



Town of Plaistow ♦ Board of Selectmen
145 Main Street ♦ Plaistow ♦ NH ♦ 03865

PLAISTOW BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES

DATE: October 19, 2020

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 6:34 p.m.

SELECTMEN:

Selectwoman, Francine Hart, Chairman

Selectman, Julian Kiszka

Selectman, Jay DeRoche

Greg Colby, Finance Dir./Asst. Town Manager – Remotely

Selectman, Greg Taillon, Vice Chairman

Selectman, John A. Blinn, Sr. - Remotely

Mark Pearson, Town Manager – Remotely

F. Hart notes all votes will be done by roll call tonight.

J. DeRoche motions to approve the minutes of October 5, 2020. Seconded by G. Taillon.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = abstain, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 4-0-1

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

APPOINTMENT TO ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

Barbara Burri is here tonight. She has been recommended to be an alternate member of the Zoning Board. Peter Bealo, Chair of the Zoning Board highly recommended her. Barbara states she is a former software engineer and now is a Veterinarian Technician. She is a past member of the ZBA and would like to come back and support the community. Barbara is welcomed by the Board.

DONATION ACCEPTANCE – POLIQUIN WELDING/FABRICATION

Former Selectman, Dan Poliquin donated parts and labor valuing \$215.00 to repair and reinstall the main flagpole at Town Hall. He generally does this every year.

G. Taillon motions to accept the donation from Dan Poliquin Welding/Fabrication with a value of \$215.00 for repairs and reinstalling the flagpole. Seconded by J. DeRoche.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

The Board thanks D. Poliquin.

CLEAN ENERGY PRESENTATION

Henry Herndon, Director of Local Energy Solutions from Clean Energy NH is here tonight to talk to the Board about energy aggregation. H. Herndon states Clean Energy New Hampshire is a nonprofit, membership-based company. They provide neutral, expert information for businesses, individuals and local governments regarding clean energy, energy aggregation and technical assistance for community energy projects.

G. Taillon asks who would do negotiations for power.

H. Herndon replies, Clean Energy NH can do it if Plaistow becomes a member. Plaistow can negotiate on their own or hire someone to do it for the town.

H. Herndon states there is an economy of scale by joining Clean Energy NH. Many other cities and towns have joined.

F. Hart asks how administrative costs are paid.

H. Herndon replies, it is part of the energy cost.

J. Kiszka states there are two primary goals of Clean Energy NH. The first one is energy aggregation to provide lower costs for communities. The other goal is to provide guidance for its members. He would like to make a motion to join Clean Energy NH.

F. Hart suggests we table the decision for now. She would like to invite Henry Herndon back in the future to cover more details and get the Energy Committee on board.

J. DeRoche asks if the Clean Energy NH website has a table showing a cost benefit based on population.

H. Herndon states there is not a table set up like that.

It is recommended the power point presentation is added to the Town of Plaistow's website.

J. Kiszka states it is a great program and has been successful in Massachusetts.

BUDGET REVIEW

The Executive budget is reviewed.

The line item for technical supplies and equipment totaling \$4000.00 will be moved to Other Government Buildings.

F. Hart recommends removing \$100.00 from the Trash and Recycling Advisory Committee (TRAC) line item.

F. Hart motions to approve and adjust the Executive budget in the amount of \$306,297.00.

Seconded by G. Taillon.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

J. Kiszka wants the public to know this budget decreased from 2020.

The Town Clerk budget is reviewed.

G. Taillon motions to approve the Town Clerk budget in the amount of \$107,453.00. Seconded by J. Kiszka.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

The Assessing budget is reviewed.

This budget has been reduced. No values-a-new will need to be done next year.

G. Taillon motions to approve the Assessing budget in the amount of \$111,818.00. Seconded by J. Kiszka.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

Fire Chief Chris Knutsen is here to present the Fire Department budget.

Chief Knutsen states he has been to many meetings in the past to bring grant money before the board. Tonight, he is here to ask for money. The fire department is responsible for much more than putting out fires. Plaistow firefighters are all-hazards responders, and they provide an essential service to Plaistow. They are responsible for emergency medical response, fire suppression, technical rescue, hazardous materials mitigation, active shooter/hostile events, fire inspections, public education, community training, and more. There are three (3) main elements used to effectively manage a fire department.

