

**TOWN OF GRANBY
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING
THREE BOARD MEETING
JANUARY 25, 2016**

First Selectman Kuhnly called the special meeting of the three boards to order at 7:50 p.m. and thanked those in attendance for coming.

PRESENT:

BOARD OF SELECTMEN: B. Scott Kuhnly, First Selectman; James Lofink, Sally King, Edward Ohannessian, and Mark Neumann

BOARD OF FINANCE: Michael B. Guarco, Jr., Chairman; Gordon Bischoff, William Kennedy, Frederick Moffa, Kelly Rome, and Alfred Wilke

BOARD OF EDUCATION: Ronald Walther, Chairman; Jenny Emery, Mark Fiorentino, Lynn Guelzow, Melissa Migliaccio, and Stephen Royer

ALSO PRESENT: William F. Smith, Jr., Town Manager; Barbarajean Scibelli, Administration Finance Officer; Roger Hernsdorf, Treasurer; Alan Addley, Superintendent of Schools; and Anna Robbins, BOE Business Manager

I. Opening Remarks – B. Scott Kuhnly, First Selectman

First Selectman Kuhnly opened the meeting by stating the Board of Selectmen are convening a meeting of the Board of Education, Board of Finance, and Board of Selectmen (Three Board Meeting). The individual boards will review their Plus-One Budget requests for the 2016-2017 Fiscal Year.

II. Ronald S. Walther, Chairman

a. Review of Plus-One Budget (Board of Education)

Chairman Walther stated the Board of Education Plus-One budget represents a 0% proposed increase for FY 2016-2017. The BOE budget base increase is 1.77%, with -0.38% retiree savings, -3.16% declining enrollment, +0.82% new programming, +0.95% transfer of Kindergarten teachers from Quality and Diversity.

Staffing and operational savings of \$908,539 with the closing of Kearns School is lower than the projected \$1,032,704.

Operating budget staffing levels will net -6.89 FTE as a result of the declining enrollment.

Special Education decreased \$71K from FY16.

Funded Priorities include the transfer of three Kindergarten teachers from the Quality and Diversity Fund budget to the operating budget for Special Education, Primary Reading Interventions, and After-School Athletic TA.

Unfunded priorities are Literacy Coach (high school), Part-Time Special Education, and a third Girls Volleyball Team.

Projected student enrollment is a reduction of 79 students (-4%). There is a reduction of 269 students projected for FY 2016-2021 (-14%).

FY09-FY16: reduction of -14.7% in students and -8.9% in staff.

Highest priorities include: portable emergency generator to protect school systems during power loss, Wells Road playing field, and high school facility upgrades.

The Quality and Diversity Fund is an important resource to fund programs. The Board of Education process is to hold a balance sufficient to cover commitments for five years. They are looking for a projected balance of \$184K in FY21.

The Board of Education strives for the best educational opportunities at a reasonable cost to the taxpayers.

III. B. Scott Kuhnly, First Selectman

a. Review of Plus-One Budget (Board of Selectmen)

First Selectman Kuhnly thanked everyone for coming and for all their hard work putting together their budget proposals. The town has a responsibility to fund and maintain all departments and to meet all state mandates. In addition they must provide town services as well as meet their debt obligations.

First Selectman Kuhnly reported minimal requirements for existing operational needs in 2016-2017 are approximately \$392,900. It may be possible to hold close to that amount without service reductions. Department budgets have not been completely developed so the numbers are somewhat in line with the adopted Plus-One budget guideline process. Three add-back items including a Police Officer (budgeted for half year), DPW Maintainer II (budgeted for half year), and Library Services restoring cut backs, when added would bring the amount to \$471,300 above the present operating budget.

Wages and salary increases, as well as step increases for FT and PT, are at 3%. Health benefits are at 5%. Insurance Business package and Workers Compensation increases are at 6%. The current Insurance consultant is retiring so the bargain price is no longer likely. Health Services – FVHD, CMED, EMD are estimated at \$3,000 as the final amount is unknown. Salt, equipment parts, and solid waste and recycling have all increased due to demand and price. Building repairs needed to maintain all town buildings and minor repairs as the buildings age, is \$10,000. Final increases for miscellaneous contract services are unknown at this time.

