

APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE MILFORD BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
January 5, 2009

PRESENT: Gary L. Daniels, Chairman
Tim Finan, Vice Chairman
James Dannis, Member
Mike Putnam, Member
Katherine Bauer, Member
Guy Scaife, Town Administrator
Jack Sheehy, Financial Operations Director
Darlene J. Bouffard, Recording Secretary

The meeting was called to order at 5 p.m. for a budget work session. Chairman Daniels asked Guy Scaife to go through the latest budget update.

BUDGET DISCUSSIONS:

Guy Scaife reviewed the impact to the average homeowner with a 2% tax increase. Selectman Dannis noted that it is like talking about raising additional money, the individual effect on a home owner appears to be small, but over time it becomes large. Selectman Dannis suggested looking at some of the larger assessments as well, such as businesses. Guy Scaife indicated this information was provided as a result of the request at the last meeting. Chairman Daniels noted that tonight's meeting is to alter things or suggest things that might be lowered in the budget. Chairman Daniels asked for input from Board members on what they feel could be lowered.

Chairman Daniels noted that the gas line items have been adjusted, asking what price was used. Guy Scaife responded that \$2.15 was used for gas and \$2.75 for diesel. Chairman Daniels indicated those prices are high. Jack Sheehy said that those were the prices at that time. Guy Scaife said it is a guess what the prices will be and we have talked about bringing that down again for gas and diesel; he thinks we will see low gas for the next few months. That line item might be adjusted more. Some towns are still budgeting \$4/gallon. Today we are buying from the State for \$2.20/diesel and \$1.48/gas. One month ago, the prices were still higher than we were; the State provides \$.18 off each type of fuel than what is charged at the pump. Jack Sheehy explained every time the State receives a delivery, they adjust the price, however there is a delay between the delivery and the cost to the town.

Chairman Daniels asked how members feel about using Fund Balance. Vice Chairman Finan would like to use it as much as Guy Scaife and Jack Sheehy have recommended. Selectman Dannis suggested going to the second recommendation not the first, and see if there is any other savings. We should reduce it to the extent possible in times of crisis; families dip into their savings, there is no upper limit for him at all with Fund Balance. Jack Sheehy said the DRA recommended limit is 5%. Guy Scaife suggested lowering it to no less than 5.4%. Selectman Putnam said he sees no limit in its use. Selectman Bauer would go with the \$200,000 maximum at this point. Selectman Putnam said it is tax payer money and it should be given back, but we should dip into it and look at other places to save and cut. Selectman Dannis suggested getting a white board to write down ideas for recommended changes. Vice Chairman Finan asked how many police cruisers there are. Guy Scaife answered 14.

Selectman Putnam would recommend any of the following: salary freeze, layoffs, cut fire department vehicle. Selectman Putnam indicated the police may see an increase in business in tough times, as will the fire department because of heating with alternate fuels. The ambulance will most likely stay the same; the DPW could also see some cuts. DPW should also see salary freezes or layoffs, by increasing the part time budget, part time employees could pick up that work, overtime could be done by part time temporary people who could work to pay their property taxes. A police cruiser is needed but the paving machine for \$4,500 could be eliminated this year and DPW could use more sand and less salt. If there were layoffs, they would need to be from DPW, ambulance and planning. Selectman Dannis noted that the common area to cut on everyone's list is a salary freeze. The salary freeze would have a savings of \$70,400 for non-union and \$10,300 for Teamsters, everyone should be treated the same, if there is no AFSME contract, there is no increase there. Selectman Dannis also noted the Board should not ask for a salary freeze without the Board having to cut their salary as well.

