

FARMINGTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Tuesday, April 28, 2020

The meeting was conducted through remote access by telephonic, video, and electronic means. The public was able to attend by viewing the livestream at <http://mtbluetv.org/program-live-stream-farmington-selectmen.html> or Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/MBTV11/> and/or calling 778-5874

Chairman Joshua Bell called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. with the following members present: Matthew Smith and Scott Landry. Stephan Bunker participated remotely as authorized by PL 2019, c.617. Michael Fogg was unable to attend. Town Manager Richard Davis, Police Chief Jack Peck, Fire Rescue Chief Terry Bell, Deputy Chief S. Clyde Ross, Deputy Chief Timothy A. Hardy, Town Secretary Nancy Martin, and the Mt. Blue TV camera operator were also physically in attendance.

Votes were taken by roll call.

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 Award the bid for Street Striping and Crosswalk Painting

Richard Davis reviewed the one bid received, which was from Lucas Striping, LLC, the same contractor that received the bid for the past two years. Mr. Davis pointed out that the bid amount falls within the amount budgeted this year.

Scott Landry moved to award the bid for street striping to Lucas Striping, LLC at a cost of \$21,905.30; Matthew Smith seconded.

Roll Call Vote – Joshua Bell: Yes, Stephan Bunker: Yes, Matthew Smith: Yes, Scott Landry: Yes

VOTE	AFFIRMATIVE	3	ABSENT	4	MOTION CARRIED
			(Michael Fogg)		

ITEM 3: To Consider Revising the Proposed 2020 Fire Rescue Department Budget

Richard Davis stated that revenues have dropped off drastically and he will need to revise the revenue estimates. Mr. Davis said the Town is making it a priority to lessen the burden on the taxpayers. Mr. Davis reviewed the proposed 2020 Fire Rescue budget in the amount of \$603,896, which is a decrease from the December 11, 2019 proposed budget of \$805,714, or -37.71%. Chief Bell was present to answer the Selectmen's questions. After much discussion regarding the reserve account and departmental coverage, Chief Bell agreed to look for additional budget reductions and present a revised proposal at the next meeting.

ITEM 4: To Consider Revising the Proposed 2020 Police Department Budget

Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2020 Police Department budget in the amount of \$1,328,009, which is a decrease from 2019 of \$65,966, or -4.73%. The revised budget reduces two open positions by cutting them from a full year to six months. The Vehicle and Equipment account was reduced from \$33,500 to \$20,000. Police Chief Jack Peck stated that it is a risk, but he believes they can purchase several used cruisers through the state surplus program for the price of one new SUV. Chief Peck stated that he will look for additional budget reductions and present a revised proposal at the next meeting.

ITEM 5: To Consider Revising the Proposed 2020 Traffic Light Maintenance Budget

Richard Davis reviewed the proposed 2020 Traffic Light budget in the amount of \$20,000, which is an increase over 2019 of \$10,000, or 100%. Mr. Davis explained that the Town has spent \$16,955.50 year to date repairing broken loops on Wilton Road. Cameras were installed at the Hannaford, Walmart, and Franklin Memorial Hospital locations to eliminate the safety hazard caused by the broken loops.

Scott Landry moved to recommend the proposed amount of \$20,000 for the 2020 Traffic Light Maintenance Budget; Matthew Smith seconded.

Roll Call Vote – Joshua Bell: Yes, Stephan Bunker: Yes, Matthew Smith: Yes, Scott Landry: Yes

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 3 ABSENT 4 MOTION CARRIED
(Michael Fogg)

ITEM 6: To Approve an Expenditure of up to \$2,500 from the Parks and Recreation Vehicle and Equipment Reserve Account to Purchase a Utility Trailer

Richard Davis provided a copy of a memo from Matt Foster, Director of Parks and Recreation, dated April 22, 2020. On Tuesday, May 28, 2019 the Selectmen voted to approve the expenditure of up to \$1,600 from the Recreation Department’s Equipment Reserve account for the purchase of a new utility trailer. The trailer was not purchased. After researching different alternative options, Mr. Foster narrowed the Department’s need down to a heavy-duty, all aluminum utility trailer. The cost of an aluminum trailer will be between \$2,200 - \$2,500 and will include many benefits over the steel trailers. The Equipment Reserve account will have a balance of \$19,077 once this year’s budget is approved.

Matthew Smith moved to Approve an Expenditure of up to \$2,500 from the Parks and Recreation Vehicle and Equipment Reserve Account to Purchase a Utility Trailer; Scott Landry seconded.

