Minutes
Of
The Foxboro Water and Sewer Commissioners
December 21, 2010

Members in Attendance: Chairman Phillip Henderson, Clerk W. Euerle, Superintendant L. Potter

The Board is meeting with the members of the Board of Selectmen and the Town Manager in the Gala Meeting Room of the Foxboro Town Hall

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

This joint meeting is being held to discuss the merger proposed by the Town Manager Kevin Paicos of the Water and Sewer Department and the Highway Department into a Department of Public Works (DPW).

Town Manager Kevin Paicos gave a PowerPoint presentation on why he feels there is a need to create a DPW including cost savings and coordination of road repair and snow plowing. He suggests having a DPW for a one-year trial basis. He also proposes having a Town Engineer position created with the cost savings. Additionally he proposes providing management assistance to Plainville for their DPW, the DPW Superintendant would work with them 15 hours a week; Plainville would pay $30,000 to the town for this service.

Mr. Paicos has met with the staff of both departments to explain the proposal. He explained that no staff would be moved immediately, time is needed to make this proposal work. The clerical savings would not be in this year's budget.

The DPW director would be a manager, so he wouldn't necessarily need all the water licenses, there would be workers with those qualifications. Current Superintendant Leo Potter has a P.E. as well as 30 years experience; there was no one even close to that who applied for his position. A complete replacement of the current Superintendant would cost the town around $130,000 per year. An application process for a DPW director would be necessary and the current Highway Superintendant, Bob Swanson, would be invited to apply.

L. Potter pointed out that if the Water Superintendant is eliminated, there will be a void that needs to be addressed.

Selectmen Larry Harrington addressed an anonymous letter that was received by stating that the town would take advantage of retirements to reduce costs without layoffs.

There was a discussion on hiring an outside auditor for a rate analysis at a cost of $20,000 to $25,000.

Some of the savings could be reinvested in technology in Town Hall such as the telephone system.

P. Henderson stated that he has spoken with the Town Manager and appreciates the fresh prospective but wanted to point out that the Water and Sewer department is unique with unique

requirements for the job. The water quality affects everyone it town and he is concerned that not enough emphasis is being placed on the Water and Sewer aspect of the merger. He feels an operations manager would be needed for water and sewer distribution and treatment, the water and sewer employees can go to the highway department, but the highway department employees cannot go to the water and sewer department, too much emphasis is being placed on roadwork.

W. Euerle commented that this discussion is long overdue but feels that this proposal will result in less manpower that what is currently available. More engineering support is needed now, there are lots of state reports that need to be completed that the current Superintendant struggles to complete on top of all his other duties. There are questions of how this could be done and lots of details to be worked out. He does feel there is room to put it all together but the town must be sensitive of the needs of the employees and make sure that they are all treated well.

L. Potter added that it will take awhile to change the mindset of the employees. Cross-training will be necessary and it will take time to make it work.

Selectman Harrington added that they are not approving the structure tonight, just giving the Town Manager permission to take it to the next level and start putting a plan together.

Mr. Paicos stated that he will work with the employees in both departments but the town needs to do more with less and what can we afford to loose and still get a quality product. The budgets are due in 1 ½ months and this concept needs to be included in that budget. He stated that he is not asking for a vote tonight, but wants to know if both boards are in support of the plan. Some of the details will have to be worked out by the future director and a town meeting vote for funding would be needed.

Selectmen Harrington made a motion that the Town Manager and the Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners flush out the details and take it to the next level with the understanding that the concept would be approved. Selectmen Mortenson seconded the motion for discussion.

The water department needs capable and certified personnel due to many state requirements.

Highway Superintendant Bob Swanson stated that he agrees with the concept and feels that expertise is needed in the water department, there will be enhanced snow plowing and cost savings to the town.

Water department employee Mike Walker thinks that more review is needed. He would like to know the cost savings on having the water department employees plowing all night and then running the treatment plants the next day. He suggests this be tracked through the winter to see what the savings could be.

P. Henderson feels that the town can't afford a drop in water quality; a subcommittee is needed to go through the details.

The motion carried 5-0-0.

The Board left the Board of Selectmen meeting at 8:40 p.m. and moved back to the Water department to continue their meeting.

The Board reviewed the minutes of October 26th and November 9th. M. Stanton may have comments that need to be reviewed so these minutes will be put on the next agenda.

Meeting dates were set for January 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th.

A motion to approve payment to AECOM in the amount of $61,000 for design services for the Oak Street treatment plant was approved 2-0.

In regards to the sewer easement for the Wall Street project, L. Potter hasn't heard from the attorney on the easement paving issue. He suggests that the Board approve the contract for J. Hockman so that work can be started while this issue is worked out. Weather is becoming an issue as well as a public safety issue if any more of the pipe breaks.

A motion to sign the contract with J. Hockman Co. for the work at 10-20 Wall Street and for work to proceed pending a satisfactory solution from the attorney in regards to the easement was approved 2-0.

The Board would like an option for Executive Session on all future agendas.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diana Gray

****

These minutes of December 21, 2010 were approved as amended on February 22, 2011.

William C Euerle

William Euerle, Clerk