

**Joint Meeting
Select Board & Finance Committee**

**Friday, January 14, 2011 – 4:00p.m.
Town Room, Town Hall**

MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD:

Attendance from the Select Board:

Present from the SB: Stephanie O’Keeffe (Chair), Alisa Brewer, Diana Stein (Clerk pro-tem), Jim Wald . **Absent:** Aaron Hayden

Town manager: John Musante

Others speaking: Patricia Holland, Larry Kelley,

Call to order:

Chair O’Keeffe called the Select Board meeting to order at 4:07 p.m. as did Andy Steinberg for the Finance Committee.

Ms. O’Keeffe welcomed everyone.

Mr. Steinberg read a short statement defining the budget problems. He noted that the stimulus money that helped last year is largely gone, that the override voted last year helps, that the recommendations from BCG will be considered carefully but that developing the budget to be recommended by the Finance Committee by mid-April will be difficult.

Mr. Musante said that, due to the recent inclement weather, the full budget books were not yet available but he distributed the detailed Town Manager's Proposed FY 12 Municipal Budget - Executive Summary of Jan 14, 2011. This is also available to everyone on line. He walked us through this budget and some key points from the introduction are cited from this document.

His recommended FY 12 Town of Amherst Municipal Budget includes the following:

• General Fund	\$18,591,919	0.0%
• Water Fund	4,101,543	-2.4%
• Sewer Fund	3,763,199	-0.3%
• Solid Waste Fund	549,716	+3.3%
• Transportation Fund	1,062,688	+9.8%

His budget assumes:

- that the Commonwealth will reduce aid to towns and school districts for an unprecedented *fourth* consecutive year, and

- that this year there will be a reduction of 12.5% in FY 12, or a cut of \$1.7 million, plus additional aid cuts made directly to the Regional Schools, and
- that the Town will levy to the property tax levy limit allowed under Proposition 2 ½, or \$40.2 million. This amount includes the remaining \$427,000 of levy capacity not used in the current year following the passage of the \$1.68 million override last spring.

New growth is estimated at only \$300,000 added to the levy, and increased revenue from the local option taxes will also be modest.

No reserves are utilized to support the proposed budget.

Mr. Musante detailed the rest of the summarized budget and discussed the many good things that are happening in Amherst that brighten the picture such as the Lord Jeffrey Inn reopening and the prospect of getting a large solar array on the old landfill.

He then took questions.

Ms. Holland asked if money is set aside in the budget for collective bargaining and was assured that it was.

Mr. Kelley commented that it was good that there was no request for another override.

Mr. Jackson (FC) noted that Mr. Musante is doing double duty as Finance Director and Town Manager and wondered who was going to replace Mr. Musante. He was assured that we hope to have a new Finance Director in about two weeks.

There will be additional follow-up discussion and clarification of the budget details at future Select Board meetings as necessary and Ms. Brewer pointed out that everyone should ask questions about the budget early and often.

ADJOURNMENT

Stephanie O’Keeffe moved to adjourn at 5:11 p.m. and the Select Board and Finance Committees voted unanimously to do so.

Corrections welcome!

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Stein

List of Documents

(Any documents listed here can be found in the Packet Archive for this meeting date on the Select Board archive section of the Town web site).

Town Manager's Proposed FY 12 Municipal Budget - Executive Summary of Jan 14, 2011