

**Select Board
Minutes
March 29, 2016**

Leverett Town Hall, 7 pm

Present: Tom H., Peter d., Julie S., Lisa S., Margie M., and a few residents

Finance Committee: Tom P., Phil C., Steve N.

School: Jennifer H., Aaron O.

Fire: John I., Stewart O.

Budget Hearing

Tom Powers, Finance Committee, ran the budget hearing. He opened with a broad statement about the current financial unknowns the largest being the tax abatement which is still outstanding. He informed the meeting that some interest had been saved by refinancing the debt service along with the broadband project.

Since the Select Board met individually with departments the financial outlook is not as grim as previously expected when the Select Board asked all departments to cut 2%. As a result Margie had prepared 5-6 scenarios presenting options for restoring some funds to departments (who also took a 3.5% cut last year). Tom reviewed each option and took questions from the meeting. Ultimately the board decided to restore 2% to all town departments including the school.

Motion: To support adding 2% over the level budgets presented to all departments for FY17. Vote: 2-1 in favor.

Richard Nathhorst, Phil Carter, Peter d'Errico, and Lisa Stratford all gave brief statements as candidates running for election on April 30.

Business:

Wolf Tree Camps asked Margie if they could have a sleepover night on the Bill Rivers Conservation Land as part of their camp experience. Margie stated that they have insurance and will provide a copy. The board asked Margie to have them call John I. to make sure a campfire is permissible and agreed it was okay if he is on board.

The Energy Committee is having doubts about their recommendation for electricity aggregation. There have been some questions about pricing and one company has not been as responsive as they'd like. The Select Board will meet with the two vendors in question and see what they think ahead of the Energy Committee informational sessions. Town Meeting article will continue as planned.

The FCC requested that Peter sign a letter of support for allowing Lifeline to be provided to low income people for the internet as well as phone. Peter agreed.

George Lockwood forwarded a contract to the board from United Energy, a company that was offering to look at the town's utility bills to see if we're being charged correctly. There was a bit of mistrust and Tom offered to look into the program on the internet before signing on.

The minutes of March 22 were approved as written.

Motion: To appoint Julie Shively to the Regional Assessment Method Com. with Peter as a backup.

Vote: 3-0 in favor.

Motion: To appoint Carl Siebing to the Conservation Commission. Vote: 3-0 in favor.

Tom will contact the Town of Amherst to see if a meeting is possible for the Amherst DPW with the Leverett Well Committee and Select Board.

Documents referred to:

Budget dated 3/21/2016

Meeting adjourned: 9:24 pm

Minutes taken by Lisa Stratford