1. Understanding the risks in the response environment.
2. Deploying enough resources to manage every incident effectively.
3. Being able to demonstrate how changes to response resources will affect the overall safety of responders and the community.

Chief Knutsen reviews risks. The control mission is the capability to have the needed equipment, training, and personnel to perform the functions for which they are responsible. Risk is not based on actual occurrence but on an event's opportunity and consequences. Plaistow does have some deficiencies. Bringing forward deficiencies will help create a platform for policymakers and residents to prepare an informed, efficient budget plan. One deficiency is our Insurance Services Office Mitigation (ISO) rating. Plaistow is currently a Class 4 (64.48 out of 105). A better ISO rating results in lower homeowners' insurance for residents. Staffing, response times and training all play a role in the ISO rating along with our communications center and water supply. The Plaistow Fire Department is not properly equipped, trained, or prepared to do the following:

- Extract person/s from a Motor Vehicle Accident (MVA) other than a small passenger vehicle.
- Low and high angle rescue.
- Hazardous materials response.
- Confined space/trench collapse rescue.
- Natural or man-made disasters or hostile events.

The fire hoses are also deficient. The threads on hose nozzles are not national standard threads. The length of our hoses is too long and dangerous to firefighters. As a community grows, so does the need for fire/rescue services and specialized equipment. The population of Plaistow has many more people in town during the day as people come to shop, work, and drive through to get elsewhere. The daytime population is approximately 50,000 people even though the residential population is about 7,700. The most important goal of a fire department is to save lives and property. In most communities the budgets for public safety both police and fire are similar. That is not the case in Plaistow. The 2020 police budget was \$2,011,175.00 while the 2020 fire budget was \$718,791.00. The support of an adequate operational budget is essential for public safety. While developing the budget, Chief Knutsen combined some budget line items, realigned full time salaries and enhanced job descriptions. In conclusion, Chief Knutsen is trying to bring an understanding and

transparency to the Plaistow Fire Department's funding needs and improve public safety in the community.

F. Hart asks the Board if they want to support the budget as presented, think about it first, or prepare a warrant article for the increase. She supports the budget as presented. She had a personal experience with a family member needing medical services and she states you cannot put a price on public safety.

G. Taillon supports the increase however he recommends the presentation is replayed on cable TV, is available to the public as a public presentation at the Library, and he wants the Budget Committee to have the same presentation.

J. Kiszka supports the budget. Since the increase is so large, he thinks the voters should weigh in just like they did with the Public Safety Complex.

J. DeRoche agrees you cannot put a price on public safety. It is a large increase yet when you look at it as 19 cents a day, he supports the budget as presented.

J. Blinn supports the upgrade to the fire department and states it has been needed for many years. He would like to know if there are any grants to help with the increase.

Chief Knutsen replies, there are grants and he will continue to apply for grants however we do not know what the grants will be. Typically, they are for specific things such as staffing four (4) firefighters to a truck for all calls. If this type of grant is accepted, it is expected the community will continue to pay for the staffing upgrades. A grant will not help with the overall fire budget.

J. DeRoche motions to approve the Fire Department budget in the amount of \$918,285.00.

Seconded by G. Taillon.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

F. Hart thanks the Chief for his informative presentation.

The Tax Collector Budget is reviewed. There is a slight decrease from last year.

G. Taillon motions to approve the Tax Collector budget in the amount of \$49,790.00. Seconded by J. Kiszka.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

The Human Resources/Personnel budget is reviewed. Most of the increase is in the New Hampshire Retirement line item. Rates increased in July. We recently had two people retire.

G. Colby, Finance Director states he needs to increase the line item for Workers Comp. The new rates from Primex were received after the budget was developed. The new total for this budget is \$1,910,526.00.

G. Taillon motions to approve the Human Resources/Personnel budget in the amount of \$1,910,526.00. Seconded by J. Kiszka.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

The Planning budget is reviewed. There is a slight increase from 2020. The permanent positions line item is about \$8,000.00 higher. Discussion occurs regarding the increase. It appears the Director or Administrative Assistant was given a large raise.

M. Pearson replies no. The Administrative Assistant received the normal 3% increase, and she jumped a level in longevity. The Planning Director did not receive a raise. The budget was brought in line with the actual hours worked. If you do the math the line item works.

