

**SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
MAY 2, 2022 AT 6:00PM  
TOWN HALL, SELECT BOARD CONFERENCE ROOM**

**CALL TO ORDER/OPENING**

Chair Antanavica called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Chair Rick Antanavica, Vice-Chair John Shocik, Second Vice-Chair Herb Duggan Jr., Selectman Dianna Provencher, Selectman Allen Phillips, Town Administrator David Genereux and Assistant Town Administrator Kristen Rubin were in attendance.

**1. SCHEDULED ITEMS**

**a. 6:00pm - Appointment & Execute Contract – Nicholas George – Treasurer/Collector**

Mr. Genereux presented a 2 and  $\frac{3}{4}$  year agreement which runs through June 30, 2024. Mr. George would be hired at a level 4, step 2. After a six-month probationary period and upon a positive review, the Board would move him up to level 4, step 4.

**Motion 050222-1a:** A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Phillips to appoint Nicholas George as Treasurer/Collector and to execute his department head contract. **Motion carries 5:0:0.**

**b. 6:05pm - Discuss/Vote on Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles**

The Select Board and Advisory Committee discussed the FY23 Operating Budget article including:

- Town Accountant Allison Lawrence discussed how carryover funds work and school funds that get carried over to pay summer salaries for employees.
- The elementary school oil leak and school ESER grant funds which freed up funding to pay the \$600K balance on the oil spill but are limited time only funding which are gone by 2024, the ongoing costs of air quality monitoring, how the school found these funds and they must have cushions in their budget, the need for flexibility in school budgets due constant changes in the student population and their needs (e.g. special education costs).
- Issues with school spending on a PR firm and Town Counsel and not on education.
- Concerns about the need for extra teaching positions
- Issues with the 75/25 school/town split and whether other surrounding towns fund their schools at such a high percentage rate
- Moderator Don Cherry stated he would not allow a motion to significantly change the FY23 budget from the boards or the floor because the warrant informs the voters of what to expect on the floor and constrains members to stay within the scope of the article. Posting times are strictly limited by law and once posted the articles cannot be significantly changed because the voters have been notified and a substantial change makes the warrant out of order. Mr. Cherry stated that a six-figure change to the budget will not be allowed on the floor to ensure that the Attorney General does not invalidate actions taken on Town Meeting floor because they are outside of the scope of the warrant article. The boards need to bring a clear and actionable article to Town Meeting floor. Town Meeting is a voting authority not a place to craft legislation. Signing the warrant indicates this is what the boards want the Town to vote on, that questions have been hashed out and that a solution has been arrived at.
- The Advisory Committee discussed cutting the school budget by anywhere from \$1.3M-\$1.8M to create a municipal building maintenance account which will maintain all municipal buildings including Becker and possibly all school buildings.
- Discussed if the budget is voted down tomorrow night, another Town Meeting will need to be held to set a budget prior to July 1, 2022.
- Discussed the option of changing the budget at Fall Special Town Meeting.

- Discussed the option of passing over the budget. This means article 4 will be re-written with a finite set of numbers and a new Town Meeting will be held with all of the noticing and positing requirements. A position needs to be taken by the boards with hard numbers that is clear and actionable. The moderator would be looking for a motion to adjourn to a date certain.
- Discussed whether the issue of who controls facilities can be determined by a vote at Town Meeting. Town Meeting is an approving body only and can't dictate to elected boards.
- The Board discussed additional State funding. The Town would net \$65,000 more.
- Discussed the option of removing the school budget line item and adopting the rest of the budget.
- Town Meeting floor is not the place to debate line items in a school budget where the school has the ability to change it the next day under MGL Chapter 70. Changes to State law should be directed to State officials.

**Motion 050222-1b:** A motion was made by Ms. Provencher and seconded by Mr. Duggan to recommend approval of Article 4 as written. Motion carries 4:1:0 (Mr. Shocik was opposed).

**Motion 050222-2:** A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Shocik at 7:26pm. Motion carries 5:0:0.