

BOARD OF SELECTMEN SPECIAL MEETING
March 9, 2012

A special meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held on Friday, March 9, 2012 in the Selectmen's Conference Room.

Members present: First Selectman Michael Criss, Selectman Jon Truskauskas, and Selectman Frank Chiaramonte via conference call.

Attendees: Highway Supervisor John Fredsall

Call to Order

Mr. Criss called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Discussion of Highway Budget

Mr. Criss reminded everyone that this is a special meeting to discuss the highway budget only and this is an opportunity to exchange ideas.

Mr. Truskauskas proposed the idea of not replacing the current vacancy on the highway department. Instead, he would like to hire two (2) part time people. He believes this would save taxpayer dollars and still provide the same service. He noted that the town crew does a fantastic job snowplowing in the winter but sees inefficiencies elsewhere. He proposed hiring a part time person in the winter and a part time person in the summer for a shortened summer period.

Mr. Fredsall noted that the maintenance of the ball fields begins the first week of April and continues through November, exceeding 21 weeks as proposed by Mr. Truskauskas. If the town were to hire a part time student in the summer, for example, they would still need to be supervised by a senior staff member. Regarding plowing in the winter, Mr. Fredsall stated that each crew member has a dedicated section of roads to maintain year round, not just in the winter. Highway Foreman, Wayne Johnson also has dedicated roads he takes care of, and does not just "float" around. Mr. Fredsall believes it is not only advantageous to fill the position but is also genuinely needed in order to provide the same service. The crew has already taken over many tasks that were previously contracted out such as sweeping and cleaning catch basins. Summer help has dwindled from four part time summer position to one position. He stated his highway budget is reasonable for what he expects to happen with increasing fuel costs, materials, etc. Mr. Criss noted that there are also requirements by the union regarding hiring and there is the possibility of grievances being filed. Mr. Chiaramonte wanted to know specifically what inefficiencies Mr. Truskauskas was referring to. Mr. Truskauskas replied that they take extended breaks and should manage their time better. Mr. Chiaramonte stated he does not believe Mr. Truskauskas's suggestions save any significant time and with regard to morale of the highway department, this is not something that should be nicked and dined. Regarding a part time position, Mr. Fredsall noted that part timers generally leave for full time employment so you end up training multiple people. The savings are minimal compared to the work that will not get done. Mr. Chiaramonte wanted to know the comparison of personnel with other towns.

Mr. Fredsall stated that Burlington has 14 crew members, Plymouth has 18, and Litchfield has 22. Mr. Criss mentioned if a full time person is hired, then maybe the crew would be able to take on a little more work and save money by eliminating some of the work that is contracted out.

Adjournment

With no further comments by the Selectmen, Mr. Truskauskas moved to adjourn at 4:46 p.m. Mr. Chiaramonte seconded. All were in favor.

Notes taken by Sonya Swatsley.

Minutes submitted by: _____
Melissa Santoro

RECEIVED FOR RECORD AT HARWINTON, CT
ON 3-16-12 AT 9:52 AM
ATTEST: PATRICIA K. WILLIAMSEN, TOWN CLERK