G. Taillon motions to approve the planning budget in the amount of \$97,516.00. Seconded by J. DeRoche.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

The General Government Buildings budget is reviewed. The budget has increased \$56,465.00. Some positions were combined. Two (2) buildings were added. The Town Hall Annex and the new Public Works Garage.

J. Kiszka asks why positions were combined. It makes it harder to compare and understand the budget.

M. Pearson replies there were personnel changes. One person worked for two departments, one person worked full time hours but did not get full time benefits and a full-time person resigned. The full-time person without the full time benefits typically gets laid off after a certain number of weeks. This year that person was able to fill in for another department. It became a juggling act. There was about \$56,000.00 added for repairs, heat, and electricity for the new buildings.

G. Colby states they are also trying to make the budget more consistent and streamlined.

G. Taillon motions to approve the General Government Buildings budget in the amount of \$348,650.00. Seconded by J. Blinn.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

The Insurance budget was approved at the last meeting however the property liability insurance rates went up. The new total for this budget is \$142,416.00.

J. Kiszka motions to approve the Insurance budget in the amount of \$142,416.00. Seconded by G. Taillon.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

The Advertising budget is reviewed. This was tabled at the last meeting.

G. Taillon stated his questions regarding joining Rocking Planning Commission (RPC) were clearly answered. He is in favor of this budget.

G. Taillon motions to approve the Advertising budget in the amount of \$26,500.00. Seconded by J. DeRoche.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

The Other General Government budget is reviewed.

G. Taillon motions to amend and approve the Other General Government budget by increasing it \$4000.00 for a total of \$196,500.00. Seconded by J. DeRoche. The increase of \$4,000.00 comes from reducing the Executive budget by \$4,000.00.

Discussion: G. Taillon states the line item for computer/internet was increased from \$85,000.00 in 2020 to \$130,000.00 in 2021. He asks for an explanation of the increase.

G. Colby replies, the increase is due to the added level of service for cyber security.

G. Taillon states that is a good answer. He recommends changing the description for the line item.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

The Police Budget is reviewed. It has been level funded.

G. Taillon motions to approve the Police budget in the amount of \$2,011,175.00. Seconded by J. Kiszka.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

The Inspections budget is reviewed. G. Colby states there was a budgeting error for 2020. A lease payment for the truck was inadvertently left off.

G. Taillon motions to approve the Inspections budget in the amount of \$136,881.00. Seconded by J. Kiszka.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

The Highway budget is reviewed. It is up \$10,000.00

G. Taillon asks why the maintenance line item increased so much. Is the increase for a supervisor or supplies?

G. Colby replies, it is for supplies. We are keeping trucks longer therefore the maintenance line item has been increased.

M. Pearson agrees we are keeping trucks longer. Replacement trucks used to be recommended every seven years according to the CIP. We have changed that and now plan on keeping vehicles for twenty (20) years. To keep vehicles longer we need to increase the maintenance line item for them. The body may have to be replaced in ten (10) years however a body is a lot less expensive than a new vehicle. Therefore, it is still a cost savings.

G. Taillon states the increase is only 1.2% which is good.

F. Hart states the CIP committee will meet this Thursday.

J. Kiszka recommends cutting the line item for temporary labor by \$10,000.00.

G. Taillon does not agree.

G. Taillon motions to approve the Highway budget in the amount of \$842,165.00. Seconded by J. DeRoche.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = no, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = no, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 3-2-0

The Solid Waste budget is tabled.

F. Hart states she is still working on the numbers. If we decide to go with carts as a lease to purchase program it will need to be added to the budget. This budget will be discussed at the next meeting.

The Solid Waste Disposal/Landfill budget is discussed.

G. Taillon asks why the line item for groundskeeping decreased.

M. Pearson replies, since work on the landfill cap will be ongoing, we will not need the same maintenance. The grass will need to be cut a few times a year.

G. Taillon motions to approve the Solid Waste Disposal/Landfill budget in the amount of \$46,500.00. Seconded by J. Kiszka.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

The Health budget is reviewed.

J. DeRoche motions to approve the Health budget in the amount of \$88,617.00. Seconded by G. Taillon.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

The recreation budget is reviewed.

F. Hart asks if we can help out seniors by using some funds from revolving funds for their programming.

G. Colby replies, it is tricky. A revolving fund is supposed to be self-supporting. He recommends researching the original language used to set up the fund.