Also noted were three items that were introduced since the Plus-One Budget was reviewed by the Board of Selectmen. They involve adding \$30,000 for maintenance of Kearns School when it's closed, consideration of adding needed funding to the Lost Acres Fire Department (amount not yet determined), and a reduction of \$30,000 in existing Health Benefits.

Mike Guarco asked if health benefits information has been finalized and Melissa Migliaccio wanted to know salary and benefit information for Police Services.

IV. Michael Guarco, Chairman

a. Board of Finance Comments

Chairman Guarco thanked the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education for their submissions. He said the Board has not set a budget guideline. They are still waiting to hear what the Governor has to say when he presents his budget next week. The grand list growth will be identified by the end of the month. Subsequently, the Board will be able to make a more informed decision on the budget guidelines for Granby next month. Given the economic situation and past years' budgets, he would like to see the increase in the 1-2% range.

Gordon Bischoff commented he was able to attend all the budget workshops last year to try to get a handle on each portion of the budget. He did say that people are not expecting to see an increase after the closing of Kearns School, not fully understanding that the money will primarily be going into the renovations at Kelly Lane School. Mr. Bischoff would like to see the budget under 2%. He also inquired about the now projected savings of \$900,000 which was formally stated at \$1,000,000. Board of Education Superintendent Alan Addley explained there was one extra teacher that wasn't included in the original projection.

Kelly Rome appreciated the boards coming in with these reasonable numbers. She understands it is a lot of work especially for the Board of Education. Ms. Rome indicated she agrees with Mr. Guarco that we need to submit something under 2%. She sees this as a tight year for the budget.

V. Discussion and Items of Interest Concerning the 2015-16 Budget

a. Questions and Answers

Alan Addley stated we are known for our high quality school system. We need to maintain that to keep the level of education at the high standard we have worked hard to achieve and it is at a cost. Zero and 1% increases will not sustain the education budget. We have made huge investments in programs and we need to continue to support them.

Town Manager Smith commented we are constantly looking at revenues to offset expenditures. We already collaborate with the Board of Education. Mr. Smith indicated he talks with Mr. Addley almost daily. It is not easy to keep up with the staff that we have. We need to maintain the quality. Holding the line every year won't work to continue to sustain operations and services.. We have had a very tight mill rate the last few years. Revaluation is coming soon and it may not be fantastic. It is tricky to maintain the high level of education and quality services. We don't like to cut back services. Our facilities are excellent and we need to maintain them. We need to look to the future and maintain what we have.

Jenny Emery commented we need to stand behind the Board of Education budget. We work with the lowest cost per student and receive the highest test

scores there are. We are getting the best for our money. People move here for the quality schools and we have an obligation to keep them at the high standard they are. We can't continue to provide this level of education without paying for it.

IV. Consideration of Intra-Board Final Report and Memo of Understanding Endorsement

First Selectman Kuhnly reviewed the charge of the Intra-Board Advisory Committee that came together in the spring of 2014. Members included: B. Scott Kuhnly, First Selectman; Ronald Walther, BOE Chairman; Edward Ohannessian, BOS; Jenny Emery, BOE; Kelly Rome, BOF; William F. Smith, Jr. Town Manager; and Alan Addley, Superintendent of Schools. They researched information technology, town and school buildings and grounds maintenance operations, financial operations, solar power opportunities, human resources, and retirement benefits.

The Committee has concluded that further value will be realized through institutionalizing the town and BOE commitment to operational coordination, collaboration, and integration as opportunities arise, and that this can best be accomplished, at this time, through a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the three governing boards. This MOU was previously adopted by the Board of Selectmen, Board of Education, and Board of Finance at their respective meetings. A Leadership Committee will be formed and they will meet quarterly to review and discuss items. This MOU will also be reviewed on a regular basis.

The three Chairman present signed the MOU.

ON A MOTION by Gordon Bischoff, seconded by Selectman Ohannessian, the Boards voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

William F. Smith, Jr.
Town Manager