

**TOWN OF SOMERS
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES– SPECIAL MEETING
Monday, February 4, 2008, 7:00 p.m.
Selectmen's Conference Room, Town Hall**

1. Call to order – 7:03 p.m.
2. Members present – Kathleen Devlin, David Pinney, Joseph Tolisano. Also present were Marcia Mitchell, Exec. Asst./Operations Manager, as recording secretary, and Greg Simmons, CFO.
3. Appointments – Mr. Pinney, in conversations with Mafalda Carra, has determined that she is ready to come off the Somers Housing Authority. He has identified another Woodcrest Resident, Mary Lou Hastings, willing to be appointed to the open position. ***Ms. Devlin moved that the Board of Selectmen appoint Mary Lou Hastings to the Somers Housing Authority for a five-year term to expire on 12/22/2012. Mr. Tolisano seconded, and the motion unanimously carried.***
4. Budget review – Mr. Pinney proceeded with an overview of the current year's finances in preparation for review of the draft budget proposal. The two major areas of review were salaries and fuel. In the review of year-to-date salaries expended and remaining, Mr. Pinney said that the budget is solvent on salaries. Based on the fuel expenditures to date, using the average fuel consumption from February-June over the last three years, and assuming an average price per gallon of \$2.70, Mr. Pinney expects that we will need to transfer funds into the fuel lines for all departments in order to finish the year. Mr. Pinney said that he would like the Board to consider a 30-60 day freeze on expenditures given this outlook. After further conversation, ***Mr. Tolisano moved that the Board of Selectmen freeze discretionary expenses for 60 days, with the process to be developed and administered by the First Selectman, CFO and Operations Manager. Ms. Devlin seconded and the motion unanimously carried.***

Mr. Pinney went on to discuss the current budget proposal for the coming fiscal year. The proposal as it stands, after minor adjustments by Mr. Pinney, sets the budget at 5.66% over last year's approved budget. The guidance from the Board of Finance for developing the new budget was 4.4%. The Selectmen agreed that cuts would need to be made to get closer to the guidance. Since the budget projects a 37% increase in the cost of heating and fuels based on the last three years' average usage, the Selectmen reviewed other budget areas for potential reductions. Ms. Devlin commented that, if at all possible, the funding for a full-time social services director needed to be maintained. Mr. Pinney responded that the proposed budget combines the cost of current Social Services director and the Municipal Agent for the Elderly. With the combination of these and some available grant funds, the town should be able to attract a credentialed Social Services professional. Mr. Simmons then explained the rationale for budgeting the un-funded liability for accrued vacation and sick days. If all retirement-eligible employees take retirement during the coming budget year, the liability for accrued vacation and sick days would exceed the \$50,000 budgeted by 60%. Website development was not funded in the prior budget year, and is becoming a critical need. After further discussion of all the lines in the areas of personnel, heat, and fuel, workers' comp, fire building/vehicle maintenance and road maintenance, the following reductions were recommended:

Budget	Rationale	1st Selectman analysis	Selectmen recommend	Savings
Engineering (outside)	Have town engineer on staff	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Fire Marshal	Set new staff to available funds	\$31,200	\$25,000	\$6,200
Library Part-time (for Children's Library relocation)	Set services available at temporary location to available funds	\$85,630	\$79,630	\$6,000
Fire Department OT	Revise scheduling	\$15,000	\$12,000	\$3,000
Transfer Station OT	Revise scheduling	\$10,000	\$8,000	\$2,000
Total proposed savings				\$22,200

Mr. Pinney commented that this was a good start, but more reductions would need to be identified to bring the budget closer to the 4.4% guidance recommended by the Board of Finance. He, Mr. Simmons & Ms. Mitchell will continue to identify areas of opportunity prior to the next BOS meeting scheduled on 2/11/08.

Ms. Devlin recalled a discussion at the Budget Forum earlier this year asking why the vote for the school and town budgets could not be separated. The conclusion that evening was that the Town should conduct an informational referendum to determine what residents wanted to see in terms of where (Town or School) budget cuts should be made and the amount (fixed for both or different for Town and School) of any necessary budget cuts. Mr. Tolisano and Mr. Pinney agreed that this item should be kept on the agenda as a reminder.

5. Authorize Scheduled Payments – after a brief review, ***Ms. Devlin moved that the Board of Selectmen authorize payments scheduled on 1/31/08 and 2/4/08 in the amount of \$209,441.25. Mr. Tolisano seconded, and the motion unanimously carried.***
6. Adjournment at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
 Marcia L. Mitchell
 Executive Assistant/Operations Manager
 Recording Secretary

MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVED AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING