

Town of Huntington — Selectboard Meeting

Monday, January 07, 2012—6:00 pm

Town Office Building – Lower Level
APPROVED MINUTES

RECEIVED

DATE January 29, 2013

<p>Agenda</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selectboard Budget Working Session (Town Hall, Highway, Other) • Minutes/Warrants • Public Comment • Fothergill Segale & Valley – Meeting with Professional Auditors • Budget Final Considerations & Adoption • Administration & Planning (Updates, Action Items, Correspondence, Calendar)
<p>Selectboard members present</p>	<p>Jim Christiansen (Chair), Dori Barton (Vice-Chair), Doug Graver, Everett Lewis, Roman Livak</p>
<p>Staff/Officials present</p>	<p>Yogi Alger (Road Foreman), Barbara Elliott (Town Administrator), Heidi Racht (Town Clerk), Dan Stoddard (Town Treasurer)</p>
<p>Others present</p>	<p>Ruth Blodgett (Times Ink), Terry Boyle, Don Dresser, Barbara Felitti, Linda Fickbohm, Pam Hart, Lucinda Hill, Lela McCaffrey (Fothergill Segale & Valley), Rick Moulton, Barb Winters, Aaron Worthley</p>
<p>Call to order</p>	<p>Christiansen called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.</p>
<p>General Fund Budget Working Session</p>	<p><u>Town Hall (TH) Roof Repair / Town Hall Insurance Fund (THIF)</u> Christiansen asked Elliott to summarize the Town Hall Insurance Fund (THIF) references she gleaned from sifting through Selectboard minutes (from 2000 on).</p> <p>Barton read a statement which she initially prepared because it appeared that a work commitment was going to preclude her attendance at the Selectboard meeting. This statement expressed her strong opinion that the requested budget amount for ½ the roof replacement cost needs to be fully included in the repairs & maintenance line item (#396) of the general fund budget. The building is a municipal building with routine maintenance needs that should be budgeted as such, just as is done for other municipal buildings. She stressed that there are no major restoration projects for which the committee plans to ask for taxpayer support – but that local match may be required for grants and that the THIF should be left available for this kind of use and not taken for routine building maintenance. She also stated that the building is an asset to the community as demonstrated by recent community use for classes, fairs, art shows and meetings.</p> <p>Christiansen then opened the floor for comments, which included: Barbara Felitti:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research shows intent over time has been for the THIF to be used at the discretion of the Town Hall Committee (THC). Intent has been to use these funds to leverage grants. • Town Plan has repeatedly referred to the Town Hall (TH) as a vital asset. • The THC has received 2 small grants over the years –and the committee is currently pursuing additional grant possibilities. <p>Rick Moulton:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commented that he was a member of the Selectboard (probably as serving as the Chair) when the THIF was originally created.

- Seed money for what eventually became the THIF came from fundraisers sponsored by the THC (e.g.: from a decade of bingo proceeds).
- Concurred with Felitti that the intent of the THIF was that it be used at the discretion of the THC.
- Sees the TH as an asset and not as a liability to the town.

Roman Livak:

- 1999 Town Meeting report noted that \$8,500 was set aside in the general fund budget for the TH ramp work. The insurance settlement was compensation for problems that arose with the contractor hired with this general fund budget money. Thus, Livak asserted, ½ the funds in the THIF originally came from the taxpayers and the other ½ came from fundraisers.
- Noted that the Library and Fire Department – which fall under statutory guidelines – both contribute money raised through fundraising to support their departments.
- Noted that the Library (UMH building) restoration cost about \$750,000 – with \$500,000 coming from grants and other one-third of the cost coming from taxpayer money.
- Believes the TH is currently costing us money while not providing any essential service to the town.
- Believes the Conservation Fund, which has some \$200,000, is an appropriate resource for TH restoration support.
- Would like to see the issue of funding for the TH brought as an Australian ballot item before the taxpayers.
- Proposed that the THIF be used for the roof repair and that the balance of the fund be transferred to the Town Hall Fund for use at the discretion of the THC.

Linda Fickbohm:

- To attract businesses to the community, we have to 'have things going on' in the community, which is one example why the TH is seen as an important asset.

