

October 26, 2020

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Durham held October 26, 2020 at the Town Hall commencing at 6:00 p.m.

**Present, called in:** Shawn Marriott, Supervisor  
Joan Breslin, Deputy Supervisor  
Linda Sutton, Council member  
Scott Hulbert, Council member  
Walt Bennett, Council member

**Recording Secretary called in:** Janet Partridge, Town Clerk

**Others called in:** Karen Tirpak, Bookkeeper/Judge  
Joe van Holsteyn, Highway Superintendent  
Nancy Wycoop Bower, Assessor  
Chris Kohrs, Court Clerk  
Maryellen Brooks, Assessor's Clerk  
6 community members

Supervisor Marriott called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. with the Pledge to the Flag.

With changes made thus far on the tentative budget, the 2021 budget is \$236,635 above last year which calculates to a 10.443% increase.

Deputy Supervisor Breslin explained the \$2,000 for the town newsletter was not in. They were going to find out what appropriation line it should be in. They will put it in the Comprehensive line for now, increasing that line from \$500 to \$2,500.

The Board discussed the Town Clerk salary increase. There was an increase of \$2905 in the salary for the town clerk and a decrease of \$7476 in the deputy clerk line. Town Clerk Partridge had explained at the last meeting she would be doing additional work to cover some of the deputy clerk's duties next year. This was a 9% increase. When Marriott decreased all salaries across the board on the new budget sheet to 2%, Partridge asked why the large drop in her line. Discussion on the increase followed. Marriott wanted to know if the Board was comfortable with a 9% increase or he felt if there was a 1% decrease across the board, the clerk's increase should be 8%. Partridge explained she is doing additional work and when she made up her budget worksheet, she wasn't thinking about a percentage increase but about the additional work she will be doing. She also explained last year when the building department was going to be doing addition work to cover the clerk work the board increased their salaries by 20 and 30%. Breslin stated she was not looking at it as a percentage but as a dollar value for the additional work being done. Discussion continued on how many hours the deputy clerk would have been working and paid for and what her salary would have been with a 2% increase. It was agreed to leave the monetary increase in the town clerk salary line for the additional work being done.

The Board then discussed the Ambulance budget. Breslin suggested cutting out the new windows for \$7500. She said she figured there were 8,736 hours in a year and looking at a \$1/hour increase for two people, it is \$17,473. She and Hulbert both agreed it is hard to cut such an important service in our community. Last year they asked for \$265,000 and the Board agreed on \$245,000. Hulbert suggested \$315,000. Sutton was thinking \$340,000. Marriott said he could see both of their suggestions so he was looking at somewhere in the middle. It was agreed to decrease to \$325,000. Breslin suggested volunteering to mail donation letters and volunteering to hold fundraisers for them.

Nancy Wycoop-Bower discussed the assessor's clerk line. She is looking for her clerk to be salaried just like all the other clerk's in the town offices. Marriott explained a couple years ago, civil service wanted all part time workers to be paid hourly. The only ones to be salaried would be those in charge of two or more people. The clerk has been working an average of 22 hours a week. The Board discussed everyone going hourly but Marriott said he didn't think civil service was pushing that any more. He will reach out to them. He would like to keep everyone salaried until they can research and come up with a plan to do it differently. With an average of 95 hrs. a month at \$15.97/hour, it would be \$18,071 for the clerk. She stated again she would like the clerk to be salary at \$18,400.

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The board discussed the flowers and watering that the town pays for. It is about \$3,000 in overtime that is spent each year to have someone water the flowers. The Board agreed to cut the flowers from the budget, A8510.400. Also cut \$3,000 from parks, the overtime expenditure. They also agreed to cut \$500 from the A7550.400 line, celebrations.

They discussed increasing the amount put into the 2021 budget from highway fund balance. They agreed on \$20,000 additional to fund balance from the highway.

Highway superintendent van Holsteyn suggested they take out the \$5,000 increase from sand and salt contractual line. They all agreed.

Breslin brought up the fact of increasing the fund balance put into the budget for the general budget. They discussed what would be left over from this year. They agreed to add \$35000 from the fund balance to help with the increase. That would be changing it from \$176,800 to \$211,800.

Sutton asked about the \$10,000 extra for quarterly accounting review. Marriott said with the new program that is coming from Edmunds GovTech they need to make sure it goes smoothly.

Marriott questioned Officer Sutton on the training that is being done by the Durham Police. We are training other police officers in the area and are not being compensated. The town is paying our officers to be the instructors. Breslin said we should be charging the other towns to train their officers even if to just get our money back. Marriott said in 2020 there was 68 hours of training on the calendar. He said the Sheriff's office does 32 hours of training a year and the state standard is 20 hrs. He feels 68 hours of training is too much for our officers. It is too big of an expense to be doing that many training hours. He would like to see 32 hrs. at \$16/hr. budgeted for the officers. That would cut \$4,780 out of the officers line and drop the other line to \$13,950.

Breslin suggested looking at the CDPHP health insurance. The difference in that plan and the current one we are using for the 2021 year would be \$5,853.92. Partridge suggested in the future the Board consider talking about the insurance plans with each other and the employees in August or September so it isn't so last minute. Breslin discussed they used to have the new plan dates in the spring but they changed it to coincide with the budget process so it would be easier to budget and there would be less to predict as far as cost. Breslin agreed it would be better to have the quotes sooner for a discussion. Partridge wished they knew more about the plan. Marriott and Bookkeeper/Highway Clerk Tirpak met with the insurance rep and discussed what the pros and cons were of the plans.

**Hulbert motioned to adjourn at 10:40 p.m. seconded by Bennett.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Janet Partridge,  
Clerk/Collector