FARMINGTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Tuesday, August 25, 2015

Chairman Joshua Bell called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with the following members present: Stephan Bunker, , Michael Fogg and Matthew Smith. Andrew Buckland was unable to attend. Town Manager Richard Davis, Town Secretary Linda Grant, Assessor John O'Donnell, Public Works Director Denis Castonguay, Channel 11, and members of the press and public were also in attendance.

ITEM 1: Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Chairman Joshua Bell led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ITEM 2: To Establish the 2015 Tax Rate

Assessor John O'Donnell was present and reviewed the 2015 Tax Rate Choices and 2015 TIF Tax Choices spreadsheet scenarios that he handed out to assist the Selectmen in deciding what to appropriate for the Franklin Printing and Downtown Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts, what to set as a reasonable overlay above and beyond the tax commitment, and what to set as a tax rate. Mr. O'Donnell pointed out that the Town had a roughly \$1.9 million increase in real estate valuation, and a \$543,000 decrease in personal property valuation. His explanations included: how abatements and supplements have affected the Town's valuation; the difference between assessed and market values, which led to a certification of 105%; the Town's Business Equipment Tax Exemption (BETE) calculation; the increase in appropriations, which includes county, town, and school, and the impact on the tax rate calculations; his recommendation for an overlay of \$50,000 for abatements, based on the inadequate 2014 overlay balance; determination of overlay as it relates to Unassigned Fund Balance (UFB) and cash flow, ie., late or non-payment of taxes; Captured Assessed Value (CAV) as it relates to use of TIF appropriation funds in the tax rate calculation; and use of UFB funds to reduce the tax rate. Discussion included: the Church Street TIF project; and the UFB being below what the auditor recommends for a minimum balance, and the need to build it back up. Resident and Appeals Board member Dennis O'Neil participated in the discussion regarding the 2014 overlay and the Appeals Board decision in regard to the one abatement that was instrumental in its overage.

Michael Fogg moved to appropriate \$100,000 for TIFs and \$25,000 for overlay and set the 2015 tax rate at 0.01880; Matthew Smith seconded.

John O'Donnell pointed out that the Tax Assessor is obligated to set the tax rate, and asked the Selectmen for a motion that reflects the amount they would like appropriated for the TIFs and he will calculate the overlay accordingly to set the tax rate. Richard Davis stated that he will word the Item differently in the future.

ITEM 2: To Establish the 2015 Tax Rate (Cont.)

Michael Fogg amended his motion to move to appropriate \$100,000 for the TIFs by reducing the recommended overlay appropriation by \$25,000, and to direct the assessor to take such action as necessary to set the tax rate according to the Selectmen's wishes; Matthew Smith amended his second.

Resident Dennis O'Neil asked for and received clarification from Mr. O'Donnell of the calculations used to determine the assessment certification of 105%. He also explained the concept of assessed values being higher than market values. Mr. O'Donnell verified that the tax rate will be 18.80/1,000, the TIF funding will be \$100,000, to be split between the two TIFs based on value, and the overlay will be in the vicinity of \$25,000.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 4 ABSENT 1 MOTION CARRIED (Andrew Buckland)

To Consider a Request from Safe Voices to hold a Vigil at Meetinghouse Park on Monday, October 5, 2015 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Install Purple Lights and a Banner at the Gazebo from October 1-31 in Recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Richard Davis reported that this is an annual event and referenced the letter of request dated August 19, 2015.

Stephan Bunker moved to approve a request from Safe Voices to hold a vigil at Meetinghouse Park on Monday, October 5, 2015 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and install purple lights and a banner at the gazebo from October 1-31 in recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month; Matthew Smith seconded.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 4 ABSENT 1 MOTION CARRIED (Andrew Buckland)

ITEM 4: To Award the bid for Municipal Building Heat Pumps

Richard Davis reviewed the summary of the three (3) bids received. He recommended awarding the bid to Dave's World Modern Energy Solutions of Windham at a cost of \$15,096.79. He explained that there is \$16,000 available for this project if the sealcoating of the parking lots is deferred to 2016. The bids received for the sealcoating were all too high, and it was discovered that the front parking lot pavement is going to have to be replaced rather than sealcoated at a cost of approximately \$20,000. He also highlighted the benefits of installing heat pumps, and explained where they will be located. During a discussion clarifying the Efficiency Maine rebate, it could not be determined if the rebate was included in the Dave's Appliance, Inc. total, as it was shown on the bid from Dave's World.

ITEM 4: To Award the bid for Municipal Building Heat Pumps (Cont.)