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1 Vice Chairman Finan indicated there is a \$77,000 line item of sick time buy out at the end of the year. In the private
2 sector, those bonuses get cut first, which he considers the sick buyout to be. If the Board suspended the sick buy-
3 outs for \$77,000 and leave \$1, that would give the Board the possibility of allowing the benefit later in the year. If
4 we tell employees now, they have 9 months to plan for it. Jack Sheehy noted it has to come from somewhere else.
5 The appropriation is a set number, you can't change it. That \$77,000 would need to come from somewhere else.
6 Vice Chairman Finan would rather suspend the sick buy out than have a salary freeze. Guy Scaife said the \$77,000
7 is for all employees including union employees. Selectman Dannis asked if it can be done across the board or only
8 for non-union employees. Selectman Bauer asked if Teamsters can go back and vote again on a new contract since
9 that has already been signed. Guy Scaife said that would be at their discretion. If they were going to look at it
10 again, Selectman Bauer asked what the time frame is. Guy Scaife said it must be done by January 13. Selectman
11 Bauer did not know if it was legally possible but Guy Scaife said it is. Guy Scaife said yes they could call a special
12 session, as far as they are concerned they have approved the contract and it is ready to go to the voters. Selectman
13 Dannis said the Board has to make a judgment. Selectman Bauer would vote against a freeze if it were only for part
14 of the employees.

15
16 **Selectman Bauer** would be in favor of the following: salary freeze with details to be worked out, remove Fire
17 Department SUV, remove paving machine from DPW, and reduce sand & salt use. Selectman Bauer asked
18 when these items will be voted on. Chairman Daniels said the only deadline is to have something to present at
19 the budget hearing. The number is presented at the budget meeting; it is not required to become public prior to
20 that meeting. Chairman Daniels hopes that 95% of the budget will be done by next week. Selectman Bauer
21 said the Facilities Committee is coming before the Board next Monday January 12, if we are going to cut
22 things, we need to be fully informed, she would not want to vote on the Facilities Consultant until the Board
23 hears the update January 12. Selectman Dannis has the facilities consultant as a cut on his list because it is a
24 study to look at facility expenditures and in a time of economic stress, the Board should not be looking to build
25 things because tax payers are not doing that and there is not an immediate crisis. Selectman Dannis hopes there
26 will be money to fund it at some point but at this time he does not see it as necessary. Selectman Bauer re-
27 sponded that in 2002 a report was prepared detailing the needs of the Fire Department and now the Facilities
28 Committee is getting near the end of it, the \$25,000 is being requested for a consultant to provide something to
29 be put in the CIP by the end of 2009 based on the work done. Chairman Daniels said if it comes down to cut-
30 ting services or cutting the facilities consultant, he would cut the facilities consultant.

31
32 **Selectman Dannis** would be in favor of the following: salary freeze, remove Fire & Police vehicles, eliminate
33 BOS compensation, and look into Conservation Commission reduction of \$10,000 to reflect town forest cut
34 wood sales.

35
36 **Vice Chairman Finan** would be in favor of the following: South Street reduction in improvement funding (Bill
37 Parking looking into – currently it is \$155,000 and considering reducing it to \$55,000. Guy Scaife asked if that
38 funding would be made up next year. Vice Chairman Finan suggested it could be pushed out another year.
39 Guy Scaife noted there is a time limit and permission would be needed to push it out another year. Chairman
40 Daniels asked if the grant is for a specific amount. Vice Chairman Finan responded it is for \$3.5 million. The
41 risk for a committed amount, said Selectman Dannis, is if things do not turn out the way we want, there might
42 be a spike in future years because it needs to be done eventually.

43
44 **Chairman Daniels** would be in favor of the following: cutting in departments that do not provide critical ser-
45 vices such as Recreation (including park ranger) and Library.

46
47 Selectman Putnam asked what Contracted Services are in the budget? Guy Scaife responded those are a move over.
48 Selectman Putnam asked what the line item is. Guy Scaife said consultant services. Selectman Putnam asked about
49 the Community Media budget, noting overall it is down, however, Dave Kirsch has requested a character generator
50 and editor to enhance the quality of the presentation for broadcast. Selectman Putnam asked if the town could do
51 without this equipment. Guy Scaife said it could go without, but it would enhance the program. Selectman Putnam
52 would like to remove that item from the budget. Selectman Putnam asked about auditing and banking services.
53 Jack Sheehy responded that the town does pay for auditing services and had talked about perhaps bidding out the
54 auditing, which would cost more. Selectman Dannis asked when banking services were last bid out? Jack Sheehy
55 said it has been a while. Selectman Putnam suggested having that bid out, then asked about staff development in the
56 Finance department. Guy Scaife responded that is for Munis training and report writing which has been put off for
57 years. Chairman Daniels stated this came up 3-4 years ago and it was said that there would be some in house train-

