

**TOWN OF GRANBY
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
BUDGET WORKSHOP
REGULAR MEETING**

Minutes

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March 9, 2023

Members Present: First Selectman Mark H. Fiorentino – Via Zoom
 Selectman Mark C. Neumann
 Selectman Kelly O. Rome
 Selectman Margaret Q. Chapple

Members Absent: Selectman Frederick A. Moffa

Others Present: Erica P. Robertson, Town Manager
 Kimi Cheng, Finance Director
 Scott A. Nolan, Town Clerk
 Michael B. Guarco, Jr., Board of Finance, Chairman
 Kevin F. Hobson, Board of Finance
 Kirk A. Severance, Public Works Director
 John Horr, Jr., Lost Acres Fire Department
 Lorri Dibattisto, President, Granby Ambulance Assoc.
 Carol Benham, Treasurer, Granby Ambulance Assoc.
 Joel Skilton, Building Inspector
 Sandra Yost, Director of Human Services
 Abigail Kenyon, Community Development Director

I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Selectman Mark C. Neumann, called the meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 5:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Selectman Mark C. Neumann led members of the Board of Selectmen in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. DEPARTMENT BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

A. Lost Acres Fire Department

John Horr, Jr. addressed members of the Board of Selectmen about the 2023 -2024 budget proposal and explained that they are requesting an increase of \$30,262 as the department has four new firefighters bringing the department to about 28 firefighters total and that the department is running as business as usual, but they are going to start looking into capital improvement projects and replacing fire trucks which are roughly \$1,000,000 each to replace. Further discussion took place regarding the formula for funding the Lost Acres Fire Department and the budget.

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B. Granby Ambulance Association

Lorri DiBattiso, President of the Granby Ambulance Association & Carol Benham Treasurer of the Granby Ambulance Association addressed members of the Board of Selectmen about the 2023 -2024 budget proposal and explained the difference between the Medicaid and the Medicare patients and how much they could collect from those clients which are having a negative impact and the revenues are down roughly \$100,000 as that money has been deemed non-collectible. Carol Benham Treasurer of the Granby Ambulance Association further explained some of the budgetary needs which are mostly preset due to the obligations and the nature of the work that they however planning ahead the Granby ambulance association is taking a look at their current ambulances they have in their fleet and have been watching the mileage to ensure that they're getting the most use out of them as they are very expensive to replace and that they would like to be mindful about planning this as a capital improvement item to begin a long term plan of replacing them. Carol Benham explained that they will be putting in a request for two new ones in the next few years as they take about three years to receive them after they placed the order.

C. Personal & Property Protection

Town Manager, Erica P. Robertson, Joel Skilton, Building Inspector, & Abigail Kenyon, Community Development Director addressed members of the Board of Selectmen about the 2023 -2024 budget proposal for property protection explaining that their goal is to minimize life and property losses caused by fire and to protect persons against bodily injury resulting from unlawful actions and to provide safe use of improved property according to law. Joel Skilton, Building Inspector further explained that it has been a particularly busy year for the building officials' office due to the number of building permits that have come in and that the next big project to come in will be the Station 280 which includes a variety of garages and a community building on top of the residential spaces.

Abigail Kenyon, Community Development Director addressed members of the Board of Selectmen about the measures of activity for the Fire Marshal position and that there is a slight increase in his hourly rate which will lead to a small increase in the budget request.

Abigail Kenyon, Community Development Director addressed members of the Board of Selectmen about the Emergency Management director who oversees our CERT Team which is a group of volunteers who help in cases of town-wide and local emergencies explaining that the Emergency Management director is a part-time position who works 10 hours a week and there is a slight increase in the areas of staff training and mileage reimbursement which is used for his classes and training that he needs to take.

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Town Manager, Erica P. Robertson, addressed members of the Board of Selectmen about the 2023 - 2024 budget proposal for Health Services and explained that the overall budget was up 3% and that the Farmington Valley Health District is also seeing an increase in their budget due to the recent increase in the population due to the U.S. Census. Further discussion took place regarding whether the Town of Granby was contractually obligated to appropriate the additional money requested by the Farmington Valley Health District.

