

MINUTES
SELECT BOARD
TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH
Tuesday, November 27, 2018 – 4:00 PM
1 Grove Street, Peterborough, New Hampshire

Present: Barbara Miller, Karen Hatcher, Tyler Ward

Also Present: Rodney Bartlett, Nicole MacStay, Brenda Fox-Howard, Alison Kreutz

Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

Setting of 2018 Tax Rate

Finance Director Brenda Fox-Howard made a presentation of the draft tax rate calculation. She informed the Board that there were still some outstanding questions regarding how bond expenditures and revenues are reported in the many reports that the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) uses to compute the tax rate. The rate could potentially be reduced slightly, but the mechanics are complicated. There was an extended discussion about how the timing of votes on large projects and bonding impacts the tax rate and the calculation of how much fund balance is available to offset the tax rate.

Mr. Bartlett asked the Board that at this point in the process, Administration is going to ask the Board to vote on using \$450,000 of fund balance to reduce the municipal appropriation, which would also reduce the municipal portion of the tax rate.

There was some discussion regarding how the cycled revaluation and increased appropriations from the town and school district would impact the tax rate. Mr. Bartlett said that once a final rate was set by DRA, Administration would issue a press release. Returning to the outstanding questions regarding bonding, the Board asked Mr. Bartlett to meet with DRA representatives before a final tax rate was set. Ms. MacStay then reviewed the draft tax rate calculation (see the attached).

Ms. MacStay said if the Board voted to use \$450,000 to offset the tax rate as recommended by staff, the remaining fund balance percentage under the proposed plan would be 4.18%, but that this percentage is based on the total gross appropriation of the town, school district, state and county, and has been heavily impacted by the bonds that were authorized and reauthorized at Town Meeting in May. Mr. Ward asked how long it would take to build up the unrestricted fund balance again; Ms. MacStay replied that it may take several years. Mr. Ward asked what could potentially wipe the fund balance out; Ms. MacStay and Mr. Bartlett agreed that, if it was something that wouldn't be covered by insurance or FEMA, it would have to be something very "unique" and "catastrophic."

Motion: Chair Miller made a motion apply \$450,000 of fund balance to offset the Town's 2018 appropriation and reduce the tax rate.

Vote: Ms. Hatcher seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

There was discussion about the comparison of the Town's taxes to the other tax rates in the area, which are largely comparable. Mr. Bartlett said the tax rate was reasonable tax rate if the Town wants to continue the standard of service. Ms. MacStay said it will be very important to get elderly exception onto the warrant this year.

Discussion of Current Use Status

There was a discussion about Current Use status, and the effect that it may or may not have on low-income housing. Mr. Bartlett said that the current use policy was originally intended for farms, and Ms. MacStay added that it cannot be built on and must be open to public.

Chair Miller asked for confirmation that the difference between easement status and current use status is that one can take land out of current use status. Ms. MacStay confirmed.

Homesharing

There was a group discussion of the population shifts happening cross-country, i.e.: younger populations moving into cities and pushing urban population into suburban areas, and related housing shortage caused by an influx of both small families and retirees wanting the same thing – small, free-standing homes. Ms. Hatcher said home-sharing could have a lot of potential in Peterborough. Mr. Ward said the Boston-based Nesterly platform could potentially handle coordination/organization.

Other Business

Review of Communication Methods

There was a brief review of best methods for contact and communication between Administration and the Select Board. It was requested that any discussions concerning policy or strategies are not started via email, as public meetings are always the best forum. Topics for discussion should be added to the agenda of the next Select Board meeting.

Riverwalk Parking & Bridge Update

Mr. Ward inquired about the status of the Riverwalk Parking Lot.

Mr. Bartlett said Administration’s recommendation is to not open the lot until spring, as the bridge will be unsafe through the winter. Lighting in the lot has not been completed, nor has sealing, as the weather has been uncooperative. The entry off Grove Street will be closed off, and the lot will remain unplowed until spring.

Chair Miller asked if there will be charging stations at the completed lot, and Mr. Bartlett said there will be two charging stations.

Next Meeting of the Board

The next Select Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 4th. The Select Board will be hosting the chairs of all town boards and committees. Chair Miller said there should be an emphasis on appreciation at the next meeting.

Ms. MacStay said that all chairs will be asked to share briefly activities of the committees, and there will be a review of the changes to annual report as well as a discussion about a new Volunteer Manual.

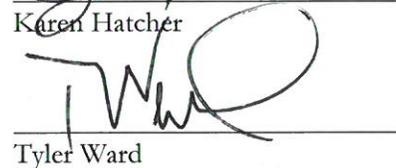
Chair Miller made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:00 p.m. Ms. Hatcher seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,
Alison Kreutz, Department Assistant

PETERBOROUGH
SELECT BOARD:


Barbara Miller, Chair


Karen Hatcher


Tyler Ward