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ing. Guy Scaife said he cannot speak to what was said at that time. Jack Sheehy indicated the training for Finance would be less expensive than hiring another person. Chairman Daniels asked how many people will be trained. Jack Sheehy responded himself, the Tax Collector and two other people would be trained. Selectman Putnam asked about the IT budget where \$10,000 is budgeted but only \$2,100 has been spent in 2008. Guy Scaife said this is an anti-virus software area that has been put off but it needs to be done. Chairman Daniels asked if it is needed. Vice Chairman Finan stated it is not a good idea to get too far behind on software because they stop supporting it which creates all sorts of problems. If the interface is old, the other software can get tied up as well. Selectman Putnam on Page 29, asked about Contracted buildings. Guy Scaife responded it is for contracted services for things such as elevators, security, HVAC, etc. The previous police station had none of that and now it is very sophisticated. Town Hall was renovated 20 years ago, so we are starting to see increases in costs for maintenance.

WARRANT ARTICLES:

Selectman Bauer asked if Warrant Articles will be addressed tonight. She believes that in tough times when people are looking for jobs they look to the town for activities; we should therefore discuss the Warrant Articles for things such as Fire Works. Selectman Bauer believes the Warrant Articles should be left as is. Selectman Dannis agreed and thinks the Board is held to history. The Board should let it be determined by the people to have petition articles. He will vote to not take a position on the Warrant Articles. The Board should put them up but feels the Board should not decide on them. Chairman Daniels stated \$10,000 for one night of fire works when the town is talking about freezing salaries is not appropriate. Selectman Putnam suggested those activities bring the town together and are necessary for a small town. Vice Chairman Finan said in down times, the town wants to provide those nice things. But for how many people, asked Chairman Daniels. Selectman Bauer said people are all over the town waiting for the fire works each year. Even in the default budget year, Vice Chairman Finan said the fire works passed. Chairman Daniels has a hard time talking about salary freeze and then supporting \$10,000 for fire works. Selectman Dannis would not recommend supporting the fire works. Chairman Daniels indicated in the Social Services budget, there are a number of services that the town benefits from because of a court order, but there are some things that should be removed from the list of Social Services. Chairman Daniels will look at the Social Services budget and determine if it was mandated by the courts that it should not be supported by the towns. Last year, Selectman Bauer said there was an explanation of the Lion’s Club support and the Association for the Blind support, which was helpful. Guy Scaife indicated that reading glasses are supported by the Lion’s Club where the Association of the Blind assists with eye appointments or treatment. Marian Castanho and Ruth Bolduc looked into that last year and there is a clear delineation. Chairman Daniels would like to see the list of Social Services organizations.

As far as the other Warrant Articles, Chairman Daniels thought the Band Concerts, Parade, Fire Works, Pumpkin Festival and DO-IT could be cut in half but wants to see additional information. Selectman Bauer asked if there is time for DO-IT to come in before the Board to identify detail of what is needed. Chairman Daniels thinks there is time. Selectman Bauer said it would need to be January 12. Vice Chairman Finan asked if NRPC is worth the \$10,000. Guy Scaife said the town gets a lot of services from them, just like LGC. Selectman Putnam feels the Warrant Article items provide bright spots for the residents and feels the tax payers should make the decision.

Selectman Putnam moved to remove from the budget the **Facilities Consultant** for \$25,000. Selectman Bauer seconded for discussion. Chairman Daniels indicated the Facilities Committee is coming before the Board on January 12, therefore a vote should be held off until that time. All agreed. DO-IT is coming to speak to the board about the Pumpkin Festival and the DO-IT request, and the Social Services list needs to be provided, therefore it was agreed the Board would not vote on those items until after the presentations.