Barb Winters:

- Applauds the members of the THC and the work that they have done over the years for the building.
- Sees the building's current location and infrastructure as being problematic and not viable.
- Taxpayers will have to fund the building – and many people in the community simply can't afford to have their taxes increase. See's the building as a 'sinkhole'.
- Has not seen grant money forthcoming in spite of having the THIF available.
- Would like to see the issue of the TH come before the voters.
- Believes people who would be likely to fill out the TH survey would be people who are in favor of taxpayer support for the TH and that survey responses may, therefore, reflect a biased representation of the sentiment of the whole town.

Doug Graver:

- Doesn't believe we can afford to continue municipal support for the TH; it is not an essential service and we should not have the \$500,000 expense for building restoration come out of non-income sensitized taxes.
- Would like to see a plan for completion of the building restoration and its future use put on the table.
- Appreciates the passion that members of the THC have for the building.
- Has never seen an example of development actually reducing taxes – but has seen many examples of where commercial development led to increased taxes.
- Would like to see building ownership transferred to a 501(c) 3.
- Believes the Conservation Fund is an appropriate resource for the THC and that Conservation Fund dollars could be used to help leverage grants. He would vote

in favor of the Conservation Fund being used to support for TH restoration.

- Wanted to make it clear that he is not at all against the building or the restoration efforts, and that he certainly is not trying to 'kill the project'. This is, in part, why he would like to see the building ownership transferred to a 501(c)3.

Aaron Worthley:

- Objected to Graver's reference to the \$500,000, as it has never been the THC's intent for the estimated \$500,000 restoration cost to come from the general fund. Graver apologized.
- Noted that the THC has consciously held tight on renovation until the Library was completed, since that project required substantial resources from the town, and because the THC wanted to take a planful approach to the restoration project. The pace of progress on the building is also a reflection of the fact that the THC members are all volunteers.
- Town interest in the TH can be judged based on the fact that 12 years ago some 30 people attended a meeting about the building's future and were very excited about its restoration. That kind of enthusiasm, by that number of people, is rare and reflects the town sentiment that this is an important community resource.

Everett Lewis:

- Noted that while the integrity of the building has to be maintained through efforts such as the replacement of the south-facing roof, he believes that using the THIF is an appropriate way to fund this.

Don Dresser:

- Believes setting aside funds for 12 years is a long time – and that the THIF should be used for projects such as the roof repair.

Jim Christiansen:

- Using the THIF for roof repair preserves the building as an asset, and should not change the THC's ability to secure grants.
- While getting approval for use of the Conservation Fund has not previously been seen as being a 'nimble process', he believes the turnaround for the Maple Wind project shows it is possible to react quickly, and that fund dollars have been used to help leverage other grant support.
- Concerned about the impact taxes are having on the community and that, especially in light of pending school budget increases, statewide property tax increases and federal payroll tax increases, we need to look at using the THIF for the roof repair. He also supports moving the balance of THIF funds to the Town Hall Fund as proposed by Livak.

Dori Barton:

- Concerned that if the THIF dollars are moved to the Town Hall Fund, the Selectboard will raid those funds for routine maintenance and support.
- Concerned that projects such as the ADA ramp may not be supported by the Conservation Fund – to which Worthley noted that the request for funds for the Church steeple project were rejected for Conservation Fund support because the project was seen a maintenance project and not a restoration project.
- Is completely against using the THIF for repairing the TH roof. Would like to have the cost of the roof repair put in the general fund budget and then, if people so choose, it can be a matter of debate for townspeople at Town Meeting.

Christiansen thanked everyone for attending and expressing their opinions.

MOTION: Town Hall Insurance Fund / Town Hall Roof Repair

Livak moved and Graver seconded that the Selectboard expend money from the Town Hall Insurance Fund to repair the south half of the Town Hall roof and that the remainder of the Town Hall Insurance Fund dollars be moved to the Town Hall Fund under the auspices of the Town Hall Committee. Motion carried with 4 in favor

