



**Town of Berlin
Municipal Office Building
108 Shed Road
Berlin, VT. 05602**

**Special Board Meeting
Tuesday, January 12, 2016**

5:30 PM-Budget Work Session

APPROVED MINUTES

Selectboard Members: Ture Nelson, Chair; Jeremy Hansen, Vice Chair; Roberta Haskin, Secretary; Brad Towne and Pete Kelley.

Present: Dana Hadley, Town Administrator, Diane Isabelle, Town Treasurer-The Discussion on the Local Option Tax was also attended by George Malak, Former President of the Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce and the current President William Moore.

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chair Ture Nelson

The Town Administrator asked for add discussion about sending a request for proposals for banking services.

The Chair noted that this will be added following the discussion of the local option tax.

Local Option Tax

Ture Nelson reminded the Board that the second public hearing on the local option tax will be on Monday, January 18th. He suggested that the Board have a proposal ready to present at that meeting. He asked Selectboard Member Hansen to present the power point presentation that he has presented at previous meetings. He would like to be able to present a plan of how the Board would use the funds raised by this tax, discussion followed.. Selectboard Member Hansen said that he has heard from constituents urging for the funds to be used for property tax relief. Selectboard Member Haskin said that she has heard from people who would support the local option tax if the funds were used to offset property taxes, as well as people who are opposed to the concept. Selectboard Member Kelley said that he feels that the reason the Board is working on this is to present to the people to see who they feel about it. He said that it is a concern to him that they will reach a limited number of voters to help everyone understand. There is a large need for infrastructure improvements and maintenance. He said that most of the funds raised would come from non- residents but would benefit Berlin residents.

Former Chamber of Commerce President, George Malek thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak about the local options tax. He gave a presentation¹ that outlined how the implementation of the local option tax would affect a citizen's income tax obligation and what net effect would be on Berlin Tax payers.

Banking rfp

Treasurer Diane Isabelle spoke to the Board about a CD for the Sewer Commission for appropriation funds. This amount is approximately \$350,000. This CD is due to mature on January 31th. Diane advised that she would send out an rfp by email to see what Banks proposed for an interest rate. She suggested a three year term.

Motion: Hansen/Towne to authorize the Treasurer to request proposals for the CD for the Sewer Department.

Budget Work Session

The Chair noted that the budget line for recreation is currently at zero. The Board is suggesting the funds to operate the department will be taken from the reserve account. The Emergency Management committee had a request for several items. The Board approved including the amount of 2,087 that includes funding for the emergency telephones at the fire station in the amount of \$1,200, a laptop at a cost of \$875 and flash drives at a cost of \$12.

The expense for a new six wheel truck for the highway department will be offset by a loan in the amount of \$125,000 and the remainder coming out of the budget appropriation.

The Board discussed the wages for staff in the clerk's office. The Town Clerk had sent an email expressing her desire that the wages for that department not be in one line. After further research into state statutes and reading V.S.A. 24 §933 that reads:

When a town does not fix the amount of the compensation to be paid such officers and town employees, the selectboard shall fix and determine the same except as to their own pay which shall be fixed by the auditors at the time of the annual town audit. If the town has voted to eliminate the office of auditor and the voters fail to fix the compensation to be paid to members of the selectboard, selectboard members shall be compensated at the

¹ A copy of Mr. Malek's Presentation is included as an addendum to these minutes.

Selectboard Minutes

January 12, 2016

Page 3 of 3

rate at which they were compensated during the immediately preceding year. (Amended 1997, No. 83 (Adj. Sess.), § 3.)

After discussion the Board proposed a 3% increase for the Town Clerk and the Assistant. The Administrator will advise the Clerk that she can still adjust the amount for each position for the approved \$61,500. In the interim for budget purposes the clerk's line will be \$43,981 and the Assistant Clerk \$17,519.

The County Tax was updated since the Board's last review. This was after the Treasurer received notice from the County of what the actual county tax would be.

The board discussed the budget line for the ambulance. The ambulance budget will be adjusted based on the proposal from Barretown that offered an option to extend the current contract. That has not been confirmed as yet. The budget was reduced to \$80,000 in anticipation of extending the ambulance contract.

The Board discussed the on call line in the Police Department and the estimated amount for on call time. In review of the actual expense the Board adjusted the budget amount to be \$4,350.

The Board also adjusted the fuel budgets for the winter and summer highway budgets. \$30,000 on the winter budget and \$20,000 for the summer budget.

For the Select Board:

Dana I. Hadley, Town Administrator