

**TOWN OF FAIR HAVEN, VERMONT
SELECTBOARD
WATER AND SEWER COMMISSIONERS
CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS--LIQUOR COMMISSIONERS**

**EMERGENCY SELECTBOARD SESSION
JUNE 10, 2014**

Members Present: Christopher Cole, Rod Holzworth, Bob Richards, Jeff Sheldon, Dave Ward
Others Present: Glen Roberts, John Lulek, Walter Panoushek, Claire Stanley, Mary McNeil, Don Howard, Chief William Humphries, Joan Sheldon, Judy Sheldon, Town Manager Herb Durfee, Recorder Wilma DeSpain

CALL TO ORDER

The Chair, Christopher Cole, called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

BUSINESS

Cole and Durfee explained the purpose for the Emergency Session is necessary in order to be able to hold another budget vote by mid-July, which, if approved, would allow the tax billing process to continue forward with minimal disruption. Cole explained that the board agreed at last evening's meeting (June 9) that trying to hold another budget vote for the reason explained above made sense. Durfee explained that balancing the mid-July vote with statutory requirements for noticing a Special Town Meeting made it essentially that the board finish a draft budget this week, thus, the reason the emergency meeting [tonight] and the special meeting [Wednesday] were scheduled.

Fiscal Year 2014-15 Town Budget. The bulk of the board's discussion focused on whether the fourth police officer position and its related level of service/coverage should be maintained. The discussion also focused on whether that issue should be dealt with as a special article in the mid-July budget vote.

The board discussed the "50/50" situation in which they found themselves. The community seems to be somewhat divided as to the police officer position. Holzworth described this difficult situation in detail and indicated that due to the split he believes as representative to the community he has to vote for what he feels is best for the community. Holzworth explained that he believes the police position is critical for needed levels of service and coverage and, as such, indicated his support for leaving the officer position in the budget. Richards stated, as he's previously explained, that he feels neither the position nor the level of coverage is needed for the Town. Cole agreed with Holzworth that the position is needed but, in the interests of getting a budget approved, he said the question of the police officer position should be asked as a special article rather than included as part of the overall budget question. Ward spoke in support of the office position being included in the overall budget and indicating that the Town can't afford not to have levels of service/coverage reduced. Sheldon also spoke of his support for the fourth officer position and shared in Holzworth's statements regarding the "public voice" and what appears to be an evenly divided community. Additional discussion by board members and the

public occurred but with no specific additional or new information to that already heard by the board.

Board members also discussed the overall budget beyond the fourth police officer position. Generally, there was agreement that the real issue in the budget and its passage is the police officer position. Beyond that most of the members felt there was not much left to cut. Richards felt, however, that there were additional cuts that could be made.

After discussion, Holzworth moved to keep the fourth police officer position in the overall budget. Seconded by Sheldon. The motion passed 3-2-0 (Cole and Richards opposed).

Holzworth moved to propose for voter approval on July 15, 2014 a fiscal year 2014-15 budget of the same amount as the June 3 vote (\$1,861,421) and to schedule the required public informational meeting on Monday, July 14 at 7:00 p.m. at the Grade School. Sheldon seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-2-0 (Cole and Richards opposed).

It was noted that the Warning for the July 15 vote would be prepared for tomorrow's special meeting. Also, given the sensitivity of budget and its proposed content, the board agreed to hold a public forum on Monday, July 7 at the Grade School beginning at 6:00 p.m. to discuss the budget, its content, and the board's decision to include the fourth police officer in the overall budget. The public forum also would be an additional opportunity for members of the public to discussion or otherwise raise other questions regarding the proposed budget.

SCHEDULE SPECIFIC TO THE JULY 15 BUDGET VOTE

July 7 – public forum on the proposed budget; 6:00 p.m. at the Grade School

July 14 – public information meeting on the proposed budget; 7:00 p.m. at the Grade School

July 15 – Budget Vote; 10 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. at the American Legion Post #49

ADJOURNMENT

Sheldon moved to adjourn at 9 p.m. Second by Richards. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Wilma B. DeSpain, Recorder



Jeff Sheldon, Clerk
Rob Holzworth #