

**TOWN OF BEDFORD  
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
January 24, 2018  
BEDFORD MEETING ROOM  
10 MEETINGHOUSE ROAD**

**1. ROLL CALL:** A meeting of the Bedford Town Council was held on Wednesday, January 24, 2018 at the Bedford Meeting Room, 10 Meetinghouse Rd. Present were Kelleigh Murphy (Chairwoman), Chris Bandazian (Vice Chair) and Councilors Catherine Rombeau, David Gilbert, Melissa Stevens, and Bill Duschatko. Also present was Town Manager Rick Sawyer.

Councilor Schneller was absent.

Chairwoman Murphy opened the meeting at 7:02pm.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Led by Councilor Rombeau.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS** – None.

Chairwoman Murphy move agenda item 5.b. under New Business up in the agenda.

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

**b. Action on the Fire Union Collective Bargaining Agreement**

Mr. Sawyer stated that it is proposed to be a 5-year contract starting this past January 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup> 2022. The Fire Department is currently out of contract. The contract is responsible for 29 employees, down from 30 employees. It is proposed to remove the Building Inspector from the union. The average cost is \$3.52% annually over the five years of the contract. Mr. Sawyer went over some changes in the proposed contract. He recommended that the Council ratify the agreement, which he believes will secure attraction and retention program for the Fire Department over the life of the contract. If the Council ratifies the contract, the cost items for the contract would be a warrant item at the Budgetary Town Meeting. The effect on the budget will be discussed during the public hearing on the budget. Chairwoman Murphy pointed out that the impact of the contract on next year's budget is \$0.03. Mr. Sawyer pointed out that all three contracts – Public Works, Police, Fire – together is \$0.08.

Chairwoman Murphy thanked all of those involved in the process. It's been a long journey and she's pleased to see them arrive at a contract for the Fire Department.

**MOTION by Councilor Bandazian that the Bedford Town Council approve the Bedford Professional Firefighters Association, Local 3639, IAFF, AFL-CIO, CLC, Collective Bargaining Agreement as presented for the five year period commencing on January 1, 2018**

**and concluding on December 31, 2022 and authorize the Town Manager to sign upon passage of the financial terms of the agreement at Town Meeting on March 14, 2018. Seconded by Councilor Duschatko. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0.**

#### **4. PUBLIC HEARING**

##### **a. Second public hearing on the proposed 2018 budget**

Chairwoman Murphy wanted a rundown of the tax rate with the contracts rolled in. Mr. Sawyer stated that the budget as presented for the hearing is \$4.39, which is an increase of \$0.26 over the current tax rate of \$4.13. He pointed out that without the debt increase attributed to the road bond, the actual budget increase would have been a decrease of \$0.07 over the current tax rate. If they include the three unions, the tax rate would go up to \$4.47. There is also a recommendation from staff for the additional Fire Captain position. If that is included, the tax rate would go up another penny to \$4.48.

**MOTION by Councilor Bandazian to open the public hearing. Seconded by Councilor Stevens. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0.**

Chairwoman Murphy mentioned that there had been questions and concerns that had been raised on the Mom's Board. Councilors Stevens and Rombeau have answered questions and she's answered questions. In a perfect world she would like to think that everyone's questions were 100% answered, which is why there is no one there tonight asking questions about the budget, but thought was a little idealistic. It would be nice to see citizens in Town show up to these budget hearings and express their thoughts on the tax rate, on spending, on what direction they want to see the Town go in, because in the absence of anyone coming to the budget hearings, she thinks everyone is on board with what they are doing and that is a statistical impossibility. She would encourage people to pick up the phone or email them, because she hasn't heard from very many constituents at all. As a Council they try to be very conservative and very prudent with their tax dollars and make only the decisions that are necessary for the betterment of the Town. She is always blown away when they get to this point in the process and no one is there to speak on the budget. It is disappointing.

**MOTION by Councilor Bandazian to close the public hearing. Seconded by Councilor Stevens. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0.**

Councilor Bandazian wanted to comment on the additional Fire Captain position. He thought with the retirement of Lt. Leary that they lose a great deal of talent that they need to replace at the upper management level. He thought it was prudent to make something that has been long needed.

