



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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JAMES M. PRICHARD
Deputy First Selectman

MELINDA M. FERRY
AARON J. FOSTER
DAVID E. STAVENS
RONALD F. STOMBERG
JOHN W. TURNER

LORI L. SPIELMAN
First Selectman

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING
Friday, August 19, 2016
Town Hall – Meeting Hall

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Lori L. Spielman, Melinda M. Ferry, Aaron J. Foster, James M. Prichard, David E. Stavens, Ronald F. Stomberg, John W. Turner

OTHERS PRESENT: Matt Zavadsky, MedStar Mobile Healthcare; Marie Sauve, Human Resources Coordinator; Nicholas J. DiCorleto, Jr., Finance Officer/Treasurer; Dorian Famiglietti, Town Attorney; Lisa Houlihan, Town Planner; Timothy Webb, Director of Public Works/WPCA Administrator

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

First Selectman Spielman called the meeting of the Board of Selectmen (BOS) to order at 8:00 a.m.

II. CITIZENS' FORUM: No one came forward.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Ellington Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Inc./
Comprehensive Assessment by Consultant, Matt Zavadsky

Matt Zavadsky, Director of Public Affairs at MedStar Mobile Healthcare, briefed the BOS on the process and goals of the comprehensive assessment he is conducting for the Ellington Volunteer Ambulance Corps (EVAC). He stated that the goal is to make EVAC an innovative, functional and valuable asset to the community. His findings and recommendations will be compiled in a final report which will be available within two weeks as a draft. He will ask the BOS to review the draft and forward their suggested revisions.

Collectively the BOS expressed that the EVAC organization is well-intended, well-trained and dedicated but needs assistance for reasons of improvement. They noted a significant lack of leadership, lack of communications skills and feel EVAC has lost their credibility to manage the emergency medical services in Town. Currently there are not enough volunteers and EVAC is frequently taking the ambulance out of service, noting that this places an undue burden on mutual aid. The BOS finds this is an unacceptable performance standard.

The BOS expressed concern that training is not consistent between all members and that the maintenance of the building and inspection of the ambulance is not routine. EVAC submitted an unsupported budget this year and was not receptive to working with Town personnel in this matter.

The BOS is concerned with the safety standards that need to be implemented; i.e., use of spotters for when the ambulance is backing up and use of daily vehicle trip checklists. In addition, they are disappointed that staff meetings with the paid personnel are not being conducted as requested in April of 2016.

Ms. Spielman stated that it is not the intent of the BOS to criticize the EVAC operation but it is their intent to help them; however, the BOS is always met with rejection.

Mr. Zavadsky asked what is going well with the EVAC organization. The BOS responded that POST 512 program is important and would like to see that stay in place. There is a long history with the explorer program and it provides a positive impact to a very impressionable age group. Also the fact that paid staff is on during the day takes the pressure off other responders and elevates the level of service to the community. It was noted that EVAC provided the Town with AEDs in Town buildings which is good for the community. In addition, they supply the fire service with medical supplies but the process is inconsistent and there is no continuity on how this is managed.

Mr. Zavadsky stated that he would like to talk to each member of the BOS individually and will be contacting them either in person or over the phone. He thanked the BOS for their time and input.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Charter Revision Commission Final Report dated August 12, 2016

Ms. Spielman noted that the Charter Revision Commission (CRC) held a meeting on July 13, 2016 to address the BOS recommendations made at their meeting on June 20, 2016. The CRC submitted their Final Report dated August 12, 2016.

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (FERRY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF THE CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION'S FINAL REPORT DATED AUGUST 12, 2016 AND TO THANK THE CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION MEMBERS FOR THEIR SERVICE.

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (PRICHARD) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING PROPOSED CHARTER REVISION/BALLOT QUESTION: **SHALL THE BOARD OF LIBRARY DIRECTORS BE RENAMED TO THE LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES, AS PRESCRIBED IN STATE STATUTES, SECTION 11-21?**

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (FERRY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING PROPOSED CHARTER REVISION/BALLOT QUESTION: **SHALL THE REGULAR MEMBERS OF THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS BE PROHIBITED FROM CONCURRENTLY SERVING ON THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION, AS PRESCRIBED IN STATE STATUTES, SECTION 8-5?**

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (FOSTER) TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING PROPOSED CHARTER REVISION/BALLOT QUESTION: **SHALL THE PROVISION THAT A SPECIAL TOWN REFERENDUM NEEDS A MAJORITY VOTE OF AT LEAST FIFTEEN (15) PERCENT OF THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF THE TOWN IN ORDER TO OVERRULE THE ACTION OF A TOWN MEETING BE REPEALED?**

Discussion:

The BOS asked Attorney Famiglietti to review the impact of this proposed change. Attorney Famiglietti stated that currently 15% of the registered voters would have to show up to vote at a Special Town Referendum and vote in favor to overrule the action of a Town Meeting. By removing this language any action of a Town Meeting can be overruled with the simple majority of voters who show up.

The BOS expressed concern with removing the 15% requirement noting that special interest groups could easily sway a vote. They questioned if the threshold could be lowered. Attorney Famiglietti noted that other options could have been explored to reduce the percentage but the BOS cannot modify the proposed change at this point.

