HARRISON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING
Thursday March 9, 2017 – 7:00P.M.

Present:  Vice Chairman William Winslow, Selectman Richard St. John, Selectman Achille Belanger, Selectman Raymond Laplante, Town Manager George Finch, Secretary Melissa St. John

Absent: Chairman Matthew Frank

Public:LRTV, 1 public

1. Pledge of Allegiance – Led by Vice Chairman Winslow

2. Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Vice Chairman Winslow

3. Public Participation (Non-Agenda Items)

4. Approval of Warrants #33 - #37

Motion to accept the Fiscal Year 2016/17 Financial Warrants #33 - #37 made by Selectman Laplante, 2nd by Selectman Belanger. Approved 4-0.

5. Approval of minutes – February 10, 2017

Motion to accept the February 10, 2017 meeting minutes made by Selectman St. John, 2nd by Selectman Laplante. Approved 4-0.

6. Old Business – None

7. New Business
   a. Quit claim deeds

Motion to grant Terrance & Patricia Thompson quit claim deeds on their tax acquired parcels, Map 01, Lot 4-14, Lot 4-15, and Lot 4-A, made by Selectman St. John, 2nd by Selectman Laplante. Approved 4-0.

8. Other Business
   a. Election information – See attached
   b. March 23, 2017 and April 27, 2017 meeting

Requesting to add these meetings to the calendar because we are headed into a time sensitive time of year. There are several items that are works in progress that may need Board decisions or direction over the next couple of months.

Meetings confirmed added to the schedule.
9. Manager’s Report

- **FY17 Financial Update** – The municipal operation portion of the FY17 budget is running tighter than I would prefer, after eight months, when compared with past years. The end of fiscal year bottom line in June is still in projected to be in the black.
  
  - Administration remains the strongest at this point and is expected to be under budget at the end of the fiscal year by $20,000 or 4.7%. This is due to personnel changes that are still under evaluation as we head into the final phase of preparing next year’s budget.
  
  - Public Works, as most would expect, is the one area where I am most concerned. This winter has been harsh on equipment, material, (sand & salt), and personnel. I would like to tell you we are out of the woods, so to speak, but it is not uncommon to have storms into April. We do have carry forward funds from last year’s milder winter but it is too early to count on the final budget outcome.
  
  - Fire & Rescue is running slightly over budget as we had a lot of fire & rescue responses in the first half of the year. The second half started out as if it would average out but the last week or so has once again seen an increase in calls.
  
  - Solid waste & Transfer Station is pretty much on target for this time of year and expectations for the end of the fiscal year in June.
  
  - Parks & Recreation is on track and should finish the year on target.
  
  - Insurance, Public Safety and Community Services are all on track with expectations of being slightly under budget.

- **FY18 Budget Update** – The budget process has taken a different track this year, which is fine, but complicates the process we have utilized the past 6-years. Other than the amount of time we have put into it the end result is expected to remain as targeted. The direction I have been given is to hold the bottom line on property taxes and we will make that happen on at least the municipal side of the budget when the work of my staff, the Budget Committee and the Board of Selectmen is completed. The big unknown remains with what the education budget will be and while there is some flexibility to hold the bottom line we do have limits on what we control. We are at a point on the municipal side of the budget we are only left with reduction in force, (RIF), as an alternative.
  
  - FY15 Mill Rate - $10.95
    FY16 Mill Rate - $11.15
    FY17 Mill Rate - $10.95
    FY18 Mill Rate Target - $10.95 - $11.15 – Currently projected at $11.07 so we are in the range I have been given but I still remain concerned about the final education numbers.

One item I would like to address will be legal expenditures other than the norm which accounts for about $2,500 per year under administration. The issue is how to deal with legal costs dealing with Code Enforcement and others where typically when you authorize us going forward with a case we are confident we are going to win and be reimbursed. While winning and being reimbursed is always good it most often falls out of the year the legal funds were expended with payment of legal fees and fines happening in another fiscal year. What is being recommended is that we set up a
reserve account for legal services similar to accounts such as capital equipment and capital roads. This would be a self-funding account where funds for expenses would be drawn down as necessary and all judgment revenues for legal fees and penalties would be reimbursed to that account. This would alleviate the need to project costs which may not incur and revenues that may not incur into the annual property taxes.

If all goes as planned I hope to have the budget wrapped up and presented to the public at the Thursday, April 9th Selectmen’s Meeting.

- **Public Works Road Projects** – Bids for the 2017 road projects will go out on Friday with a bid return date of the 31st. Due to the extreme road issues this year we have held off the bidding a bit longer to ensure there was no new damage on the roads scheduled to be paved that could cause unanticipated issues. We now feel confident the roads in question have survived what has been a tough winter on our road system. Dawes Hill Road, Deer Hill Road, Buck Road & Fog Road are scheduled for grinding and paving. Town Farm Road will have ditching and culvert replacement in preparation for the following year. A few short roads within the town center area, based on bid prices, will have paving work done also. Full details will be available upon acceptance of bids.

- **Town Office Parking Lot** – With spring in the air we will once again begin the task of reconstructing the upper parking lot at the Town Office as soon as the ground sufficiently dry enough to complete the project.

- **Contract Negotiations** for our employees covered by the bargaining unit are now underway and will need to be discussed in executive session at the end of this meeting. The employees at Public Works, the Transfer Station and one person at the Town Office are covered under the contract which was created the year before I became Town Manager in 2010. This, I expect, will be their third-three year contract if negotiations go as expected.

- **My Employment** – As we have discussed before, although I am not particularly concerned, it is again that time to plan on the path the Town desires to pursue in terms of my employment contract. If the Town desires to continue my services beyond December 2017 it is important we address it now for if you are not then we need to start the process for a replacement. If you do not desire to continue my services I am fine with that also. My personal desire to continue to serve the community is based on the desire of the town to continue my employment matched with my willingness to stay in Harrison. As long as I am wanted and I have the health to do so I am willing to continue as your Town Manager. For those who can recall I only applied to be the interim Town Manager in 2010, a position that would have been for 3 to 6 months until the search for a permanent manager was completed. I have now been here 6 years and 4 months which is well beyond being an interim manager. I will be 68 in April and it is important to me to plan the latter stages of my life, if that means moving on I will do so peacefully in my mind knowing I have served the Town well. Otherwise as noted I will stay as long as the Town continues to move forward, wants my services and I am capable of performing the duties. I am comfortable with the continuation of the current which I have had for a number of years now and willing to continue with this until I ultimately do move on.

- The contract would remain at the same salary of $69,160 with the same benefit package of $24,752.52 to cover health, dental and life insurance, vehicle/travel and cell phone, etc.
10. Executive Session - 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(D) – labor negotiations

Motion to enter executive session to discuss labor negotiations, made by Selectman Laplante, 2nd by Selectman Belanger. Approved 4-0. Entered at 7:42 p.m.

Came out of executive session at 8:17 p.m. No action taken.

11. Adjourn

Motion made and carried to adjourn at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Matthew Frank, Chairman

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Melissa St. John, Secretary