



Select Board Minutes
Tuesday, February 20, 2024
7:00pm

The Select Board Regular Meeting was held virtually in accordance with Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, An Act Making Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2023 to Provide for Supplementing Certain Existing Appropriations and for Certain Other Activities and Projects, and signed into law on March 29, 2023, this meeting was conducted via remote participation.

Select Board participants:

Rich Maiore, Charles Oliver, Erin McBee, Kara Minar, Don Ludwig

Town Department participants:

Town Administrator Tim Bragan, Assistant Town Administrator Marie Sobalvarro, Executive Assistant Julie Doucet, Finance Director Jared Mullane

Public Communication

Board of Health Chair Sharon McCarthy thanked the Select Board for accepting their budget recommendation to increase their clerk’s hours up to 25.

Harvard Special Education Parent Advisory Council member Molly Vaughan read a statement strongly urging the Select Board to put forth the budget override of the full amount as one of the override options to let the voters decide.

FY25 Budget; finalize override questions (Attachment A)

Town Administrator Tim Bragan shared a document prepared outlining the original deficit amount, level service override amounts and full growth override amounts. He noted the Governor’s budget and insurance reduction lowered the deficit by 308,450.

He asked the Select Board to consider moving funds around to help reduce the Raise and Appropriate to reduce the level service override to 423,902.

OPEB	25,500	The Board can keep the amount coming from Raise and Appropriate or change the funding source to Free Cash as was done for the current fiscal year.
Voting Machine	5,800	Currently this is a Raise and appropriate article but it is a one-time item and could be moved to stabilization as a funding source.
Personnel Policies	15,000	Currently this is a Raise and appropriate article but it is a one-time item and could be moved to stabilization as a funding source.

The Select Board members agreed with this approach after explanation from Finance Director Jared Mullane on free cash and the use of the stabilization fund.

By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve OPEB 25,500 from raise and appropriate to free cash.

By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve 5,800 for the voting machines to come as a one-time item from the stabilization fund.

By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve 15,000 for personnel policies to come as a one-time item from the stabilization fund.

Finance Director Jared Mullane shared the tax impact for the average single-family household.

Override Amount	Avg Single Family Tax Impact
100,000.00	52.56
200,000.00	96.36
300,000.00	148.91
400,000.00	192.71
500,000.00	245.27
600,000.00	289.07
700,000.00	341.63
800,000.00	385.43
900,000.00	437.98
1,000,000.00	481.78
1,100,000.00	534.34
1,200,000.00	578.14
1,300,000.00	630.70

Town Administrator Tim Bragan shared the draft ballot questions that have been reviewed and approved by Town Counsel.

Question 1 - DPW building project

Question 2 – General Override

Ludwig made a motion seconded by McBee. By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve question one for the DPW building project.

Ludwig made a motion seconded by McBee. By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve the first tier (2a) of \$423,902.

Bragan outlined the details within the other two tiers. Rich Maiore revisited the sense of the Select Board to offer an incremental approach to adding additional town/school positions.

Charles Oliver asked if the veteran’s benefit could be included in the second tier. Bragan explained why it must remain in the third tier.

Ludwig made a motion seconded by Oliver. By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve the second tier (2b).

Second tier Includes: Board of Health hours, DPW administrative assistant, school athletic director and a special education teacher.

They discussed offering a third tier (2c) which would include the full ask from all departments.

Ludwig made a motion seconded by McBee. To approve the third tier (2c) for \$1,214,354.

Don Ludwig was not inclined to support a third tier however based on public feedback he would support having it on the ballot for the townspeople to decide. Erin McBee agrees with Don. Charles Oliver does not support the third-tier ballot question. He does not believe a request three times level service is justified. He is also mindful of the impact adding positions has with respect to the ongoing operational budget and the OPEB liability based on health insurance costs. Kara Minar has heard feedback from those in town in favor of the full ask and those in town who are not. She understands those townspeople who are concerned with the level of tax increases over the past few years. Now may not be the right time. Rich Maiore agrees with Kara and Charles. He prefers a more incremental approach to adding positions given the high health care costs. Maiore remains committed to guiding the town in a fiscally responsible path.

By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – nay, Oliver – nay, Ludwig – aye, Maiore – nay, the board voted to approve the third tier (2c). (3-2) the motion did not pass.

McBee made a motion seconded by Ludwig to approve ballot question 1, question 2a and question 2b with amendments to replace and with an in questions 2a and 2b, to move the summary of ballot questions as indicated and if possible, include a dollar amount for question one.

By a roll call vote, McBee – aye, Minar – aye, Ludwig – aye, Oliver – aye, Maiore – aye, the board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Announcements

Town Administrator Tim Bragan announced the retirement of Police Officer Scott Hughes. Hughes has been an officer in town for 30 years.

Bragan also announced the sudden passing of resident Al Combs. Al was an avid volunteer and generous donator to many causes he supported. He made a huge impact on many in town over the years. He will be missed.

Rich Maiore thanked everyone for all their hard work and dedication over the past few months.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm.

	<u>Original Deficit</u>	<u>Level Service Override</u>	<u>Full Growth Override</u>
1.11.2024	1,477,884	813,032	1,477,884
1.26.2004*	1,169,435	504,582	1,169,435

* Governors Budget and Insurance Reduction drop the deficit by \$308,450

2.20.24 Changes to Budget

Insurance 34,380 This reduction was made possible by Marie working with the insurance company and pushing them on our behalf to look at our numbers and realize errors in their calculations.

2.20.24 Select Board Decisions to be made**

OPEB 25,500 The Board can keep the amount coming from Raise and Appropriate or change the funding source to Free Cash as was done for the current fiscal year.

Voting Machine 5,800 Currently this is a Raise and appropriate article but it is a one-time item and could be moved to stabilization as a funding source.

Personnel Policies 15,000 Currently this is a Raise and appropriate article but it is a one-time item and could be moved to stabilization as a funding source.

** The issue involved in moving these to another funding source, other than Raise and Appropriate, is the fact you will be reducing a Raise and Appropriate line and moving those dollars to other areas of the budget and thus not having a larger number for this line item next year, which if needed for Small Warrant Articles then it will be an amount taken out of new revenues thus reducing what the increase in the overall operational budgets can be.

2.20.24 Overrides with Insurance Reduction and if SB makes the above decisions:

<u>Level Service Override</u>	<u>Full Growth Override</u>
423,902	1,214,354 ***

*** The Dollar amount for the Full Growth Override includes \$115,000 for insurance for the positions that would be eligible for benefits and the additional sum for BOH.

	<u>Deficit</u>	<u>Level Service Override</u>	<u>Full Growth Override</u>
2.20.2024*	1,214,354	423,902	1,214,354

* This represents a reduction of \$80,680 provide the SB makes the decisions outlined on the previous page.

Three options with multiple combinations:

<u>Level Service Override</u>	<u>Mid Level Override***</u>	<u>Full Growth Override</u>
423,902	752,964	1,214,354

*** This mid level override includes the \$101,928 additional funds for the Town and an additional \$227,134 for the Schools (see below).

Town		School	
DPW Admin	48,994	Athletic Dir	100,000
BOH Add Hrs.	20,800	SpEd Teacher	95,000
Insurance	32,134	Insurance	32,134
	<u>101,928</u>		<u>227,134</u>