Chairwoman Murphy couldn't agree more. She has been a proponent of this position since day 1. She thought it was critical to the operation of the Fire Department and

thought it was long overdue especially given the soar in overdose incidents and drug use. She thought they had to have someone whose expertise is in that area.

Councilor Duschatko thought the work that Chief Wiggin and Deputy Chief Hunter have done spelled things out to a much better organized approach than they were aware of when it first came up. He thought they had a plan and should be given the opportunity to implement it.

Councilor Stevens stated that initially she was against the idea in hopes that they could put it off for another year. Since then, she’s had a friend that has had to use the services of the Fire Department and how comforting it was to know that there were professionals there. It came to her mind that not everyone lives in a community like this where they have the professionals who are there when they make that call and sometimes they take that for granted. Having the knowledge and security that they do have the resources in Town that they have is huge. Taking that into consideration, she has changed her mind and would be supportive of implementing the position as soon as they can rather than putting it off. She thanked them for their work and extended her friend’s gratitude.

Councilor Rombeau didn’t want to wait until they find themselves in an emergency situation where they don’t have enough training or availability especially given the types of challenges that have evolved and the kinds of services that are needed and the size of the Town. She thanked Chief Wiggin and Deputy Chief Hunter for the extra info.

**MOTION by Councilor Bandazian that the Bedford Town Council restore the Fire Captain of Training to the 2018 budget with a cost of \$54,083. Seconded by Chairwoman Murphy. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0.**

Mr. Sawyer stated that they are at the point to move the rest of the budget to the Budgetary Town Meeting. The 5 scenario options were shown on the screen.

		Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3	Scenario 4	Scenario 5
		\$ 191,384.00	\$ 54,082.00	\$ 245,466.00	\$ 373,256.00	\$ 319,174.00
	2018 Budget Proposal As of 1/10/2018:	Incorporating Only PW and Police Union Cost Items	Incorporating Only the 6 Month Cost of a Fire Captain	Incorporating Both PW and Police Union Costs and Captain costs	Incorporating PW, Police and Fire Union Costs as well as Captain costs	Incorporating PW, Police and Fire Union Costs only
General Fund	\$27,211,599.00	\$ 27,402,983.00	\$ 27,265,681.00	\$ 27,457,065.00	\$ 27,584,855.00	\$ 27,530,773.00
Special Revenue Funds	38,000.00	38,000.00	38,000.00	38,000.00	38,000.00	38,000.00
Recreation Day Camp	80,415.00	80,415.00	80,415.00	80,415.00	80,415.00	80,415.00
BCTV	472,321.00	472,321.00	472,321.00	472,321.00	472,321.00	472,321.00
Sewer Fund	2,158,389.00	2,158,389.00	2,158,389.00	2,158,389.00	2,158,389.00	2,158,389.00
<b>Total Appropriation</b>	<b>\$ 29,960,724.00</b>	<b>\$ 30,152,108.00</b>	<b>30,014,806.00</b>	<b>30,206,190.00</b>	<b>30,333,980.00</b>	<b>30,279,898.00</b>
Tax Rate Increase		0.05	0.014	0.064	0.09	0.08
<b>Tax Rate</b>	<b>4.39</b>	<b>4.44</b>	<b>4.40</b>	<b>4.45</b>	<b>4.48</b>	<b>4.47</b>

Mr. Sawyer stated that the recommendation now that they’ve included the Fire Captain into the budget would be Scenario 4, which would include the Fire Captain plus the three unions to the bottom line of the budget.

**MOTION by Chairwoman Murphy that the Bedford Town Council move the following to the Budgetary Town Meeting:**

<b>General Fund</b>	<b>\$27,584,855</b>
<b>Special Revenue Fund</b>	<b>38,000</b>
<b>Recreation Day Camp</b>	<b>80,415</b>
<b>BCTV</b>	<b>472,321</b>
<b>Sewer Fund</b>	<b><u>2,158,389</u></b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$30,333,980</b>

**Seconded by Councilor Duschatko. Vote taken – Motion Passed –6-0.**

Mr. Sawyer clarified that the total is the budget coming into tonight, plus the Fire Captain, plus the three union contracts. He thanked all of the Department Heads who started the budget process back in July and August.

