MINUTES

LIBERTY SELECTBOARD

January 14, 2019 6:00 PM

**Selectboard Attendance:** Melinda Steeves, 1st Selectman

Carrie Peavey, 2nd Selectman

Henry Hall, 3rd Selectman

**Town Officials:** Administrator Kenn Ortmann, Fire Chief Bill Gillespie, Deputy Fire Chief Tobey Kress, Assistant Fire Chief Bill Gillespie III, Fire Lieutenant Lisa Gillespie, Clerk/Tax Collector/ Registrar of Voters Gail Philippi, Deputy Clerk/Tax Collector Jamie Davis, Treasurer Hannah Hatfield, and Planning Board Chair Peter Mallow

**Guest(s):**  Liberty Volunteer Ambulance Deputy Chief Jason Earl, Liberty Library Association Board of Trustees President Barb Rehmeyer, Budget Committee Chair Betsy Levine and members Elise Brown, Judy Fuller, Joy Hadsell, Dorothy Harrison, Melanie Ripley and Joan Tax

1. **Open Public Meeting:** 6:00 PM
2. **Approve Minutes:** Pursuant to review Selectman Steeves moved and Selectman Peavey seconded approval of the January 7, 2019 minutes. Unanimous.
3. **Joint meeting with Liberty Budget Committee:** Liberty Volunteer Ambulance Assistant Chief Jason Earl provided a handout showing three options. Option 1, at an annual cost of $51,517 will continue operations as they are now allowing per diem coverage 0600-1800 Monday through Friday. Option 2, at an annual cost of $60,892 will continue operations as they are now and will add a stipend to cover one EMT on weekend days. Option 3, at an annual cost of $70,204 will continue operations as they are now and will add a stipend to cover two EMTs on weekend days. Option 3 is the only option that ensures the Ambulance rolls Monday through Sunday. Assistant Chief Earl asked the Selectboard and Budget Committee to seriously consider Option 3 to best serve the needs of Liberty residents.

Liberty Library Association Board of Trustees President Barb Rehmeyer provided a handout showing how our library compares with several others. She noted that while many other libraries receive over 50% of their operating revenue from the community, the Liberty Library receives approximately ⅓ and has to fundraise for the remaining ⅔. She noted the Library is requesting $4,800 this year.

Planning Board Chair Peter Mallow noted that, pursuant a request for an increase in the hourly rate from the Planning Board Secretary, he worked up a number of scenarios for changes in the amount we pay the Planning Board Chair and members and the Secretary. He noted that this issue has not been revisited since 1987. He shared his thought that he and the other Planning Board members see this as a volunteer position, and, while there has been difficulty staffing the Board and finding new Members, he does not believe changing the payment amount for the Board will make a difference, and it could result in a substantial increase in the Board's yearly budget. It was noted that the Planning Board Secretary position just received a 10% increase in the hourly rate (from $10 to $11) due to the minimum wage increase mandated by the State.

Fire Chief Bill Gillespie distributed his budget request for FY20. The $50,000 requested for Operations and the $20,000 requested for Compensation are the same amounts requested last year. The one new item is a request to begin rebuilding the vehicle capital reserve fund in the amount of $15,000. The Chief noted there are some increases in heat and electricity now that the station is staffed by ambulance personnel during the week. He will break out those increases to document additional costs Liberty is incurring in support of the Ambulance service.

Clerk/Tax Collector/ Registrar of Voters Gail Philippi discussed two aspects that impact her proposed FY20 budget. One is to increase the Clerk's wage from $16/hour to $17/hour. The Deputy Clerk's wage will remain at $16/hour. A larger impact is due to changing office coverage to insure that, with the exceptions of training, illness and vacation, that the office will be staffed by two people at all times. This will improve customer service and staff safety. The total impact is to increase the annual wages for the office from $31,264 to $45,000. It is hoped that the MV module introduced last July will begin reducing office workload next year, but previous experience has shown that it takes awhile for the public to become comfortable with the new technology. Another option to help reduce office workload is to upgrade our Cash Receipting program to add the ability to automatically load in transactions from the Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife’s online registration system (MOSES) for a cost of $420 with an annual maintenance cost of $125.

Gail also noted that Jamie Davis will be leaving the Deputy position and that she has asked and appointed Liberty Treasurer Hannah Hatfield to assume that position. With Hannah's experience she will require little training. Gail noted that she has reviewed how other communities handle these positions and there are many permutations. She also checked with our Auditor and she indicated no concerns. One option to tighten up our financial management process is to purchase and use the TRIO "Budgetary" module to replace QuickBooks.

Treasurer Hannah Hatfield described the more rigorous journal entry requirements of the Budgetary module. She noted the purchase price is $3,500. The training cost is $1,600 and the annual maintenance cost will be $770.

1. **Warrant Review and Approval:** Done.
2. **Officials/Public comments:** See Budget Committee discussions above.
3. **Old Business** 
   1. **Annual report dedication:** Pending.
   2. **Other:** None.
4. **New Business**
   1. **Other:** None.
5. **Other Business:** None.
6. **Adjournment:** 8:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Kenn Ortmann

Town Administrator