

**MINUTES – EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order by Mr. Weiss at 9:25 p.m.

**ATTENDANCE**

Present: Gerry Weiss, Diana Stein, Alisa Brewer, Stephanie O'Keeffe

Absent: (none)

Present: Town Manager Larry Shaffer

**PURPOSE**

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining.

**DISCUSSION**

Mr. Shaffer provided a document with call numbers, town stipends and insurance reimbursements from Hadley, Leverett, Pelham and Shutesbury. He discussed his goal of increasing Hadley's stipend with a five-year commitment, and said he expects Hadley officials to make their decision by December.

If Hadley opts not to contract with Amherst for services, layoffs from Amherst's department are not expected, because the lost revenue would be made up through other new revenue sources, including increased ambulance fees, money from UMass and Amherst College, and increased stipends from the other towns. If Hadley does not contract with Amherst, Amherst will still be required to provide mutual aid, as would Hadley be required to provide it to Amherst.

Mr. Shaffer said that fear of layoffs if the Hadley contract isn't completed is one of the issues in the collective bargaining negotiations with the Firefighters Union. Another issue is the option to hire EMTs and paramedics who are not also trained as firefighters. The union contract expired in FY07, and they have been operating without a contract for a year and a half. Mr. Shaffer said that ambulance calls are on the increase so it may be desirable to have more EMTs. He said that more single-purpose EMTs could either alter or augment the firefighter staffing. He said that all firefighters would continue to be cross-trained as EMTs, while not all EMTs would be firefighters. There was discussion of the excellence of the student firefighter force, and how the top officials in the Fire Department all were originally part of that.

The Select Board's desire to be made aware of major policy changes while they are being considered and before they are pursued was emphasized.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**VOTED** unanimously by roll call vote to adjourn the executive session at 10:22 p.m.