<p><i>FOLLOW-UP: Alger to organize 'demo day'</i></p>	<p>(Christiansen, Graver, Lewis, Livak) and 1 opposed (Barton).</p> <p><u>Town Hall Electric Service</u> Worthley then requested that, in light of the Selectboard's vote on the Town Hall roof, the Selectboard restore the THC's original budget request for \$3,000 for electrical service work, which the Committee had previously withdrawn when they submitted their proposal for the roof repair. He stated that electrical work is needed, in part, to address safety concerns.</p> <p><u>Highway Truck</u> Selectboard discussed comparison of single axle versus tandem trucks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost difference is about \$20,000. • Livak noted that this equates to about 1¢ on the tax rate • Alger noted the wheel base of a tandem is about 3' longer than that of a single axle truck. Currently Raymond takes 2 trips back to the shed each time he goes out on his plow route. Having the larger dump body would cut that down to one. • Alger will set up a 'demo' down at the garage so Selectboard members can compare a single axle vs tandem. • Christiansen noted that while he originally wanted to push the purchase out a year, the potential repair cost—especially if we need to replace the dump body—makes it worth doing the upgrade now. There is also a cost associated with having unreliable trucks. <p><u>Other</u> Elliott contacted each committee/department with a status summary of the Selectboard's working budget for their line items—and received no additional comments/concerns from this outreach.</p>
<p>Professional Audit – Lela McCaffrey, Fothergill Segale & Valley (FSV)</p> <p><i>FOLLOW-UP: FSV to make updates to the Audit Report</i></p>	<p>McCaffrey gave an overview of the audit report. Findings, comments and answers to questions that were raised included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huntington received a clean report • FSV observed that staff & volunteers truly care about Town finances • Commended Stoddard on the tremendous job he does—noting that the grants tracking system he has implemented is excellent • We are doing a good job of replacing equipment as it depreciates • Revenue includes delinquent taxes, not just the year's taxes • There is great benefit in managing surplus and expenses in such a way as to keep tax rates 'on an even keel' • Noted differences under the "Extraordinary Item" section, in reported numbers based on 'full' versus 'modified' accrual: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Page 11 of the final audit report reflects full accrual ○ Pages 14 & 16 of the final audit report reflects modified accrual ○ The flooding damage expenditures that occurred, but where revenue was not received, are not recognized in the modified accrual numbers—but are reflected in the full accrual reporting. • It is not necessary for us to have a written investment policy (see Page 23) because we have only \$1,000 in investments. If we decide to increase our investments, we will need to develop a written policy. • Appreciates our fiscal approach of not carrying large debt <p>McCaffrey will make the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pg. 8: Left column of Table 4 – change 2011 to 2012 • Pg. 25: List specific examples for what comprises the reported \$655,000 • Pg.28: McCaffrey will send an updated paragraph on the eligible expenses to

	<p>Elliott Christiansen thanked McCaffrey, Stoddard and the Town Auditors for all their work.</p>
Minutes - MOTION	<p>Livak moved and Graver seconded to approve the minutes of 12/17/2012 as amended. Passed unanimously.</p> <p><i>Amendment: Elliott to add "Barton stated she is in complete disagreement with the funding options offered by Christiansen and Graver for the routine repair and maintenance of the Town Hall." to the Town Hall Committee comments section.</i></p>
Warrants	<p>4 warrants were signed as presented.</p>
Public Comment	<p>Lucinda Hill:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 01/16 is the deadline for Town Report messages • 01/23 is the deadline for Town Report messages that include financial data <p>Heidi Racht:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nomination deadline for Olga Hallock awards is 01/28. • Selectboard will need to make the selection at the 02/04 Selectboard meeting.
<p>Administration & Planning</p> <p><i>FOLLOW-UP: Elliott to 'advertise' winter parking ordinance</i></p> <p>MOTION: Mileage Reimbursement now \$0.565</p> <p><i>FOLLOW-UP: Elliott to communicate new rates</i></p> <p><i>FOLLOW-UP: Elliott to send updated calendar listing</i></p> <p><i>FOLLOW-UP: Christiansen & Elliott to attend School Board meeting</i></p> <p><i>FOLLOW-UP: Christiansen & Elliott to develop ACO proposal</i></p> <p><i>FOLLOW-UP: Elliott to schedule CCRPC for 02/04</i></p> <p><i>FOLLOW-UP: All – Employee Evaluations – 02/18</i></p>	<p>Highway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selectboard approved Elliott & Alger's proposed flyer warning residents about the laws prohibiting plowing across roadways. • Elliott will publish notice of the Winter Parking Ordinance on FPF. <p>Emergency Shelter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elliott updated Selectboard on the Emergency Management Committee, including the opportunity we have to receive free cots, supplies and training (a \$3,500 value) from the Red Cross. She is working with Pastor Detweiler on this. <p>Mileage Reimbursement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Livak moved and Graver seconded that the Town of Huntington adopt the new IRS 2013 optional standard mileage rate of \$0.565 per mile for use in calculating mileage reimbursement, for miles traveled beginning 01/01/2013. Passed unanimously. <p>Calendar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elliott to publish comprehensive upcoming calendar listing for the Selectboard <p>Town Meeting Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racht reminded the Selectboard that there had been previous discussion about swapping the timeslots for the School and Town meeting times. Selectboard decided that they are agreeable to having the School portion start at 9am with the Town Meeting portion to begin immediately following – and to have a 'firm time' established for lunch. Christiansen and Elliott will attend the 01/08 School Board meeting to discuss this option. <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal Control backup – Christiansen & Elliott to review and make proposal • Salary Consistency – general desire was expressed to have consistency in areas such as cleaning • CCRPC/ECOS Regional Plan – Elliott to schedule municipal outreach presentation for 02/04 meeting (30 minutes) • Employee Evaluations – to be scheduled for 02/18. Elliott to work with Alger on revised Crew evaluation forms; staff to submit self-evaluations; Selectboard to conduct annual evaluations
Budget Final Considerations & Adoption	<p>Surplus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surplus from 2010-2011 was \$45,000. This year's surplus (from 2011-2012) is \$86,351. • Selectboard determined that \$40,000 of the surplus would be recommended to

