

**Town of Newington, NH
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
November 13, 2013- Town Hall
6:00pm**

Call to Order: Chair Rick Stern called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

The Board returned from non-public session at 6:30pm. RSA 91 A:3 II (e) legal . Rick informed the public that the minutes had been sealed indefinitely.

Present: Chair, Rick Stern, Selectman Jan Stuart, Selectman Cosmas Iocovozzi and Town Administrator Martha Roy.

Public Guests: Board of Fire Engineers, various fire fighters and Justin Richardson were present.

The Pledge of Allegiance was declared.

COLA Discussion: The Board discussed the COLA for 2014. **Cosmas moved to approve a 1.5% COLA. in 2014, Jan seconded the motion and all were in favor.**

Fire Engineers Budget Workshop: The Acting Chief Andy Head explained that the 2014 proposed department budget included an increase of \$16,000 in the salaries line to insure funding for a new Chief, a part time (32 hour per week) position and step increases. He explained that 6 employees were at the top of the step scale. There were 2 firemen that would receive longevity this year.

Jan asked for statistic to back up the need for an additional firefighter. Cosmas echoed Jan's concern of statistics that showed additional calls during the day that could not be covered by the current staff and mutual aid. How many calls were there that supported this increase.

He recommended a long term plan and was concerned that there were more vehicles in the fire station than men to operate them.

Andy stated that the Bookkeeper requested the Training salaries be kept separate in the budget and this had been accomplished in the 2014 proposed budget.

Justin Richardson mentioned the \$70,000 self-insurance account and asked which plan the Board would be moving to in 2014. Rick stated that the highest budget figures had been given to the departments for health insurance but that a decision had not been made yet regarding which plan the town would decide on.

He still had questions from HealthTrust that he was waiting to get answers to. Rick mentioned that the majority of plans were increased by 7.9%.

Cosmas asked about the leased copier and pagers. It was stated that the defibrillator unit had been paid off.

The Engineers had placed \$5,000 in their budget for a fee to pay to UNH Dispatch rather than continuing with the Rockingham County Dispatch Center. Andy Head cited missed calls and the need to call Rockingham as much as 3 times to get through.

Rick requested statistics on call volume and other reports that backed up the need to pay for something that the town could currently get for free.

Andy had heard that there may be a one-time \$2,000 charge to each town for dispatch services for the new County Dispatch Center.

Andy stated that the firemen's clothing is out of date and that they will be purchasing some this year and the remainder in 2014.

He listed the biggest issue in the 2014 budget as the new PT position.

The Engineers stated that the new insurance will be better for employees.

Cosmas asked the Engineers to go back to the drawing board and come back with a better number for the budget. The Engineers agreed and they will meet with the Board of Selectmen at 6:30pm on Thursday, November 21st.

Adjournment: Cosmas moved to adjourn at 7:43pm., seconded by Jan with all in favor.