

TOWN OF JEFFERSON
SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 23, 2020

A special meeting of the Board of Selectmen for the Town of Jefferson, focusing on the budget, was held in the Town Hall Thursday, January 23, 2020, at 5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Kevin Meehan, Chair, Tom Brady and Cindy Silver--members comprising a quorum of the Board

OTHERS PRESENT: Kathi Marshall, Assistant to the Select Board.

Annual Budget

Since the meeting was called specifically to prepare and proof the budget for 2020, Kathi presented a printout of the budget with her projected expenditures for the upcoming year. Board members made adjustments where necessary in areas Kathi had not dealt with before, especially having to do with the cost analysis expense for the school, the purchase of the town truck and so on. Those figures were amended in the budget to more accurately reflect the remaining expenses for 2020.

Board members also discussed the possibility of setting up a new position that would reflect the work Linda Cushman continues to do for the town. She is the Deputy Tax Collector and helps Mary with a good deal of technical support as well as practical services. She also works with the Assessor. The board agreed she should receive a stipend for these services. It was also mentioned that Linda will be helping Kathi with any upcoming issues with which she is not familiar. Looking forward, Linda will also be filling in for Kathi when she is on vacation or out sick. It was decided to include a new category in the budget for "office assistant" in order to properly reflect these anticipated expenses for the future.

Kathi commented that the town of Jefferson seemed to be relatively "debt free." Kevin confirmed the only outstanding debt was the fire truck, and the town obtained it with a note currently being paid off with an annual installment.

Once preliminary budget figures were complete, the board members moved on to discuss the warrant articles that would be needed for town meeting—particularly those that would enable the town to move into and make changes to the old school building. Members explained to Kathi that warrant articles had to be worded in precise ways and ultimately had to be approved by the Department of Revenue in Concord before they could be presented at town meeting.

The board discussed the many plans that had been presented for the school and agreed they would like to have major renovations and make the school a welcoming center for all town administrations, including the library and the Historical Society. But the plans that offered those high-end, energy-efficient designs, also came with a huge price tag. The most expensive was around \$2-million, the less expensive around \$1.5 million.

Cindy asked why they couldn't begin at the low end of the scale and build up financially with what is actually needed to make the move possible, as opposed to beginning with an expensive plan. Tom agreed and said they needed to be very mindful of the possible tax impact on townspeople.

Following much discussion, the board elected to approach the warrants in a three-step progression. And the first step would be getting into the school. While the bones are good, there is still much to do before we can move right in. Floors need to be cleaned, lighting needs to be upgraded, rooms need to be reconfigured, a phone system needs to go in, etc. The board agreed that a beginning sum of \$100,000

would cover start-up expenses and allow the school to be prepared for inhabitants. Tom said once that article was written, any following articles pertaining to the school would be contingent on the first article passing. We could not make any improvements without first having the go-ahead to set up, clean up and move in.

While members worked diligently on the wording of the articles, the meeting was going very late and it was decided to meet again on the budget in the near future.

Adjournment - Cindy made a motion to adjourn. Tom seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The next meeting will be Monday, January 27, 2020.

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,