

December 16, 2013

Chairman Michael Jackson called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Present:

Members: Barbara Brown, Sally Cornell, Michael Jackson, Jack Boyer, Craig Schoon, Rex Swain

Alternates: Liddy Adams, Ted Bent, Keith Templeton

Selectmen: Mark Lyon, Richard Carey, Jay Hubelbank

Treasurer: Linda McGarr

Guests: Tony Bedini, Bldg. & Property Committee, Region 12 Board of Education

Minutes:

Rex Swain requested an amendment to the October minutes with regard to the Housing Down Payments Assistance Program, noting Liddy Adams, and not he, had reported noted this Program would provide a subsidy and not a loan to eligible homeowners. He also suggested the minutes note that new employees will be covered under a 401A Defined Contribution Plan, and not the Defined Benefit Plan that has covered current employees. Amendments to minutes approved.

Education:

Tony Bedini updated the Board of the most recent Region 12 meetings. He noted the firms of Fletcher Thompson and Arcadia had held meetings in the three towns to obtain input from the residents of all towns in Region 12 regarding the future of Shepaug buildings. Total attendance had been under 100 for all three towns; however, he felt Fletcher Thompson and Arcadia had gotten a good sampling of what is going on. These firms had also met with teachers and the administration, both of whom were in favor of a new school and provided some input. They have provided a schedule of what they will do and the next step will be to address a Plan that would be presented to the public at future meetings. The Plan recommended one elementary school for the three towns. The final decision on this must be approved by a majority of votes in all three of the towns. The Board noted their appreciation to Tony for his efforts.

Tax Collector's Report:

Approved.

Assessor:

First Selectman Mark Lyon reported he had spent time with the new Town Assessor, who reported the revaluation of town properties is still in progress. A report will not be available until the end of December. Currently there has been a 12% decrease in residences and a 9% decrease in condos when comparing the different classes of real estate properties between 2012 and 2013. The information is very preliminary and numbers most likely will be revised. Once the revaluation company has completed their work, the Assessor may make adjustments if re-inspections are necessary. The Assessor has noted the importance of making a fair and accurate assessment. Property owner will be able to go "on line" to review the assessments. If the Grand List declines, the mill rate will have to change.

Income:

Investment income is currently at 20% of the estimated Town's budget.

Expense:

The Winter Maintenance section of the Town's Highway budget is estimated to cover approximately five months. Parks & Rec maintenance costs are currently high and will be reviewed before the Spring.

Old Business:

Tax Collectors:

First Selectman Mark Lyon reported the Board of Selectmen has met with the Town's new tax collector Donna Alex, who has been working with retiring tax collector, Tanya Wescott. The list of the top 20 delinquent taxpayers has been reviewed and they are moving ahead on most of them. There was some discussion as to how this is handled by other towns and their tax collection rate; and it was noted there are written procedures in place if taxes have not been paid. If it becomes necessary to call on the Marshal to collect the taxes, the Marshal is paid only upon collection and an additional 15% is charged to the taxpayer to pay the marshal. The marshal is allowed to attach wages and the Town would be allowed to foreclose on the property if necessary. The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities analyzes the tax situations town by town and we are currently in good shape. The liability to the Town was discussed if properties were in poor or toxic shape or a hazard to the public.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m..

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Gollow, Secretary