

**Town of Auburn
Board of Selectmen
April 3, 2014**

Selectmen Present: Russell Sullivan, James Headd & Richard Eaton

Also Present: Gerald Demirjian, David Dion, Police Commission Chairman; Edward Picard, Police Chief; Michael Dross, Road Agent; Adele Frisella, Finance Director; Mickey Rolfe & Dennis Vieira, Residents; and William Herman, Town Administrator

Mr. Sullivan called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Former Fire & Police Station – Raymond Road

Mr. Demirjian was present to reintroduce himself to the Board and report he was near to a position where he could consider exploring the possible purchase of the former fire and police station building on Raymond Road from the Town, which had been discussed in 2010 and 2011, and approved by voters in 2011. He noted his interest in developing a garage site where he could store and work on specialized automobiles that he collects and occasionally sells. He is outgrowing the current space that he has, and needs to look elsewhere for the future.

The Board members were positive about the potential of being able to move forward. Mr. Sullivan noted his understanding was the repair and possible sale of an automobile was not to be confused with a commercial repair facility or automobile sales business, but was limited to maintaining vehicles he owned, restoring ones he may acquire and perhaps selling one or two a year. Mr. Demirjian confirmed that understanding.

Mr. Demirjian noted there was a concern with the deeds for the property in question as conveyed to the Town. Mr. Herman reported when the properties were originally transferred to the Auburn Volunteer Firemen's Association and the Town of Auburn by the Preston family, there was a reverted clause that required if the properties were not utilized by those entities they should return to the Prestons or their heirs. The Town would need to attempt to clear title and address this provision before it could consider any action on the property.

Following their discussion, it was the unanimous consensus of the Board to authorize the Town Administrator to work with Town Counsel to address the deed and title issue on the former fire & police building.

Other Business

Mr. Dion requested the Board of Selectmen reconsider their decision of March 31st and instead of making adjustments to various lines within the budget of the Police Department, that the Police Commission instead would agree to pay the approximate \$14,700 legal bill from within their budget from an account of the Commission's choosing without making any changes to the set-up of the Police Department budget.

Board members indicated they did not understand they were actually moving various line item

accounts with the action they had taken, and thought they were simply reducing the Police Department budget by \$14,700. Mr. Herman explained the vote the Board had made on March 31st and the process the Finance Director has since gone through to set the budget into the Town's budget and general ledger system. He noted that he had advised the Board once the budget is set; it is extremely difficult to change and should not be changed.

Mr. Dion indicated the Commissioners would prefer to have the Police Department budget remain unchanged and that they would pay the \$14,700 expense from the line item for Part-Time Police Officers.

The Selectmen agreed the legal expense should not be paid from the Police Department budget, but from the Selectmen's Legal Expenses account and that funds needed to be transferred for that purpose.

Finance Director Frisella explained the process involved with the Town's accounting system in first setting up the budget and how it interfaces with the Town's General Ledger, Payroll and Accounts Payable systems. She noted the budget module, once all individual account lines are set, populates the information within the various systems. She indicated it is possible to make changes, but it is extremely complicated and could take significant work to change one account line, let alone multiple account lines.

Mr. Dion then requested the Selectmen simply allow the Police Commissioners to pay the legal expenses from an account line within the Police Department budget of the Commissioners' choice. Mr. Sullivan indicated that can't happen. The Board has agreed the expenditure has to come from the Selectmen's budget accounts and funds need to be transferred there for that purpose.

Ms. Frisella advised this is not a new issue or concern, and it is not limited to one department. She indicated quite often we are asked to make changes in the new year before the budget is approved or expenditures are made for items not budgeted shortly after the budget is approved. She indicated this is not limited to any one department, but felt that it is not good planning or budgeting.

Mr. Herman and Ms. Frisella both noted under the terms of the Town's Purchasing Policy, departments are not allowed to exceed their individual budget account lines without securing the approval of the Board of Selectmen. Without the adjustments made by the Board on March 31st, the Police Department would not have adequate funds for the three full-time police officers they currently employ as the budget line only provides funding for two full-time positions. They would need to come back to the Board of Selectmen sooner than later to address that concern.

Mr. Dion then requested the Selectmen reduce the Police Sergeant's line by \$50,000, but place the full \$50,000 in the Full-Time Police Officer line, and they would pay the legal bill from that account.

Mr. Herman advised the Board that, essentially, is the action the Board of Selectmen took on March 31st. They transferred \$50,000 from the Police Sergeant's line, added \$35,000 to the Full-Time Officers line and added \$15,000 to the Board's Legal Expenditures line.

Following their discussion, it was the unanimous consensus of the Board to sustain their March 31st vote concerning budget adjustments and make no further adjustments.

Mr. Herman advised the Board it appeared there were only one or two business items for the Selectmen to consider at their evening meeting on April 7th. He noted the Board was already scheduled to meet on the morning of April 7th for the Griffin Mill Bridge project, and would they want to combine their business into one meeting on the morning of April 7th? Or would they want to have a morning and an evening meeting on April 7th?

Following their discussion, it was the unanimous consensus of the Board to hold one meeting for all business on Monday, April 7th at 8:00 a.m. at the Town Hall.

Adjourn

Mr. Eaton moved to adjourn; Mr. Headd seconded the motion; all were in favor, the meeting adjourned at 8:49 a.m.