Selectman Bauer moved to support the **Fireworks** Warrant Article for \$10,000. Selectman Putnam seconded for discussion. Selectman Dannis indicated there are places where money sits in town and it would just take a little effort to get it instead of using tax payer money. Selectman Bauer, Selectman Putnam and Vice Chairman Finan were in favor of the motion, with Chairman Daniels and Selectman Dannis opposed. Motion passed 3/2.

Selectman Putnam moved to support the **Band Concerts** Warrant Article for \$9,000. Vice Chairman Finan seconded for discussion. Selectman Bauer said she attends two or three of the concerts every year and they are enjoyed by seniors, but they are not well attended. Vice Chairman Finan suggested that it be looked at to possibly take off for next year and he will talk to the Recreation Commission about looking into it. Selectman Putnam, Vice Chairman Finan and Selectman Bauer were in favor, with Chairman Daniels and Selectman Dannis opposed. Motion passed 3/2.

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2 Selectman Putnam moved to support the **Parades** Warrant Article for \$6,000. Selectman Bauer seconded. Select-
3 man Putnam, Selectman Bauer, Vice Chairman Finan and Chairman Daniels were in favor, with Selectman Dannis
4 opposed. Motion passed 4/1.

5
6 **BUDGET:**

7
8 A potential salary freeze was discussed. Guy Scaife indicated he has given the Board the department budgets and
9 his budget. The increase in activities are being responded to and the town is doing a good job. Selectman Dannis
10 stated from a tax payer perspective, they are not getting a wage increase, so they should not pay for people to get an
11 increase. Vice Chairman Finan indicated he went through the budget for hours and there is not a lot that can come
12 out. If we take out the vehicles, South Street project and use fund balance, then we do not have to touch salaries or
13 cut services. Guy Scaife indicated this town has a lot of really good programs and has kept things relatively flat; it
14 is almost as if the staff is being penalized for doing a good job. Selectman Dannis indicated the managers can easily
15 explain a salary freeze and why is it happening, he thinks people are happy to just have a job. Selectman Putnam
16 indicated the Board is not saying employees are being penalized, they have done a good job. Chairman Daniels
17 would prefer to not touch salaries; the salaries being discussed are for work already done, not for the future. Vice
18 Chairman Finan would like to hear Guy Scaife's opinion on the vehicles. Guy Scaife explained he has talked with
19 other towns about using the Crown Victoria's; when looking at 14 cruisers, if you do not keep with the rotation, it is
20 being put off and there is never a good year. The choice is either no vehicles, one or two vehicles; it is harder on
21 the voters when the budgets move up and down or spike. Guy Scaife feels for the people who have not had raises,
22 but there are a lot of people who are getting raises and who do have jobs. The town also hears a lot of complaints
23 from people about the condition of the roads and paving. Chairman Daniels asked about just replacing the engine of
24 the older police vehicle. Guy Scaife said that would not cost as much but then the next thing will break, such as the
25 transmission. In answer to the question, Guy Scaife indicated the SUV is more critical for replacement.

26
27 Selectman Putnam moved to keep the **cruisers** in the budget. Selectman Bauer seconded for discussion. Selectman
28 Bauer asked if the town goes off the rotation, it will end up with spikes in the budget. Safety and wear & tear on the
29 cruisers is different and cannot be compared so she feels that money should stay in the budget. Selectman Bauer,
30 Selectman Putnam, Vice Chairman Finan were in favor of the motion. Chairman Daniels and Selectman Dannis
31 were opposed. Motion passed 3/2. Selectman Putnam suggested looking into a used vehicles for the Fire Depart-
32 ment; which Guy Scaife agreed he could look into and present to the Board.

33
34 Selectman Putnam moved to remove \$4,500 from the DPW budget for the **Paving Machine**. Vice Chairman Finan
35 seconded for discussion. Selectman Bauer asked how much money this equipment could save the town. Guy Scaife
36 indicated it could save \$10,000 per year; it will pay for itself in else than one year and will provide flexibility. Vice
37 Chairman Finan and Selectman Putnam were in favor of the motion, with Selectman Bauer, Selectman Dannis and
38 Chairman Daniels opposed. Motion failed 2/3.