Stephan Bunker moved to authorize the Town Manager to validate the bids with Efficiency Maine rebates under consideration and award it to the lowest responsible bidder; Matthew Smith seconded.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 4 ABSENT 1 MOTION CARRIED (Andrew Buckland)

ITEM 5: To Consider Placing a Permanent Weight Restriction on the Porter Hill Road

Richard Davis stated that the Town is in the process of rebuilding Porter Hill Road and it is felt that the major reason for the destruction of this road was from heavy log trucks hauling across it as a shortcut to the chip mill on the Town Farm Road. He further stated that the Town will have invested over \$300,000 in this road over a two-year period. He pointed out that the Board of Selectmen has the authority through a Town Ordinance to restrict the weight limit on this road to protect it and save the Town money. He reviewed the Ordinance and recommended that the road be posted with a 80,000 lb. weight restriction. Public Works Director Denis Castonguay was present and explained the permit process to increase the weight limit on a temporary basis. Mr. Castonguay pointed out that the State weight limit is 100,000-105,000 lbs. He also noted the large number of trucks that travel that route.

Michael Fogg moved to place a permanent weight restriction of 80,000 lbs. on the Porter Hill Road; Stephan Bunker seconded.

Denis Castonguay explained how the road has been greatly improved, and how the road would have to have been constructed in order to accommodate the 100,000-110,000 lb. truck traffic.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 3 OPPOSED 1 ABSENT 1 MOTION CARRIED (M. Smith) (A. Buckland)

ITEM 6: To Approve two (2) Applications for Licenses to Operate Games of Chance at the Farmington Fairgrounds for Sports Projects, Inc. of Lewiston, Maine

Richard Davis stated that this is an annual request.

Stephan Bunker moved to approve two (2) Applications for Licenses to Operate Games of Chance at the Farmington Fairgrounds for Sports Projects, Inc. of Lewiston, Maine; Michael Fogg seconded.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 4 ABSENT 1 MOTION CARRIED (Andrew Buckland)

ITEM 6: To Approve two (2) Applications for Licenses to Operate Games of Chance at the Farmington Fairgrounds for Sports Projects, Inc. of Lewiston, Maine (Cont.)

The Selectmen signed both applications.

To Approve an Application for a License to Operate a Game of Chance at the Farmington Fairgrounds for Johnson Cox Post 78 American Legion of Strong, Maine

Richard Davis stated that this is an annual request.

Stephan Bunker moved to approve an Application for a License to Operate a Game of Chance at the Farmington Fairgrounds for Johnson Cox Post 78 American Legion of Strong, Maine; Matthew Smith seconded.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 4 ABSENT 1 MOTION CARRIED (Andrew Buckland)

The Selectmen signed the application.

ITEM 8: To Discuss the Process for Conducting the Manager's Annual Performance Evaluation

Richard Davis reviewed the information he provided to the Selectmen, and pointed out that he has answered the questions on the form and left a space for the Selectmen's comments. He offered to email the form to each of the Selectmen, who could then submit their completed forms to Chairman Bell before October 13th so that the Chairman can compile the comments for the evaluation on October 13th. All were in agreement with this process and schedule.

ITEM 9: To Approve the Minutes of August 11, 2015

Matthew Smith moved to table the minutes of August 11, 2015 as the Selectmen had not had an opportunity to review them; Stephan Bunker seconded.

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 4 ABSENT 1 MOTION CARRIED (Andrew Buckland)

ITEM 10: To Discuss Other Business

A) Richard Davis reported that Police Chief Jack Peck is losing Officer Ryan Wagner to the University of Maine at Farmington Police Department. Chief Peck now needs to hire two officers, as he has not yet filled the position vacated by Officer Derek MacDonald.

ITEM 10: To Discuss Other Business (Cont.)

- B) Richard Davis reported that the Conservation Commission has looked at the large pine tree at the upper end of Broadway by the old movie theater and found it to be in very bad shape and in need of maintenance. He wanted the Selectmen to be aware of the situation considering the sentimental value of the tree and public outcry and protest many years ago when an attempt was made to take the tree down. Mark Ingresano has been contacted to do some work on the tree and it will need to be inspected on a regular basis. Efforts will be made to preserve the tree as long as possible but, since it is a public safety issue, it will need to be taken down at some point.
- C) Richard Davis reported that three applications have been submitted to date for the RSU 9 interim director. Appointment of this position by the Selectmen is scheduled for the September 8th Selectmen's meeting.
- **D)** Stephan Bunker noted the letter and dividend payment check received from Maine Municipal Association for a successful year on Workers' Compensation issues.
- E) Stephan Bunker reminded the Selectmen of the upcoming Maine Municipal Association (MMA) Conference and encouraged them to attend at least one day of events. He also reminded them that he will be sworn in as MMA President on day one of the conference, to which event each of them will be receiving an official invitation.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Stephan Bunker moved to adjourn at 8:10 P.M.; Matthew Smith seconded.

VOTE	AFFIRMATIVE	4	ABSENT	1	MOTION CARRIED
	(Andrew Buckland)				

(Marew Buckland)					
Minutes respectfully submitted by Linda H. Grant.					
Andrew R. Buckland - Secretary					