## **5. NEW BUSINESS**

### **a. Award of Time and Attendance Contract**

Theresa Young, Finance Director explained that in 2016, the Town Council set aside \$70k for a Time and Attendance system to be implemented. In 2017, a team was formed, an RFP was put out and the team worked together to come to a conclusion on what they thought should be awarded.

Kathy Nikitas, HR and Payroll Coordinator, stated that the team had representatives from Police, Public Works and Fire along with Finance. She explained the process and the benefits they were looking for in a Time and Attendance system. They had four vendors who responded to the RFP and they narrowed it to two who they felt would meet the Town's needs. They ended up recommending TimeClock Plus out of Texas, because the team felt they had the best options for the Town and a lot of flexibility in customizing. The vendor will need four months to put it in place and the Town will need about 2-3 months before that to make decisions about protocols on how they want to handle things internally. Those decisions would be in consultation with the Town Manager, talking with Department Heads and looking at how things are handled differently amongst departments. If they were to start in March, they would be looking at October to implement hopefully or by year end. She thanked the departments who participated – Police, Fire, Public Works, and Nate Gagne of IT.

Councilor Bandazian mentioned a recommendation from the school system in Windsor, CT and wanted to know if she knew of other experiences of other local government units in her research where she found this company to be responsive and to provide continuous support. Ms. Nikitas stated that they are not in NH, but they are in Mass. and they were able to vet them. Councilor Bandazian wanted to know if their integration with MUNIS was good and Ms. Young stated yes, and that they are already established.

**MOTION by Councilor Gilbert that the Bedford Town Council award the Time & Attendance RFP to TimeClock Plus, expend the funds previously authorized by Town Council totaling \$100k and authorize the Town Manager to sign the contract on behalf of the Town. Seconded by Councilor Bandazian. Vote taken – Motion Passed –6-0.**

**b. Other New Business – None.**

## **6. OLD BUSINESS**

### **a. PFC Update**

Mr. Sawyer mentioned that on January 11<sup>th</sup>, DES and DHHS held a public meeting in Bedford to discuss the current status of the PFC impact on the community and the results of the Merrimack Village Water District exposure assessment, which is the blood testing that took place. The PFOA serum concentration levels for people within the study came back to be approximately twice that of the national average, which is very similar to what they saw in the private well study. What that concentration level means is unclear at this point, but there is a summary that DHHS has on their website. He stated that the most frustrating and disappointing thing that he heard that night was that there's been a further delay in the announcement of the contract or bidding process to extend public water to the residents that have been on bottled water since the start of this almost two years ago. It was stated that by the end of February it is expected to have an agreement on the water line extension as well as the areas that haven't had an agreement on whether they should be connected to public water or not, which are the additional residents on Back River Road and the residents and businesses on South River Road where they've also been added to bottled water. The Town expected the bidding to be happening about now. They have at least another 30-45 days delay on that decision being made. That's the agreement that the State has with St. Gobain.

Councilor Duschatko wanted to know if Mr. Sawyer had updates on what the status was with St. Gobain and the Merrimack Village Water District on bringing the wells that are off line back on line. Mr. Sawyer stated that they are in deep negotiations with St. Gobain to bring treatment to wells 4 & 5, but nothing has been determined at this point. It sounds like they are pretty far along in their design efforts as to what it would take to do that treatment and they are pretty far along in their negotiations with St. Gobain to come to a conclusion on that. They seemed very positive that at some point those wells would receive treatment and would be brought back on, which is critical to the overall health of their entire system.

**b. Other Old Business – None.**

## **7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**a. Public Session – January 10, 2018**

**MOTION by Councilor Bandazian that the Bedford Town Council approve the minutes of the January 10, 2018 Public Session. Seconded by Councilor Gilbert. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 5-0-1 (Duschatko abstained as he was not present).**

## **8. TOWN MANAGER REPORT**

- 1) The registration period for open elected positions is Jan. 24<sup>th</sup> - 5PM Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Open Town Elected Positions:

- Three Town Council positions (3-year term)
- One Town Moderator (2-year term)
- One Library Trustee (3-year term)
- One Trustee of the Trust Fund (3-year term)
- One Supervisor of the Checklist (6-year term)

Open School District Positions:

- Two School Board positions (3-year term)
- One School District Clerk (1-year term)

Any Bedford registered voter wishing to file for Office must do so by contacting Town Clerk Lori Radke at 472-3550. The clerk will be available during office hours at the Town Office Building, 24 North Amherst Road and until 5 PM on the last day of filing. As per RSA 669:19 candidates who file on the last day of the filing period shall do so in person before the Town Clerk.

