 3:00 pm and it was noted that 70% of calls come in from 6 AM to 6PM. Lieutenants are in charge until the next in command gets to a call which would be the deputy or the chief. There will be more to come to discuss the command vehicle.

Vote: Mr. Rauscher moved, and it was seconded to approve the budget as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

FY19 Budget Review: Police, Emergency, Management, Harbors, Shellfish, Dispatch, Animal Control: Presented by Police Chief Nikas

Animal Control:

Meghan Boissonneau, Animal Control Officer (ACO), was present to discuss with the Board the Animal Control budget. Ms. Boissonneau stated that deer strikes have increased significantly (as expected during this time of year) and a lot of cats have been brought into the Humane Group and of these cats that are not claimed, have to be vetted which can cost upwards of \$250 per cat (a total of 50 cats have been adopted), three dogs had to be vetted this year and for both animals there is a seven day mandatory hold. Ms. Boissonneau stated that she has assisted Rowley and Hamilton with dogs throughout the past year and when activity is slow the department helps out surrounding towns. The biggest challenges are protocols within the animal shelter as it is a day-to-day operation for the shelter to go through disease prevention and applying vaccinations. It was noted that Ms. Boissonneau is the only Animal Control member that is rabies vaccinated as it is very expensive for vaccinations. The build out has cost about \$110,000 but the concrete pads still need to be built and there is another \$10,000 to \$15,000 still left in construction costs.

There have been a lot of problems with chickens and rats and it was noted that properties under an acre, you have to have a permit that is approved by the ACO and there is a limited number of chickens based upon the size of the lot and the coop. Currently there are about 1,053 chickens that are known about (most likely 1,500) in the Town.

Emergency Management:

Police Chief Nikas and John Hubbard, Town Emergency Director were present to discuss the Emergency Management budget to the Board. Mr. Hubbard stated that there are some big issues with a couple major projects such as updating the Town's Hazardous Mitigation Plan, a NEMA certified plan that was only good for 5 years. The Town received a grant from MEMA for \$15,000 (75/25 grant) and is requested of the Town to pay the balance of \$4,875. This project has already started and it brings all different departments in to discuss the mitigation processes. Once this is approved by NEMA all the different departments will be able to apply for grants. Mr. Hubbard will create a Town-wide plan once he receives mitigation plans from all the different departments. Mr. Hubbard stated that the Town is engaged in a few studies with Emergency Management Committee which will have a meeting on April 11, 2018 at 6:00 pm in Town Hall Meeting Room A to discuss the Coastal Zone Management Grant, gained by the Town of Essex which covers IBOS 01.29.18

Ipswich, Essex, Manchester-By-The-Sea, Gloucester and Rockport. Ms. Alexson inquired what the additional \$2,600 is for in the “Other Supplies” section, and in response, Mr. Hubbard stated that he does an outreach program by going to schools and teaching the kids about the Emergency Plan Program and provide Red Cross kits, and since Mr. Hubbard hasn’t been able to find donations for this outreach program and kits, he hasn’t been able to run this program in the past years.

Vote: Ms. Alexson moved, and it was seconded to support the Emergency Management and Animal Control budgets as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Police Department:

Police Chief Nikas stated that the Police Department has ramped up training in the past year. Every officer received forty hours of state mandated training. Added Professional Development courses included Firearm training, Use of Force training, Defensive Tactics training, Youth Interaction training, Elderly Dynamics of Addiction training, Active Shooter training and Diversity training. In the past year, the Lieutenant and Chief decided that all five sergeants will undergo classes on Supervisory Training. Patrolmen will have additional courses on Crime Scene Photography and Deescalate People with Mental Health Issues through Emotional Distress. The Police Department is still running the D.A.R.E Program/curriculum, and still operating the “Angels Program” and as of January 28, 2018, the PD received a second grant from the Department of Public Health for a regional effort to embed a Mental Health Counselor into the department (this grant will apply to the towns of Beverly, Essex, Manchester-By-The-Sea, Rockport and Ipswich). Due to the budget, the PD had to cut back on training as the department has already spent over \$23,000 in fees for classes alone. Moving forward, professional development is high importance for the department.

The budget overall has some increases mostly due to CBA as the budget is majorly personnel driven. Increases in expenses consist of the maintenance contract increase due to technology services. Another increase was for the body cameras that each officer wears as well as the cameras in the cruisers. The PD received these body cameras from a full grant received from the state. It was noted that there was no cost in original purchase however, there is a “Product Licensing Cost” and a “Support Cost” for each camera. Each body camera costs approximately \$1,000 with a 5-year expectancy and each police cruiser camera is \$5,000 with a 5-year expectancy. The PD currently has 28 body cameras.

Being a Civil Service Department, they are only allowed to hire summertime helpers or “Specials” that can work from May 15 – September 15 to augment the police force. Other designations are “Permanent Intermittent” (which comes directly from the Civil Service) are part-time employees that can work year round. The department currently has five permanent intermittent employees. The Department currently has 24 uniformed officers with an additional officer currently in the hiring process.

Ms. Alexson inquired about the \$8,000 cost for the “Civil Event Overtime” and wondered if that was for Town or private events, and in response, Ms. Crosbie stated that this is for Town events such as the Veteran’s Day Parade, Memorial Day Parade, etc. and the Town has been receiving additional requests for events and activities that require police/traffic officer guidance.

