

Town & Village of Woodstock
Select Board & Village Trustees Joint Meeting
January 25, 2021
6:45 pm
Zoom
Minutes

Draft minutes are subject to approval.

Present: Chair Mary Riley, Jill Davies, L.D. Sutherland, John Doten, Keri Cole, Chair Jeffrey Kahn, Seton McIlroy, Daphne Lowe, Brenda Blakeman, Bill Corson, William Kerbin, Nikki Nourse, Zoie Parent, Elijah Lemieux, Ray Bourgeois, Roger Logan, Fire Chief David Green, Karim Houry

A. Call to order

1. Select Board

- a. Chair Riley called to order the joint meeting of January 25, 2021 at 6:49 pm.

2. Trustees

- a. Chair Kahn called to order the joint meeting of January 25, 2021 at 6:48 pm.

B. Additions to or deletions from the posted agenda – none.

C. New business

1. FY22 budget discussion

- a. Chair Kahn stated that last week the Trustees had a meeting to discuss the budget. He did some research regarding the employee raise increase. He found minutes from three years ago. At that time, they had a discussion that the raise would be the cost-of-living increase. He urges the Trustees to change that one figure in the Village budget. He believes it is appropriate to go with 2.5%. This would be above the CPI. Dispatch is also at 2.5%.
- b. Mr. Corson stated that in terms of total dollars 3% is not much more than 2.5%. It does not seem like a huge difference. He comes from an employment benefits background and 3% was the norm. He believes a tier makes sense based on performance. They should have a set percentage to increase wage, plus a performance bonus if deserved.
- c. Mr. Sutherland agrees with Mr. Corson. The Village only pays 25% of salaries. It is not a big dollar amount. It is not the proper time to change this. Taxpayers want their employees to live here, work here, and send their kids to school here. They should move forward with this.
- d. Chair Riley stated that she does not recall a signed policy stating it would be a 2.5% increase and go no higher. Our employees work hard every day. She was pleased to see the 3% when she first saw the budget this year. They need to pass the budget within the next couple of days.
- e. Mr. Kerbin stated that the Town and Village can vote differently on this.

Motion: by Chair Kahn to approve the Village budget for FY22 with the one change to wages to 2.5%.

Seconded: by Ms. McIlroy.

Discussion: Mr. Corson stated that if the Trustees put 3% in for the wages in the budget, they do not have to use it all.

Mr. Houry stated that he is not against it but as a taxpayer he would like an explanation if they were to go away from the cost of living.

Chief Green stated that none of this was brought up until the last minute. That is why it is not sitting well with employees.

Ms. Davies stated that the budget is a document for discussion until it is agreed upon.

Mr. Logan stated that they should have a policy.

Ms. Lowe stated that they need to have some wiggle room and start at 2.5 and be able to go up to 3% or more.

Vote: 4-1-0, passed. Chair Kahn for, Ms. McIlroy for, Ms. Lowe for, Ms. Blakeman for, Mr. Corson against.

- f. Ms. Cole stated that there are larger issues at play here. They need to have policies in place going forward. She would support the 2.5% increase to wages. She would also like to forego the Select Board pay for FY22.

Motion: by Ms. Cole to approve the Select Board budget with the one change to the employee wages to 2.5% and to forego the Select Board salaries for FY22.

Seconded: by Ms. Davies.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 2-2-1, motion did not pass. Ms. Davies for, Ms. Cole for, Chair Riley against, Mr. Doten against, Mr. Sutherland abstained.

- g. Chair Riley stated that there will be a Select Board meeting tomorrow morning at 9:00 am where they can discuss this further.

- h. Ms. Davies asked Chair Kahn to share the minutes that discussed the wage increase.

Motion: by Chair Kahn to forego the Trustees salaries for FY22.

Seconded: by Mr. Corson.

Discussion: Chair Kahn stated that he wants the employees to know that they are all in the same boat in terms of COVID-19. He is happy to have the 2.5% increase for the employees.

Mr. Corson stated that he thinks it is a confidence thing for our employees to have 3%. It is important that employees have good morale.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

D. **Other business** – none.

E. **Adjournment**

1. **Select Board**

Motion: by Mr. Doten to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 pm.

Seconded: by Ms. Davies.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

2. **Trustees**

Motion: by Ms. Lowe to adjourn the meeting at 7:47 pm.

Seconded: by Mr. Corson.

Discussion: none.

Vote: none.

Respectfully submitted,
Nikki Nourse