Roll Call Vote – Joshua Bell: Yes, Stephan Bunker: Yes, Matthew Smith: Yes, Scott Landry: Yes

ITEM 6: To Approve an Expenditure of up to \$2,500 from the Parks and Recreation Vehicle and Equipment Reserve Account to Purchase a Utility Trailer (continued)

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 3 ABSENT 4 MOTION CARRIED
(Michael Fogg)

ITEM 7: To Establish the Tentative Date for the 2020 Annual Town Meeting

Richard Davis stated that the primary election is scheduled for Tuesday, July 14th, and if the Town can safely hold the vote at that time, he recommends holding the Selectmen’s ballot concurrent with the primary election. Mr. Davis explained that the Annual Town Meeting date is dependent on the COVID-19 situation and social distancing requirements at that time. Mr. Davis stated that perhaps the Annual Town Meeting could be held on Monday, July 20th. Mr. Davis stated that another possible option would be to hold the Town Meeting referendum style and have residents vote by written ballot. Mr. Davis explained that referendum voting could potentially be done with absentee ballots. Unfortunately, the costs for this option would be quite high. Joshua Bell expressed concern with temporarily altering the Town’s Charter and hopes to hold the Town Meeting, but he understands the reasons for a referendum vote. Scott Landry requested that Richard Davis research the mailing option. Mr. Davis stated that the Town currently does not have the authority to hold a referendum vote. A referendum vote requires approval at a Town Meeting. However, emergency legislation is being discussed that may allow referendum voting, with the authority to hold a referendum vote expiring thirty days after the State of Emergency ends. Mr. Davis stated that he will reach out to authorities and determine if a referendum vote can be held.

Matthew Smith moved establish a tentative date of Monday, July 20th for the 2020 Annual Town Meeting; Scott Landry seconded.

Roll Call Vote – Joshua Bell: Yes, Stephan Bunker: Yes, Matthew Smith: Yes, Scott Landry: Yes

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 3 ABSENT 4 MOTION CARRIED
(Michael Fogg)

ITEM 8: To Approve the Minutes of April 14, 2020

Matthew Smith moved to approve the minutes of April 14, 2020; Scott Landry seconded.

Roll Call Vote – Joshua Bell: Yes, Stephan Bunker: Yes, Matthew Smith: Yes, Scott Landry: Yes

VOTE AFFIRMATIVE 3 ABSENT 4 MOTION CARRIED
(Michael Fogg)

ITEM 9: To Discuss Other Business

- A. Richard Davis stated that the Atlantic Salmon Federation held a bid opening for the Clover Mill Road and Cummings Hill Road culvert projects they are funding. There were two bidders, Sumner Company out of Massachusetts, and E. L. Vining. The low bidder was E. L. Vining in the amount of \$767,000. However, the Atlantic Salmon Federation is negotiating with E. L. Vining because their budget is currently under funded by approximately \$200,000. Richard Davis and Atlantic Salmon Federation held a Zoom meeting with Kevin Vining on Friday and discussed some changes that could be made to the specs to bring costs down. Kevin Vining is working on reducing the costs and they will hold another Zoom meeting this Friday. If they are unable to get the cost in line with available funding, they may do one culvert this year and the second in 2021. The Atlantic Salmon Federation prefers to replace the Cummings Hill Road culvert this year because this would open up more fish habitat. The Town has budgeted funds and Maine DOT has pledged funds to rebuild the Clover Mill Road. The Town would rebuild the road and then come back next year and repave where the new culvert is installed.
- B. Richard Davis stated that Town has been offered the services of an intern. Natalie Thomsen is a student at UMF, majoring in Business Economics, and minoring in Geography and Legal Studies. Ms. Thomsen is also a student at USM pursuing a Masters in Policy, Planning, and Management with a Public and Nonprofit Management concentration. Mr. Davis stated that he has pulled together some projects that Ms. Thomsen could work on, and there would be no cost to the Town. Ms. Thomsen would start in July and intern for 150 hours.
- C. Matthew Smith stated that the Wilton Board of Selectmen sent a letter to the school board encouraging them to keep the school budget conservative. Mr. Smith asked if the Farmington Board of Selectmen would be interested in doing the same. Richard Davis stated he will draft a letter to the RSU 9 School Board.

Matthew Smith moved to send a letter to the RSU 9 School Board requesting they keep the school budget flat or as low as possible due to contractual agreements; Scott Landry seconded.

Roll Call Vote – Joshua Bell: Yes, Stephan Bunker: Yes, Matthew Smith: Yes, Scott Landry: Yes

VOTE	AFFIRMATIVE	3	ABSENT	4	MOTION CARRIED
			(Michael Fogg)		

- D. Joshua Bell generated a discussion regarding the Unassigned Fund balance. Mr. Bell recommended that if the Town pulled funds from the Unassigned Fund account, that they be applied to Debt Service reducing the tax commitment and the Town’s debt. Richard Davis stated that the only way Unassigned Funds can be used now is to apply the funds to the tax commitment. Mr. Bell asked if there was a way to pay down the dept using the Unassigned Funds and create less debt in 2021.

There being no further business to come before the Board, **Scott Landry moved to adjourn at 7:49 P.M.; Matthew Smith seconded.**

Roll Call Vote – Joshua Bell: Yes, Stephan Bunker: Yes, Matthew Smith: Yes, Scott Landry: Yes

VOTE	AFFIRMATIVE	3	ABSENT	4	MOTION CARRIED
			(Michael Fogg)		

Minutes respectfully submitted by Nancy L. Martin.

Michael J. Fogg - Secretary