

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**March 14, 2018**

**Call to Order**

Chairman Kevin Morse called the Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting to order at 7:00 PM in the Resource Room of the Municipal Center.

Due to an error, the beginning of this meeting was not recorded.

**ATTENDANCE:**

Board: Kevin Morse (Chairman), Tim Bonin, David Cortese (Vice Chairman), Hal Davis (Absent), Mike Hughes, Matt Wojcik (Town Administrator), Suzanne Kane (Administrative Assistant - Absent)

Library: Justin Snook (Director), Joe Biagioni (Chair), Barbara Van Reed, Ellie Chesebrough

Other Staff and Citizens: Jeanne Lovett (Finance Director) and other citizens.

- **Pledge of Allegiance**
- **Chairman's Announcements**
- **Citizen's Forum**

**1. Budget Discussion (00:00)**

• Recording of the meeting did not start until 8:15 pm, the beginning minutes are from Mr. Wojcik.

*Handed out at the meeting is a document entitled, "Chairman Morse Budget Mark – March 14, 2018".*

Mr. Wojcik went over the Budget Workbook presented at the March 6<sup>th</sup> meeting and handed out Mr. Morse's "Chairman Morse Budget Mark", a proposed budget based on the Town Administrator's workbook. Mr. Wojcik also went over the 5 year outlook, major expense accounts driving the budget, and proposed saving initiatives.

• The minutes from here on were recorded.

The proposed budget for FY18-19 needs to be reduced by \$400,000. The BOS discussed a proposed balanced budget that includes cutting funding for the library and reducing the budget for the School Department.

Ms. Lovett stated that she is unable to present her budget spreadsheets until decisions are made at the BOS level.

Mr. Hughes feels the BOS needs to do a better job making people understand the Town's financial situation. Mr. Bonin stated that service cuts are becoming real this next fiscal year.

There is no Capital in this budget. The primary financing mechanism for Capital is Free Cash. There is over \$17.5 million in Capital needs. If you remove

building needs, there is still \$5-\$6 million in pressing needs. There is no mechanism for replacing equipment. Every system in the Municipal Center needs an overhaul. **Mr. Bonin asked for the list of Capital requests for review at the next meeting.**

Ms. Van Reed of 36 Monroe Street stated that a living community needs a heart and soul, which she feels is the library. She would like the townspeople to decide whether or not to cut the library. Mr. Hughes stated that nothing has been cut at this time; the BOS is reviewing scenarios. Town Meeting will ultimately decide on a balanced budget. Mr. Cortese explained how the process works and how the Town and Town Meeting needs to accept a balanced budget.

Ms. Van Reed is willing to publish information from Mr. Wojcik and/or the BOS regarding the Town's financial situation in *The Blackstone Valley Express* to distribute to the public. Her next issue will come out the second week of April.

Mr. Wojcik stated that any permanent combination of \$200,000 keeps the library open. Ms. Lovett reminded the public that Douglas has a revenue problem. With the reductions in State aid since 2008, the Town cannot continue to support the same services without a Proposition 2.5 override.

Mr. Snook stated that the Town has no choice; it cannot support a library. He asked why the BOS does not put an override question on the ballot every year. If the override does not pass, he suggested a service be taken away until the override does pass. Mr. Cortese feels that that has been done. Two overrides have been proposed and voted down. The townspeople have not seen a tangible impact. A discussion was held.

Ms. Chesebrough suggested a menu override question. **Mr. Morse asked Ms. Lovett for relevant information at the next meeting.**

Mr. Bonin explained that continuously putting an override question on the ballot and having it fail negatively affects the Town's bond rating.

## **2. Adjournment (39:35)**

**Mr. Cortese made a motion at 8:45 PM to adjourn. Mr. Hughes seconded the motion. All-Aye.**

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Wright  
Recording Secretary