

**Kingston, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting of October 27, 2014
MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm in the Selectmen's Office of the Kingston Town Hall. In attendance were Board Chairman Mark Heitz and Selectmen George Korn and Peter Broderick.

Fire Department Discussion

Fire Chief Bill Seaman was present to finalize his 2015 budget proposal for call personnel. Budget Committee liaison Peter Broderick and Kent Walker of the Department had reviewed and reduced the overall initial proposal for pay increases, and Chief Seaman is hoping for a consensus of support prior to presenting his proposal to the Budget Committee. He presented copies of his revised matrix, pointing out that the structure is meant to incentivize higher levels of training. He noted that he is content to increase pay levels incrementally over several years, as long as he is bringing Kingston's rates to a level comparable to the average of area towns. He provided a graph depicting the rates that area towns pay their emergency services call personnel. He noted that past pay structures had focused as much on longevity of service as on training level, which no longer will be the case. He also reminded the Board of the revenue generated by operation of the ambulance service and advised that the town no longer can justify paying such low rates when so much revenue is being realized. He noted that he had neglected raising the issue of call personnel compensation since their last adjustment, in 2008, but pointed out that however the present situation had arisen, it now is imperative that the issue be addressed.

Chairman Heitz asked if adoption of the new matrix will be accompanied by a requirement that call personnel sign on to cover duty shifts more frequently. Chief Seaman advised that there has been difficulty in covering weeknight shifts and that, since the new program is meant to incentivize training, he has no intention of paying increased rates but not getting the benefit of the training. Those personnel who participate only in the training and meeting aspects of the job without signing on for duty, will not be paid the premiums for higher training levels.

Selectman Korn, noting that even with the proposed increases Kingston will remain among the lower paying towns, and that a great deal of money that otherwise would have been paid out in annual, compounding increases has been saved by the taxpayers, advised that he will support the proposed increases with the understanding that Chief Seaman will be in annually to continue bringing rates to levels comparable with surrounding towns. Chief Seaman agreed that he is compelled to do so if he wants to retain the personnel he has and attract new members.

Discussion was held concerning whether full time personnel will resent such large increases for call personnel. Chief Seaman advised that his full time employees are aware of the need to attract highly trained call people, and that they get all of the benefits of full time employment - including insurance and retirement benefits - that call personnel don't get. He also noted that many of his call personnel actually are more highly trained than his full timers.

Chairman Heitz expressed concern about justifying large hourly increases to part-time employees in this economy. Chief Seaman reiterated that the request comes after more than six years of no increases and comes on behalf of employees who generate large amounts of income for the town. He pointed out that the investment of unpaid time necessary for employees to attain and maintain increasingly higher levels of training are not reimbursed and that ambulance and firefighting duty no longer is provided on a

voluntary basis; these positions constitute second jobs requiring huge investments of training time for people with families and expenses.

Chief Seaman then presented for review his 2014-15 Capital Improvements Plan submittal, noting that the only difference from last year is an adjustment in the price of air paks to reflect actual current costs.

He noted that the 1993 Engine has been taken out of service three times in the past month for blown out pump piping. He displayed 3 of the rusted hose connectors to demonstrate the problem. The truck also has issues with the engine and transmission and the Chief no longer has confidence in its suitability and reliability for service. Replacement was to have occurred in 2013 but there were some years when the capital reserve wasn't funded and there now is an approximate \$200,000.00 shortfall. He recommends that voters be requested in March to fund the shortfall so that a truck can be purchased in 2015 instead of waiting for 2016 when there will be a sufficient balance. Another alternative would be a lease to purchase agreement to fund the shortfall. He reminded the Board that there is a yearlong lag time between ordering and taking possession of a new truck. Chairman Heitz requested that Chief Seaman get an estimate of the cost to repair the engine to keep it in service for another two years.

Complaint of Lighting Ordinance Violation

A resident of Drew Lane was in attendance to present evidence of a lighting ordinance violation and to request that the Board take action to enforce the ordinance. Selectman Broderick advised that he will inspect the area and determine the level of violation. The Board will take the issue under advisement pending Mr. Broderick's report.

Review of Previous Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Upon motion of Selectman Korn and second of Selectman Broderick, it was voted to approve the minutes of the October 20, 2014 meeting as printed. Chairman Heitz abstained from the vote.

Non-Public Session

MOTION: Upon motion of Chairman Heitz and second of Selectman Korn, Chairman Heitz polled the Board for a unanimous voted to adjourn to non-public session under the provisions of N. H. RSA 91-A:3-II.a. The Board adjourned at 8:40 pm.

The Board returned to public session at 8:45 pm.

MOTION: Upon motion of Selectman Broderick and second of Selectman Korn Chairman Heitz polled the Board for a unanimous vote to seal the minutes of the non-public session for an indefinite period.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 8:47 pm and the Board resigned to review orders to pay and to attend to administrative matters. The next meeting will be held on November 3, 2014.

**Respectfully submitted,
Catherine Grant
Administrative Assistant**