39
40 Selectman Putnam moved to remove \$6,500 in the **Community Media budget** for the character reader. Selectman
41 Dannis seconded for discussion. As a viewer, Selectman Bauer indicated this equipment would help the viewer to
42 identify what meeting it is and so forth. Vice Chairman Finan said that is what this equipment is for, to help iden-
43 tify what is happening. Guy Scaife asked what the position of the PEG Board is. Vice Chairman Finan responded
44 that they support leaving it in and this equipment has been discussed from the beginning of the PEG program; this is
45 the only capital purchase in that budget. Guy Scaife said over \$100,000 was collected in franchise fees last year and
46 the budget is \$70,000; we need to keep in mind the Community Media Director was hired to build a program and if
47 we take away equipment that has been talked about for a long time, what does that say to the department? Chair-
48 man Daniels said years ago the Board of Selectman put a tax on cable TV in order to build the program, over
49 \$100,000 was collected but the budget is only \$70,000, so the other \$30,000 goes into the general fund. Selectman
50 Putnam and Selectman Dannis were in favor of the motion. Chairman Daniels, Vice Chairman Finan and Selectman
51 Bauer were opposed. Motion failed 2/3.

52
53 Selectman Dannis moved to eliminate the **Board of Selectman salary** line item of \$13,000. Vice Chairman Finan
54 seconded for discussion. Selectman Dannis stated the Board is asking for people to save money, so the Board
55 should show leadership, this Board works hard but no harder than other boards that work for no compensation.
56 Chairman Daniels noted that leadership is not encompassed in salaries. This job is more than just sitting at the ta-
57 ble, Chairman Daniels does not think the amount paid is excessive for the responsibility. In 2010, Guy Scaife said

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1 there might be a salary increase for this position, if you are proposing to remove the salaries this year, it may be
2 hard to restore next year. Vice Chairman Finan would support it if there is a salary freeze, but if that is not done,
3 it's not necessary. Selectman Dannis withdrew his motion.

4
5 Selectman Dannis asked if the Conservation Commission should be brought in to talk about the \$10,000 in wood
6 from the town forests. Jack Sheehy indicated there still needs to be an appropriation for the budget, you can request
7 the additional revenue, but the budget must have an appropriation.

8
9 **OUTSTANDING ITEMS:**

10
11 **South Street:** Bill Parker to get back to Vice Chairman Finan about the grant funding.

12
13 **DPW:** Guy Scaife to talk with Bill Ruoff about using more sand and less salt. Selectman Putnam indicated part
14 time temporary people could be hired to offset the overtime spent in DPW for snow shoveling. Selectman Bauer
15 asked if there could be unintended consequences with that type of activity. Guy Scaife said there could be if there
16 was an injury. Vice Chairman Finan asked if there is any chance the hours at the Transfer Station could be de-
17 creased. Guy Scaife said there is other work done after the transfer station closes. In the coming year, single stream
18 is still being considered so that could change, but he does not see a savings with a reduction of hours open to the
19 public.

20
21 **GSOP Transportation Warrant:** Petition Warrant Article yet to come in.

22 **Facilities Committee:** Presentation at January 12 Board meeting, then vote on \$25,000 line item.

23 **Conservation Commission:** Present what the cutting plan is for town forests and estimated revenue.

24 **DO-IT:** Attending January 12 Board meeting regarding DO-IT budget and Pumpkin Festival

25
26 **Fund Balance:** Staff has recommended using \$75,000 Fund Balance. If the Board of Selectman decides to use
27 more, Guy Scaife recommends that \$200,000 be an absolute maximum amount used. Selectman Dannis would use
28 the whole thing. This will be re-visited.

29
30 **ADJOURNMENT:**

31
32 There being no further business to come before this Meeting, Selectman Putnam moved to adjourn at 8:01 p.m.
33 Vice Chairman Finan seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed 5/0.

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37 _____
38 Gary Daniels, Chairman

Mike Putnam, Member

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41 _____
42 Tim Finan, Vice Chairman

Katherine Bauer, Member

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45 _____
46 James Dannis, Member