<p><i>FOLLOW-UP: Elliott to contact THC re: electrical service public safety concerns</i></p>	<p>go toward purchase of the new truck and the remainder recommended to be used to offset the tax rate.</p> <p>Truck</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selectboard is supporting purchase of a new truck – to be proposed in an article with \$40,000 from the equipment reserve fund and \$40,000 from the 2011-2012 fiscal year surplus and the balance from a loan not to exceed 5 yrs. <p>Town Hall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In considering the THC’s request to add \$3,000 for electrical service work back into the Committee’s Repairs & Maintenance line item of the general fund budget (an amount that had been withdrawn when the committee requested funds for roof repair) Graver stated concern that if there is a safety issue related to the electrical service, it needs to be addressed immediately. Board discussed that if there are public safety issues, we either need to fix the problem(s) immediately out of the general fund (which would create a line item budget deficit for the current fiscal year) or close public access to the building. Livak noted that electrical service work could be paid for out of the Town Hall Fund – particularly if the remaining funds in the Town Hall Insurance fund are moved over to the Town Hall Fund after the south half of the roof is repaired. Barton countered that the electrical service is routine maintenance and repair which should be part of the general fund budget and expressed that she is completely against funding the electrical service work out of the Town Hall Fund. She noted that it took less than a meeting to once again propose ‘raiding’ the insurance money. Selectboard requested Elliott follow up with the Town Hall Committee on whether there is a current electrical system public safety issue – and if there are suspected issues, to get a written statement (noting what items pose public safety concern versus those that would be considered an upgrade) and to get a quote for required corrective work. Selectboard determined that the Repairs & Maintenance line item would be left at \$600 and the \$3,000 that had been proposed and then subsequently withdrawn from the budget request would not be restored.
<p>Executive Session</p>	<p>Livak moved and Graver seconded to go into Executive Session in accordance with: 1.V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) 'The appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee.' Passed unanimously at 9:07 pm.</p> <p>Livak moved and Graver seconded to come out of Executive Session, with no action having been taken, at 9:16 pm. Passed unanimously.</p>
<p>Budget Approval</p> <p><i>FOLLOW-UP: Elliott & Stoddard to do final budget proofing</i></p> <p><i>FOLLOW-UP: Elliott to contact Committees regarding Town Meeting Articles</i></p>	<p>Lewis moved and Livak seconded to approve the Selectboard’s working budget as it stands now as the final proposed Town Budget. Passed unanimously.</p> <p>Board requested Stoddard and Elliott take another pass at reviewing the budget to determine if there are any insurance or employee benefit costs, loan information, quote estimates for items included in the budget approved Monday night, or corrections to spreadsheet formulas that need to be made.</p> <p>Board requested Elliott reach out to all Committees to see if they have any articles to propose for the Town Meeting Warning. Elliott to send sample articles to the Selectboard for review prior to the 01/21 meeting.</p>

Adjournment	<p>Livak moved and Lewis seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:21 pm. Passed unanimously.</p> <p>NOTE: Selectboard decided to start their January 21st meeting at 6:00pm</p>
	<p>01/07/13 – Meeting date 01/11/13– Preliminary draft minutes to Selectboard / Clerk, Treasurer & Auditors 01/21/13– Final minutes approved by Selectboard 01/23/13– Approved minutes sent to Town Clerk</p>