

Woodstock Board of Selectmen Minutes

Wednesday, February 15, 2023

3:30 pm

Special Meeting

Town Hall, Room A

1. Call to order: First Selectman Jay Swan called meeting to order at 3:31 pm.

- a. **Present:** First Selectman Jay Swan, Selectman Chandler Paquette
- b. **Others Present:** Finance Director Karen Fitzpatrick, Michele Woz, Jessica Weaver Boose, Kate MacDonald, Lindsay Paul, Megan Bard Morse, Pam Minella, Recording Secretary Amy Monahan

2. Warn of Special Town Meeting - February 28, 2023

- a. Jay Swan announced that there will be a special meeting on February 28, 2023 at the Woodstock Middle School at 7 pm.

3. Review and Discuss FY 24 Budget Submissions

- a. Jay Swan noted that the material being reviewed consists of submissions from departments.
- b. Karen Fitzpatrick highlighted that the 2024 budget is coming in at 14.3% increase. This is an unheard of high rate of increase.
 - i. There is an increase in debt of \$276,547
 - ii. There is an \$489,490 increase requested in the General Government Budget
 - iii. This requested increase results in a \$6,361,529 total General Government Budget request for FY 2024.
- c. The \$265,000 EMS increase and debt increase are the key factors to FY 24 Budget.
- d. Another larger increase of approximately \$40,000 from NDDH. NDDH has increased the per capita fee. This increase was not presented to the towns until after the annual deadline to withdraw from contracted services.
- e. NECCOG increased 13% on some services in General Government Budget.
- f. Insurance and benefit numbers are not set in stone and could vary. Health insurance is set to increase 8-12% and the pension rates are not finalized at this time. Liability insurance has increased due to the cyber security requirements. The current increase rate is unknown at this time.
- g. Contractual services have all increased from previous year. Fuel rates and utilities rates are a concern and increasing across the board.
- h. Karen Fitzpatrick noted that the requested numbers should be presented to the Board of Finance and shared publicly so that residents can see the costs to run the town effectively.
- i. Jay Swan noted that two years ago, the Board of Selectmen presented suggested budget without edits to the Board of Finance. He plans to do this again. Karen Fitzpatrick feels this process would be an effective way to educate the public about the cost of operation for effective town operations.
- j. Chandler Paquette asked if it is possible for Karen to highlight the items that cannot be cut. Karen Fitzpatrick will adjust to show these items and redistribute budget proposals.

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- k. Karen Fitzpatrick noted that layoff/unemployment funds need to come directly from the budget because municipalities do not pay FUTA and SUTA (quarterly Federal and State unemployment) like other businesses. For example, a layoff of a \$60,000 employee could still cost the town \$34,000.

4. Adjournment

- a. Chandler Paquette made a ***Motion** to adjourn. ***The motion passed unanimously**. The meeting adjourned at 4:14 pm.

*Respectfully submitted by Amy Monahan, Recording Secretary. DISCLAIMER: These minutes have not yet been approved by the Board of Selectmen. Please refer to next month's meeting for approval/amendments.