

Town of Danville  
Special Selectboard Minutes  
January 13, 2022  
Danville Town Hall (6:00 pm)

**Board Members Present Using Microsoft Teams:** Eric Bach, Kellie Merrell, Kristin Franson and Peter Griffin

**Board Members Absent:** Ken Linsley

**Others Present Using Microsoft Teams:** Virginia Incerpi, Keith Gadapee, Bill Bailey, Clayton Cargill, Tasha Cochran and Jonathan Austin Shortt

**Others Present:** Audrey DeProspero and Wendy Somers

**Meeting was called to order** by Vice Chair Eric Bach at 6:00 pm.

1. **Issues and Information (All)**

(a) **Budget – Highway Budget**

Highway budget carry over discussed.

Keith Gadapee discussed Joe's Brook Road grant having paving built in to it. He also discussed the payroll line and labor line noting that last year a part time position was included but no one was hired to fill that position.

Eric Bach noted all increases based on not having a part time person.

Peter Griffin inquired about the qualifying number for the tax rate.

The qualifying number was discussed that determines the tax rate.

Keith Gadapee noted it was the budget number minus revenues that the Town does not have to cover.

Peter Griffin discussed quality of service to Town and people hesitant about raising taxes.

Eric Bach discussed payroll and benefits noting the benefit package is roughly \$34,000 per person for the Highway Department and their base rate is \$19.12. He also discussed the 16% increase and no long-term reward for longevity.

Discussed was the current 5.9% increase, and how the Highway department gets their hourly rate from start pay. Suggested was to look at the base pay and longevity and persons capping out at a dollar figure. Payroll comparisons were sent out for review by the Selectboard. Noted was a 5.9% raise was being given by surrounding towns and an actual scale system was being used however other benefit packages were different and much lower.

Eric Bach proposed to the Selectboard that before their next budget season they should sit with the Highway Department and talk about how to make a step system so that the pay is rewarding.

Kellie Merrell discussed govsalaries.org and her comparisons of other town employee salaries. She looked at towns with a similar population size as Danville.

Keith Gadapee noted he sought a \$22 hourly rate for the highway guys.

Eric Bach discussed Australian ballot for Town Meeting Day and Thursday January 20<sup>th</sup> needing to make a final decision on the budget.

Keith Gadapee met with Timmy Ruggles and walked Hill Street. He wondered if the Selectboard was going to choose to do something on Hill Street and if they were would they choose a Warrant Article for Town Meeting and not include the cost in budget.

Wendy Somers noted she would have to call VLCT to find out, if they were to use the ARPA funds for Hill Street.

Kellie Merrell noted ARPA funds were not in the budget as she thought VLCT had mentioned not to mention ARPA funds until VLCT reviews the document that explains how ARPA funds can be used.

Keith Gadapee discussed development of shovel ready projects, scoping study, paying for engineering costs on these projects and wondered how much more money would the Town want to spend on planning for these projects.

Kristin Franson noted the funds came with restrictions and they were waiting to see what funds could be used for.

### **General Budget**

Eric Bach discussed surplus from last year and moving the monies into the Capitol Building Fund to help out. He noted the fund was down \$70-80,000 due to what they had previously committed.

Jonathan Austin Shortt discussed stipend amount for the Fire Department and trying to figure out how to distribute. He noted the Fire Department gained three members last year and the each was given \$100 per person and an additional \$500 could be earned by them. He discussed the Fire Department budget and their Capital Equipment Fund and the replacement of future vehicles based on twenty-year period due to different ages of vehicles.

Kellie Merrell offered assistance to the Fire Department for applying for Firefighter grants from FEMA.

Eric Bach discussed county tax rate, general insurance and insurance numbers received for budget.

Selectboard discussed payroll and benefits and wondered if the increase should be the same across the board or a step process.

### **(b) Town Meeting**

Eric Bach noted Town Meeting could be done virtually with everything on Australian Ballot making it the same as last year's Town Meeting. There is a bill that may be passed which eliminates petitions for candidates so persons would not need to go door to door for signatures.

*Motion by Kellie Merrell, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kristin Franson to hold a virtual Town Meeting Day and to vote by Australian Ballot. Vote 4-0-0. Motion carries.*

Ballot distribution discussed and decision was to have postages paid both ways for mailing out of ballots because cost for return postage was built into the budget.

Virginia Incerpi noted she missed having in person Town Meeting but would like persons to be able to talk about the ballot articles and hear from Selectboard about the information on the ballot so that residents will be able to make an informative decision.

2. **Adjourn** – *Motion by Peter Griffin, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kellie Merrell to adjourn at 8:34 p.m. All in favor.*

Minutes taken by Audrey DeProspero submitted January 14, 2022 at 11:43 pm.