

Subject to Approval

BOARD OF SELECTMEN FY09/10 BUDGET WORKSHOP
February 12, 2009

PRESENT: First Selectman H. William Davis, Jr.
Selectman Carol Hubert
Selectman Ken Kerin
Selectman Barbara McLaughlin
Selectman Stuart Somers
Selectman John Turk

ALSO PRESENT: Treasurer Bill Sarosky, Tax Collector Penny Cognato,
Land Use Administrator DeLoris Curtis, Director of
the Pomperaug Health District Dr. Neil Lustig, Dr.
Paul Nee, State Police Sgt. Ken Kramer, Police Cpl.
Jim Houle, Assistant to the First Selectman Jennifer
Naylor, and Office Manager Noreen Thompson

Members of the Board of Finance Richard Hill, Donna Pereira,
and John Reilly

The workshop on February 12, 2009 was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in Room 205 of the Southbury Town Hall.

10065 – Tax Collector

Tax Collector Penny Cognato explained her budget to the Board. Ms. Cognato said there are two full time people besides herself – an assistant tax collector and a clerk. (Per her job description, the clerk also does work for other town departments.) There is a part time person for about six weeks from the end of June through the beginning of August. This part time summer help is under the First Selectman's budget. Treasurer Sarosky said the First Selectman has control over all part time help. First Sel. Davis said the person is hired and assigned to the Tax Collector's office. In answer to a question Ms. Cognato said the part time person is needed because at the end of June between 17,000 and 19,000 motor vehicle tax bills go out. Almost all the motor vehicle taxes are then collected in full in July. Board of Finance member Dick Hill asked if tax collections were on track. Treasurer Sarosky said they were two-tenths of a percent less.

10074 – Planning Commission

Land Use Administrator DeLoris Curtis explained the planning budget to the Board. In answer to a question she said the town had received a matching grant of \$3,100 from the state for the Farmers' Market next summer. The state allows the town to match the grant with in-kind services (the time town employees spend on the market, postage, etc.). The state sets the fee the vendors pay. It is a state program. Ms. Curtis said the market lost \$218 last year (the first year of the market). In answer to a question from Sel. Hubert, Ms. Curtis said an aquifer protection study has not yet been done, although it is in the five year plan. She said Aquifer Protection Regulations have been in place since the 1980s.

Board of Finance member Dick Hill asked if the \$18,500 left to be spent on professional services in 08/09 was going to be spent. Ms. Curtis said that because of the new fees for professional services going into effect March 1, the \$18,500 would probably not be spent. However, Ms. Curtis feels the amount budgeted for professional services in FY09/10 is still needed. This is because in Connecticut the time clock runs from the day an application comes in, and there is no time to wait for the Commission to decide what review is needed and then to get the money from the applicant before hiring the professional expert(s). Ms. Curtis said she needs money in the budget to get the review process started, even though the applicant will eventually pay for the expert review. The same argument applies to professional services under 10075 – Inland Wetlands and 10076 Zoning. However, Sel. Kerin suggested that \$5,000 - \$10,000 could be cut from the total of the three professional services pots. There was some discussion as to the need for a budget column showing estimated offsets so the net effect on taxpayers is seen.

Ms. Curtis was concerned about a capital request for a comprehensive update of the Masterplan for Conservation & Development that is due to be done in 2012. The update is mandated every ten years for collecting state grants. She said the Masterplan update would cost \$50,000 - \$60,000. Dick Hill said there is \$46,982 in the capital fund for the update. First Sel. Davis said something would be added to that this year, but probably not the \$15,000 requested. Treasurer Sarosky assured Ms. Curtis that there is adequate money in the GIS account to continue upgrades.

10075 – Inland Wetlands Agency

DeLoris Curtis explained the Inland Wetlands budget to the Board. Ms. Curtis said the operating expenses figure included \$300 to purchase the round decal wetland markers and \$820 for mandated training and certification for the wetlands enforcement officer. She said they had cut down on subscriptions and memberships.

10076 – Zoning Commission

DeLoris Curtis explained the zoning budget to the Board. Again the professional services figure was questioned. Ms. Curtis instanced the need for lighting consultants to review future new regulations on outdoor lighting (requiring knowledge of new standards, LED lights, etc.).

10100 – Pomperaug Health District

District Director Neil Lustig and District Board member for Southbury Dr. Paul Nee represented the health district. Southbury pays the Pomperaug Health District \$7.95 per capita per year (in the upper half of the mid range for Connecticut health districts). First Sel. Davis suggested reducing the payment to \$7 per capita (in the mid range for local health districts). Mr. Lustig said that 09/10 would be the third year the per capita request is \$7.95. He said getting down to \$7 would be disastrous. Mr. Lustig said the salaries are budgeted to go up 3.5%, but that will probably be reduced to zero by the Health District Board. He reported that the Pomperaug Health District is bringing in grant money to do health assessments of the community and change the focus of the District. John Reilly pointed out that the Health District is carrying a fund balance equal to about 17% of the District's total operating budget. Mr. Lustig agreed to get back to the Board of Selectmen with a revised proposal in the next couple of weeks. Mr. Lustig pointed out that fees are down. He said they collected about \$250,000 in fees from the three towns in 2004, and they anticipate collecting about \$150,000 in fees in FY 09/10.

10091 – Communications

Sgt. Ken Kramer and Cpt. Jim Houle explained the communications budget to the Board. They have budgeted for five full time dispatchers although there are currently four. They want a fifth full time person so as to return to having two dispatchers on duty between 10am and

6pm. A cross-trained police officer has been filling in when things are busy. \$35,000 of the \$38,000 budgeted for equipment maintenance is for the Motorola contract.

10092 – Police Protection

Sel. Hubert asked about the \$2,000 reduction in the D.A.R.E. budget. Sgt. Kramer said the \$3,000 left was enough for the workbooks for the children – no prizes, T-shirts, etc. Sgt. Kramer explained that they would like to promote one officer to Corporal and one officer to Investigator, but that they had not included the money for those promotions in their budget for FY09/10. The police have 10 cruisers, 1 Expedition, and 1 under-cover car. To buy gas, each car has a card/fob and each officer has a PIN number. Uniform cleaning cost \$3 for a shirt and \$3 for a pair of pants. The police have called around to other places and this is the cheapest. When the new server is installed the finger print machine can be used, and they will start paying on the finger print machine lease. It was noted that the Governor wants to increase the amount that towns pay for a state trooper from 70% of the trooper's cost to 85% of the cost next year and 100% in two years. Sgt. Kramer said he needs back the \$1,000 that was dropped on the Armorer line and in return he will drop the training budget by \$2,000.

10093 – Civil Preparedness

The FY09/10 budget is the same as this year.

Upon a motion by Sel. Hubert, seconded by Sel. McLaughlin, it was agreed to cancel the budget workshop session scheduled for Friday, February 13, 2009.

At 9:25 p.m. the budget discussion was tabled until Wednesday, February 18, 2009, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jocelyn Bagger