

APPROVED
MINUTES OF THE MILFORD BOARD OF SELECTMEN WORK SESSION
October 21, 2009

PRESENT: Tim Finan, Chairman
Gary L. Daniels, Vice Chairman
Mike Putnam, Member
Katherine Bauer, Member
Nate Carmen, Member
Guy Scaife, Town Administrator

1. CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Finan at 5:00 p.m.

2. UPDATE OF SETTING 2009 TAX RATE: Finance Director Jack Sheehy was present to update the Board on the setting of the 2009 Tax Rate. Mr. Sheehy indicated that he will be meeting with a representative of the NH Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) on Thursday morning, October 22, 2009 in order to set the final tax rate for 2009. Mr. Sheehy wanted to update the Board on the final numbers that will be submitted and wanted to get Board concurrence on the use of fund balance for this year.

Mr. Sheehy explained to the Board that at the beginning of the year Milford was projecting a 1.4% tax increase (Town portion). This projection included budgeted appropriations, estimated revenues, as well as an estimate of the total town wide real estate assessment. The actual assessment turned out to be about \$9,000,000 lower than the estimate, which will result in a tax increase of 1.9% (as opposed to the estimated 1.4%). This increase assumes NO changes to revenues. Mr. Sheehy explained that on top of this, total revenues to the town are down approximately \$494,000; however, due to the hard work of department heads, appropriations were trimmed to bring that deficit down to \$156,000, which is the final number that will be used for the DRA. Taking into account the decreases in total town valuation as well as the decreases in revenues, the final Town portion of the tax rate increase will be 3.5%.

Mr. Sheehy explained that this also assumes that the Board wishes to continue to apply \$200,000 from the fund balance to offset the tax rate, as planned at the beginning of the year. Mr. Sheehy indicated that this will leave a balance of \$1,631,990 in the fund balance, which represents 4.7% of the town, school and county appropriations. Further, Mr. Sheehy explained that the DRA recommends this percentage to be between 5% and 10%. The Board discussed various options of using more or less fund balance and what the resulting tax rates would be. Selectman Putnam moved that the town apply \$200,000 of the fund balance toward the tax rate, as originally planned. Vice Chairman Daniels seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried 5/0.

3. DISCUSSION OF FACILITIES COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS: The Board discussed how to proceed relative to the recommendations of the Community Facilities Committee (CFC) regarding space needs for Fire, Ambulance and Town Hall.

Selectman Carmen stated that he felt the Ambulance facility was the greater need, and the best choice would be to build a separate Ambulance Facility at the DPW location now and address the Fire Station situation later. Vice Chairman Daniels expressed concern that the Board is moving too quickly and needs to get a better feel for what the taxpayers want, however, if something were to be done, he feels a combined facility is most cost effective. After lengthy discussion, the consensus of the Board was that if anything were decided, the best choice would be a combined Fire/Ambulance facility on the current location and adjacent lots.

It was agreed that the next step, while making no commitments, would be to begin initial discussions with the property owners of the parcels in question to see if there is even an interest in selling the land to the Town. Any potential agreements to acquire land must be contingent upon the approval of both the Board of Selectmen and the voters. Chairman Finan indicated that he would contact Rodney Richey, Chair of the CFC, to get his thoughts on how to best proceed with this effort. Guy Scaife added that if it gets to the point where a Warrant Article is being considered for land acquisition, a significant sum should be included, possibly in the neighborhood of \$100,000 for more detailed engineering studies of the proposed facility.

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4. ADJOURNMENT: At 7:20 p.m., Selectman Putnam moved to adjourn, seconded by Vice Chairman Daniels. All were in favor. Motion carried 5/0, and the meeting was adjourned.

Tim Finan, Chairman

Mike Putnam, Member

Gary Daniels, Vice Chairman

Katherine Bauer, Member

Nate Carmen, Member