Mr. Stomberg was in favor of keeping the 15% as it has not been a problem in the past; Ms. Ferry agreed. Mr. Turner stated that could not support totally eliminating the percentage and expressed disappointment that midpoints were not explored. Mr. Stavens agreed with Mr. Turner. Mr. Foster questioned what would be a good threshold. The BOS agreed that further research and discussion is necessary to determine a good threshold.

VOTE: AYE: FOSTER; NAY: TURNER/PRICHARD/STOMBERG/STAVENS/ FERRY; MOTION FAILED.

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (FOSTER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING PROPOSED CHARTER REVISION/BALLOT QUESTION: **SHALL THE ALTERNATE MEMBERS OF THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS BE PROHIBITED FROM CONCURRENTLY SERVING ON THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION, AS PRESCRIBED IN STATE STATUTES, SECTION 8-5?**

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (FERRY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING PROPOSED CHARTER REVISION/BALLOT QUESTION: **SHALL THE SECTION CREATING THE SENIOR CENTER ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE BE REPEALED?**

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (FOSTER) AND PASSED (AYE: FOSTER/TURNER/STOMBERG/STAVENS/FERRY; NAY: PRICHARD) TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING PROPOSED CHARTER REVISION/BALLOT QUESTION: **SHALL A SECTION BE CREATED ADDING A PERMANENT DESIGN REVIEW BOARD?**

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING PROPOSED CHARTER REVISION/BALLOT QUESTION: **SHALL A SECTION BE CREATED ADDING A PERMANENT PATRIOTIC COMMITTEE?**

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (FOSTER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING PROPOSED CHARTER REVISION/BALLOT QUESTION: **SHALL THE WORDING OF SECTION 917 BE AMENDED TO STRIKE LANGUAGE THAT THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN IS TO APPOINT A FIRE MARSHAL WITHIN 30 DAYS OF THE COMMENCEMENT OF THEIR TERM IN OFFICE?**

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (STOMBERG) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING PROPOSED CHARTER REVISION/BALLOT QUESTION: **SHALL LANGUAGE BE ADDED ALLOWING THE FIRE MARSHAL TO APPOINT AND REMOVE DEPUTIES, ASSISTANTS, AND EMPLOYEES IN HIS OR HER OFFICE, SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN?**

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (FERRY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING PROPOSED CHARTER REVISION/BALLOT QUESTION: **SHALL THE MINIMUM MONETARY AMOUNT THAT WOULD REQUIRE COMPETITIVE BIDDING BE INCREASED FROM \$7,500 TO \$25,000, AS PRESCRIBED IN STATE STATUTES, SECTION 7-148V?**

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (FOSTER) TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING PROPOSED CHARTER REVISION/BALLOT QUESTION: **SHALL THE CHARTER BE AMENDED TO ALLOW THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN TO APPOINT A TOWN MANAGER?**

Discussion:

Mr. Prichard stated that the wording of the question is too vague. He stated that it would be clearer if the questions asks the voters if they are in favor of changing the form or government. He added that the proposed revision does not explain how the First Selectman position will be effected with the change in government.

Mr. Turner stated that too many details have been left unanswered. The relationship of the Board of Selectmen with the Town Manager is not clearly delineated. He added that this is a significant change and the proposed revision is lacking details. Mr. Stavens agreed that this proposal is incomplete.

Mr. Stomberg stated that continuity is important and there is a loss of that continuity with the fact that of the First Selectman is elected every two years; however, he does not see how this proposal would pass as presented.

First Selectman Spielman stated that it is not clear how the duties of the Finance Officer would be impacted with the addition of a Town Manager.

Mr. DiCorleto provided the BOS with the financial impact of adding a Town Manager position. Using the CCM salary survey, he estimated the base salary at \$150,000, the fringe benefits package at \$82,263 and furniture and equipment and an operating budget at \$65,992 for a total estimated cost of \$298,255. In addition, it is anticipated that an Assistant Town Manager position will be eventually needed and Mr. DiCorleto estimates the cost for that position could be as much as \$243,380. Mr. Foster thanked Mr. DiCorleto for the cost estimates.

VOTE: AYE: FOSTER; NAY: TURNER/PRICHARD/STOMBERG/STAVENS/ FERRY; MOTION FAILED.

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (FOSTER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING PROPOSED CHARTER REVISION/BALLOT QUESTION: **SHALL THE CHARTER BE AMENDED TO INCLUDE CORRECTIONS TO SPELLING, SYNTAX, PUNCTUATION, CAPITALIZATION, AND GRAMMAR THAT DO NOT AFFECT THE MEANING OF THE CHARTER?**

The next step is for the BOS to determine if the proposed Charter revisions should be submitted for approval or rejection by the electors at a regular election or special referendum. Attorney Famiglietti pointed out that in order for the proposals to pass at a special referendum 15% of the registered voters must vote in favor of the revisions.

The BOS will review the options and make a motion at their September meeting.

V. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. For the purpose of discussing personnel appointment

MOVED (TURNER), SECONDED (FERRY), AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 9:44 A.M. FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING PERSONNEL APPOINTMENT.

PRESENT: BOS Members, Marie Sauve, Nicholas DiCorleto, Lisa Houlihan, Timothy Webb

The BOS came out of Executive Session at 10:22 a.m.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED (PRICHARD), SECONDED (TURNER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN AT 10:23 A.M.

Submitted by Marie Sauve Approved by Lori L. Spielman
Marie Sauve Lori L. Spielman