- 2) Family Snowman Challenge – build a snowman in your own yard and submit a picture by February 1<sup>st</sup>. Be sure to challenge your friends and neighbors!
- 3) Reminder that Transfer Station stickers are required to access the facility and they can be picked up at the Transfer Station with a driver's license and car registration.
- 4) January 29<sup>th</sup> – “The Slippery Slope to Substance Abuse”, presented by the Police Dept. in partnership with BeBold, 7-8 PM, Library. (youths grades 6-12 & adults)
- 5) February 4<sup>th</sup> – Sunday Concert Series, 2:30-4:00 PM, Bedford Library, “Family Concert with Steve Blunt & Marty Kelley”. RSVP through the Library.
- 6) February 6<sup>th</sup> – School Deliberative Session, 7:00 PM, Bedford High School.
- 7) February 19<sup>th</sup> – The Town Office Building, Library, and Transfer Station will be closed for Presidents Day.
- 8) February 18<sup>th</sup> – Adult & Senior Movie Matinee 2 PM “Ladies in Lavender” at Library.
- 9) March 13<sup>th</sup> – Local Election Day, 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM, Bedford High School.
- 10) March 14<sup>th</sup> – Budgetary Town Meeting, 7:00 PM, Bedford High School.
- 11) Riley Field will be closed for the upcoming season for improvements to bring it back to a safe condition. There is money in the Capital Improvement Plan that will fund the majority of the work, but they have also asked the School to contribute to it and Superintendent McGee will be requesting that before the School Board on February 12<sup>th</sup>. They will try and break ground on the improvements in late winter or early spring. It will mean having that field offline the entire 2018 year.

## **9. COUNCILOR COMMENTS**

Councilor Rombeau thanked Public Works for their continued work and getting the roads in as good condition as they have been.

Councilor Gilbert agreed with Councilor Rombeau's comments.

Councilor Duschatko thanked Public Works and wished his driveway was as maintained as well as the roads.

Councilor Stevens thought Public Works did a great job. She heard them salting when they were at Planning Board on Monday night and thanked them for their work in getting roads passable on Tuesday morning. She registered her dog and it's \$6.50. She encouraged dog owners to get that done so the Town doesn't have to send them letters. She also filed for re-election. She enjoyed her time on the Council and working with the other Councilors; even if they disagree she thought they do a great service for the citizens of the Town. She appreciates all of the input that everyone gives and really enjoys helping people out. She is hoping for three more years and if the voters let her, she will do her best to ensure that she does right by all of the residents. On Monday, February 5, packets to register kids for kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade can be picked up. Packets are due back on March 8<sup>th</sup>. On February 4<sup>th</sup> is Super Bowl day. Go Patriots!

Councilor Bandazian noticed in the staff report from December the machinations they Public Works went through in the brutally cold weather to keep their vehicles operational. He also recognizes that the Town has other great departments too and thanked them.

Chairwoman Murphy was grateful to Public Works, because the roads had been incredibly treacherous over the last couple of days and they've done a phenomenal job. She felt very safe driving home the other night from the meeting. She extended her heartfelt congratulations and good luck to Councilor Stevens on running for re-election. She hoped that other sitting Councilors that rhyme with Will Shuschatko run for re-election as well. There would still be one spot open and she would like to see somebody that has been interested in Town government run for election. If anyone has any questions feel free to get in contact with her personally or any of the Councilors or Town Manager Sawyer.

#### **4. NON-PUBLIC – RSA 91-A:3**

#### **5. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION by Councilor Duschatko to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Stevens. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 7-0.**

The public meeting ended at 7:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Boufford