M. Pearson states at the last Recreation Commission meeting there was consensus from the commission to recommend an increase of hours for the Recreation Direction. They would like to go from the current 32 hours to 40 hours.

J. DeRoche agrees with Mark and states the commission also wants to move forward with hiring a full-time director.

The salary line item would increase by about \$8,000.00.

F. Hart states, that does not include roll up costs.

M. Pearson is does include a portion of the roll up costs for mandatory deductions.

G. Colby replies the current employee is being paid \$18.50 per hour yet the budget was built on a full-time position. Roll up costs would not increase much.

G. Taillon motions to approve the Recreation budget in the amount of \$203,313.00. Seconded by J. Kiszka.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

The Conservation budget is reviewed.

F. Hart states this was tabled at the last meeting.

G. Taillon recommends reducing the water testing line item from \$6,000.00 to \$3,000.00. He also thinks the general supplies line item is too high.

J. DeRoche recommends having the Chair come to a meeting.

F. Hart states that has been done in the past.

J. Kiszka recommends changing the supplies line item to \$750.00. If both recommendations are agreed to the Conservation budget will be reduced by \$3,750.00

G. Taillon motions to lower line item 391 (water testing) to \$3,000.00 and line item 610 (general supplies) to \$750.00 and to approve the Conservation budget in the amount of \$6,480.00.

Seconded by J. Kiszka.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

The Library budget is reviewed. This budget has been level funded.

J. Kiszka motions to approve the Library budget in the amount of \$599,174.00. Seconded by G. Taillon.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

F. Hart states the Water budget and Solid Waste budget will be discussed at the October 26th meeting. She would like to give the budget to the Budget Committee no later than November 2nd.

TOWN MANAGERS REPORT

M. Pearson states we need to revisit the legal budget. Since August 19th one individual has requested over fifteen (15) Right to Know Requests. We have had to incur legal expenditures due to the disruption of town business the person is causing. He would like to increase the legal budget by \$16,000.00.

J. Kiszka states he read the draft letter supplied by the attorney. If the requests stop, do we still need to add the \$16,000.00?

M. Pearson replies, there is no way to predict what the person will do. The new total for the legal budget will be \$81,000.00

J. Kiszka motions to approve the Legal budget in the amount of \$81,000.00. Seconded by G. Taillon.

Roll call vote: F. Hart = yes, G. Taillon = yes, J. Kiszka = yes, J. Blinn = yes, J. DeRoche = yes.

Motion carries 5-0-0

- Town Hall LED Lighting Project.
- Sale of Town Owned Property (33 Garden Ave.)
- Closed on the East Road Property.
- Water Project Update.

- Public Works Garage Update.
- Salt Shed Update.
- Building Inspector/Code Enforcement/Zoning Administrator – hired an interim Building Official to perform all the function of the position.
- Building Maintenance Supervisor – conditional offer made.
- Public Safety Radio Communication Project.
- 2021 Water Budget Preparation Meeting.
- Water Main Break.
- 2020 Budget.
- Capital Improvement Program (CIP).
- P.A.R.C. Construction.
- Safety Complex Road Extension.

OTHER BUSINESS

J. DeRoche asks if the training room at the Safety Complex can be opened up for firefighters to pass through to decrease response times.

M. Pearson replies, he will have the doors unlocked. He states the Fire Chief made a good point about the beds being far away from the equipment. We paid a lot of money for the design of the building.

There have been some concerns from residents regarding recycling. This will be discussed next week, and more information will be available.

F. Hart received a letter from JRM. There is a copy in everyone's folder. She has scheduled a meeting with a JRM consultant for Wednesday.

F. Hart mentions the well water testing event on November 15th.

There is information in everyone's folders from So. Rock. This will be discussed when warrant articles are discussed.

J. DeRoche states perhaps we can get feedback from other area towns that have contributed to their organization.

SELECTMENS REPORTS

J. DeRoche

- Attended the Recreation Commission meeting.
- He states "kudos" to Mark, the Public Works Garage looks great.

G. Taillon

- Attended the Planning Board meeting.
- Working on financial planning for solar panels on the salt shed.
- He is impressed with the work our Town Manager has done on the Public Works Garage.

J. Kiszka

- Attended the RPC meeting.

J. Blinn – nothing to report.

F. Hart – nothing to report.

F. Hart adjourned the meeting at 10:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Hossack,
Recording Secretary