Vote: Mr. Rauscher moved, and it was seconded to recommend budget as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Harbor Master:

In the past year, there have been over 1,000 boat moorings, managing a waitlist of 207 people, handled 122 calls for service, 89 boat assist over the summer and operating a pump out boat which operates through a matching grant from the Federal Clean Water Act. It was noted that the HM is using a new company for markers/buoys coming soon for Pavilion Beach. There are less moorings than last year because the boats are getting bigger and there is only so much room. Mooring locations can be changed by the HM to create more room as well as safe boating and it was noted that widening some areas can be looked into.

Vote: Ms. Alexson moved, and it was seconded to support budget as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Shellfish:

The only major change is the slight reduction in the Green Crab Program from \$25,000 to \$20,000. Chief Nikas spoke with Senator Tarr and Representative Hill and it was stated that the Green Crab Program was funded at a state level and that the Town should be receiving \$10,000.

Ms. Alexson moved, and it was seconded to support budget as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Civilian Dispatch:

No changes outside of the “Collective Bargaining” issues.

Mr. Rauscher moved, and it was seconded to support budget as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

FY19 Budget Review: BOS, TM, Misc. Finance, Debt, Insurance:

Board of Selectmen:

Ms. Crosbie stated that nothing has changed with the BOS budget. Mr. Rauscher inquired on the “Longevity Service Awards” as he doesn’t recall seeing this item on the BOS budget previously. Ms. Crosbie stated that that is for the Employee Appreciation outing that occurs every spring and this money is used for purchasing service pins. Mr. Rauscher recommends moving this item to the Town Manager’s budget.

Vote: Mr. Rauscher moved, and it was seconded to approve the BOS budget as presented with the Longevity Service Awards change to the TM’s budget. The motion carried unanimously.

Town Manager:

Ms. Alexson inquired why the HR Director had an increase of more than 15,000 in the last 5 years and is this a standard raise for employees, and in response, Ms. Crosbie stated that whenever a Town employee brings to her attention disparate wages with other comparable positions, TM will then look into other communities’ wages for that certain position and make salary adjustments accordingly. Ms. Crosbie stated that the HR Director has the median wage for her position relative to surrounding communities.

Vote: Mr. Whitmore moved, and it was seconded to accept the Town Managers budget as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Miscellaneous Financial:

In Ms. Johnson’s absence, Ms. Crosbie briefly went over the miscellaneous financial budget. Ms. Crosbie stated that this budget as presented does not include any additional state aid that the Town may receive. The governor is presenting a 3% increase in unrestricted General Government Aid and a 2% increase in Chapter 90. Those increases will be partially offset by increased assessments by the state.

There was a decrease of \$40,000 in the State Pilot Program (SPP). Ms. Crosbie spoke with Senator Tarr and they feel confident that the \$40,000 decrease in the SPP (for state owned land) will be fixed in the budget.

The challenge this year is building permits and new growth because it is down from previous years. The Town does not have any anticipated projects coming up and as a result, the Town will not have any big projects closing out.

It was noted that the Base Budget spreadsheet, in FY19, an estimated levy/new growth from last year was predicted at 22 million but the Town only came in with 19 million.

Miscellaneous charges are the estimated charges such as, holding a \$45,000 levy limit (the Town does not raise levy limits), allowance for abatement hold of \$400,000 per year and an estimated profit of 120,000 from beach stickers.

Consent Agenda:

One Day Liquor License Application(s)

Wine & Malt – Ipswich Music Arts & Drama Association – Fundraising Art Show & Sales at Ascension Memorial Church, 31 Country Street on April 7, 2018

Cuvilly Arts & Earth – Fundraiser at Ascension Memorial Church, 31 Country Street on February 16, 2018

Winter Parking Permit Application(s)

Eric Lifton –Manning Street

Vote: Mr. Mootafian moved, and it was seconded to approve the Consent Agenda as posted on the agenda with the addition of the Winter Parking Permit application. The motion carried unanimously.

Town Manager’s Report:

Ms. Crosbie acknowledged the donations as well as thanking Town employees who sponsored the Dinner Bell event tonight January 29, 2018.

Ms. Crosbie stated that the BOS received a quick update regarding the Great Marsh. In the report, Ms. Crosbie has been incorporating comments from department directors on a status on a number of those projects the Town is working on so that the Board has an idea of what is going on. Items have been and will continue to be attended to proactively.

New Business:

Ms. Alexson provided updates on Public Safety Facilities Committee and stated that she joined this committee last summer and the committee has been meeting frequently. Ms. Alexson stated that she has been on extensive tours of the Fire and Police stations and is up to date on the history of both buildings and it was noted that both buildings are out of date and in horrible condition and not adequate to properly serve those department’s needs in the 21st century. The amount of money spent to keep the building functioning at a basic level was over \$600,000 in the last eight years. The committee has met with Public Safety consultants and the first step towards looking at a new facility would include a comprehensive evaluation of each department and their needs as well as current buildings/potential new sites that could best house those departments whether it is a combined facility or individual facilities. The cost of the study is expected to be approximately \$140,000 and the committee will ask at Town Meeting to approve that funding. Ms. Alexson stated that this study is a top priority to be focusing on in the next year or so. It was noted that there are existing studies but are significantly out of date.

Old Business:

None.

Miscellaneous and Correspondence:

Veteran's Board meeting on Thursday, February 1, 2018

Shellfish Committee meeting on Tuesday, January 30, 2018

Mr. Rauscher moved, and it was seconded to adjourn at 10:49 pm. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by

Alexys Parsons
02.12.18