

**Selectmen Meeting
Minutes
May 1, 2012**

Selectman Connolly, Selectman Sargent, Selectman LeBlanc, Selectman Dziokonski and Chairman Dickhaut were in attendance. Attendee was Town Administrator Ward. Chairman Dickhaut opened the meeting at 6:15PM.

FY13 Budget Review

Chairman Dickhaut began discussion deferring to Town Administrator Ward for an update. Administrator Ward reviewed the unresolved issue are the Assessors Department and the School Department. All of the other departments the board agreed to use the level service requests. Chairman Dickhaut asked if the Park & Recreation submitted an updated budget. Administrator Ward explained he had not received any updates from the Park & Recreation but there is a meeting tonight. Chairman Dickhaut asked if the board agreed with the decisions made with the Police, Fire and DPW. The board agreed. Administrator Ward explained he spoke with Superintendent McGown regarding the staffing in the DPW. He explained with a level service budget, the funding will be enough funding for 2 positions, with a level funded budget only one position could be filled. Chairman Dickhaut explained the department lost an employee three months ago, why hasn't this position been advertised. She stated she is not in favor of temporary employees filling permanent positions. Administrator Ward reviewed he had spoken to Superintendent McGown but isn't clear on the vacancy and the temporary position he will have to review again. The board asked of more information regarding the temporary position, they would like to see all vacancies filled with permanent employees. Discussion continues with review of the Finance Committee budget. The board agreed to restore the Reserve Fund to \$100,000.00. The review continued with board of Assessors budget, Chairman Dickhaut explained The Government Reorganization Committee has made the recommendation for changes to this department. The Administrator researched area cities and towns and concluded most have 2 full time staffed Assessors. Clinton is unique to have three. Selectman Connolly explained the Government Reorganization Committee has proposed changing the office and hopefully the town meeting voters will agree. These positions should be appointed, the board of Assessor sent a budget to the board reflecting the change with two full time staff and one support staff. Chairman Dickhaut agreed the 3rd staff person would only come in to do abatements as needed so the funding should be \$1500.00. Selectman Connolly agreed stating if the other two employees are to do additional work they should be compensated. Chairman Dickhaut agreed to add compensation to the salaries but is not in favor of the amounts requested, the office has run with only two people without complaint, there would be no change to the jobs. She explained she is

not opposed to some increase. Selectman Connolly explained he disagreed; this would not be a raise but compensation for the additional work and increase in duties. Chairman Dickhaut asked if the salary changes will the employees work 8 to 4 like all of the other offices. Selectman Sargent asked if you are planning on a raise for the Assessors, are the Treasurer and Collector getting the same increase. Selectman Connolly explained he isn't asking for an increase, this is compensation for asking the employee to do different duties, the staff is being reduced to 2 people but the work load remains the same. Selectman Sargent stated 3 full time positions should remain and let the voters decide on the changes. Chairman Dickhaut explained she understands Selectman Connolly's rationale and is supportive to the office, but the work has been maintained by 2 people for the last year, everything is getting done that should be. This is the perfect opportunity to make a change, no one would be hurt, and the word was out early on to those who are running for the office. The town is looking to do what is done in most surrounding communities. Selectman LeBlanc explained if the positions are changed from appointed to elected, the job descriptions and salaries should be reviewed. He explained the current compensation versus the requested compensation should be reviewed and compared with other communities, to determine what is in the normal range. Chairman Dickhaut asked Administrator Ward to do a wage comparison to surrounding communities. Administrator Ward explained he will get that information tomorrow. Chairman Dickhaut explained in corporate America a reduction to manpower is the nature of the environment this concept isn't unique. Selectman Sargent stated if someone gets a raise they all should get the same raise. Selectman Connolly explained he agrees if one group gets a raise all should get the same raise, this is not a request for a raise, no other employees are being asked to do the same work and loose personnel. Selectman Dziokonski stated in regards to the salary discussion this is a workable solution, the potential savings to the town is \$20,000.00. He explained he is in favor If you do not make a change the budget will keep growing and growing. He explained he agrees to some sort of increase not sure how much but it is different from a raise or a COLA increase, it is to support a change in duties. Chairman Dickhaut explained there has been a change in the office over the past year, the office is made up of elected official so nothing is required for a work schedule, and the office has been operating with two. Selectman Sargent stated there are three great Assessors and people get sick, the two running the office are doing an outstanding job. Chairman Dickhaut explained this is an opportunity to reduce the staff. Discussion continued regarding the staffing changes and salary compensation for the Assessors Department. Selectman Dziokonski made a motion to table the discussion regarding the Assessors salaries for the board to get more information to review. Selectman LeBlanc seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Budget review continued with the Bigelow Public Library, the board agreed to go with the level service amounts, and the level funded salaries. The Council on Aging was reviewed, the board approved

upgrading the outreach salary to full time, and the salary will be \$20.00 per hour for 35 hours totaling \$36,540.00. Administrator Ward explained he spoke with the Council on Aging Director who explained the additional funding for programming will be used for a Theater group and expanding classes for seniors on gardening, cooking and yoga. Selectman LeBlanc explained the miscellaneous expense includes funding to travel to one conference annually in Washington,DC. Administrator Ward reviewed the Director explained all of the other funding is in case the grant funding or donations from the Friends and other organizations goes away, the center can run the same. Selectman Connolly reviewed he would like more specific information on the budget, he is not in favor of covering traveling expenses. Chairman Dickhaut explained there is a huge increase in the Miscellaneous spending from \$13,000.00 to \$37,000.00 which is vague. The board agreed and noted more information is needed as to what the funding will be used for. They asked Administrator Ward to gather more information and a print out of expenses for this past year to review. They also asked for an average age of the equipment needing to be replaced. Discussion continued with the Dog Officer/ Animal Control Department. Chairman Dickhaut explained the board needs to take a more realistic review of the expenses. The board agreed they are in support of a substantial increase; there is a need to fill this position. The board agreed to collapse the budget to one line item, starting the discussion at \$25,000.00. The board agreed this may help attract more interest but still remains low for the volume of calls reported. Discussion continued of the Conservation Commissions request for the funding to hire an agent. The board agreed for the department to use the filing fees and report back next year on how it worked out. Review continued with the Town Clerks Department, the board supports the new wardens and the increase in the budget to support the positions. Administrator Ward explained the Building Manager is working together with Building Commissioner Zahariadis regarding the review of the building and the needed updates. They are preparing a list for the board. Review continued with the board agreeing to an increase in the Civic Fund to \$3500.00. Discussion continued regarding the funding for the Inspectional services department vehicle. Administrator Ward explained he was working with Building Commissioner Zahariadis regarding an amount needed. Building Commissioner Zahariadis indicated he has reviewed the state bid list and spoke with the department that runs the auctions and there isn't anything at this time applicable. His recommendation is for the board to decide on an amount and he will work within that to find a vehicle. Administrator Ward explained there is an increase in the Unemployment Compensation from \$30,000 to \$50,000. This rate needs to be adjusted. The board agreed. Administrator Ward explained there is a list of capital need for the Fire Department including the reprogramming of the radios. He reminded the board there is nothing in the budget for the pickup truck request for Fire Department. Selectman Dziokonski reviewed the subcommittee needs to work on the vehicle use

policy for all town owned vehicles. The board concluded discussion and agreed to meet again next week to review and finalize the budget.

Selectman LeBlanc made a motion at 7:53PM to adjourn. Selectman Connolly seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Corbosiero
Administrative Assistant to the
Clinton Board of Selectmen