D. Social / Senior / Youth Services

Sandra Yost, Director of Human Services addressed members of the Board of Selectmen about the 2023 -2024 budget proposal for the Human Services Department and explained that there is a slight increase in the budget request this year due to inflation and the rising cost of oil, gas, and electricity, along with food price increases which led to a higher need in the community. Sandra Yost, Director of Human Services went on to explain That there was a lot more support in the previous year due to the American rescue plan act funds that were allocated to help combat the pandemic. Sandra Yost, Director of Human Services also indicated that members of the community are becoming more and more willing to come back to programs offered by social services as people are becoming more comfortable getting out and about after the pandemic which has led to an increase in programming and participation. Sandra Yost, Director of Human Services also informed members of the Board of Selectman that as part of their programming, they are offering day trips which are becoming more and more popular.

Sandra Yost, Director of Human Services spoke about the Youth Services Bureau and that there has been a rise in the need for mental health counselors and that there is currently a wait to get in to see a marriage and family counselor. Sandra Yost, Director of Human Services also noted that they are trying to offset salary costs by using interns from Central Connecticut State University which has worked out well for both the community and for the students who are working on their clinical hours which are supervised. Sandra Yost, Director of Human Services also noted that there is a lot of programming done that is not paid for out of the general fund.

Sandra Yost, Director of Human Services informed members of the Board of Selectmen about the proposed budget for the Senior Center and read several testimonials from our senior citizens which elaborate on the greatness of our Senior Center, staff, programming, and facility.

E. Planning & Engineering Services (Added Agenda Item)

First Selectman Mark H. Fiorentino made a motion for the adoption of the following resolution:

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BE IT RESOLVED, that the Granby Board of Selectmen hereby amends the Board of Selectmen agenda to add the Planning & Engineering Services Budget Presentation to the agenda of the Board of Selectmen meeting of March 9, 2023.

The motion was seconded by Selectman Kelly O. Rome which passed by a unanimous voice vote **(4/0/0) MOTION CARRIES**.

Abigail Kenyon, Community Development Director addressed members of the Board of Selectmen about the 2023 - 2024 budget proposal for the Planning & Engineering budget. Abigail Kenyon, Community Development Director explained that this budget covers both the Town Engineer and the Town Wetlands consultant and that money is set aside for these two positions but that applicant fees also help to offset some of the costs for these positions.

F. Community Development (Added Agenda Item)

First Selectman Mark H. Fiorentino made a motion for the adoption of the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Granby Board of Selectmen hereby amends the Board of Selectmen agenda to add the Community Development Department Budget Presentation to the agenda of the Board of Selectmen meeting of March 9, 2023.

The motion was seconded by Selectman Kelly O. Rome which passed by a unanimous voice vote **(4/0/0) MOTION CARRIES**.

Abigail Kenyon, Community Development Director addressed members of the Board of Selectmen about the 2023 - 2024 budget proposal for the Community Development explaining that the department is responsible for the town's housing rehabilitation program, serves as the GIS coordinator, administers FEMA's flood plan regulations, administers the Planning and Zoning Commission process and there is a decrease in the payroll for temporary/part-time staff of roughly ~\$19,000.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

John Steven Wortley (*15 Granville Road*) addressed members of the Board of Selectmen regarding his support for the Lost Acres Fire Department informing members that he has been an active volunteer member of the Granby Ambulance Association (GAA) for 18+ years as a riding Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and GAA Board of Directors member. Mr. Wortley spoke in favor of the proposed budget for the Lost Acres Fire Department (*a copy of Mr. Wortley's written testimonial is recorded in these minutes*).

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V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES (ADDED AGENDA ITEM)

Vice-Chair Selectman Mark C. Neumann explained to members of the Board of Selectmen that there were two sets of Board of Selectmen meeting minutes (Board of Selectmen Special Meeting from January 17, 2023, & Three Board Meeting Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, and Board of Education from January 17, 2023) that were distributed prior to the meeting that needed to be approved that were not listed on the agenda.

Selectman Mark C. Neumann made a motion for the adoption of the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Granby Board of Selectmen hereby amends the Board of Selectmen agenda to add the following two agenda items to the March 9, 2023, Board of Selectmen meeting: the approval of the Board of Selectmen Special Meeting from January 17, 2023, & Three Board Meeting Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, and Board of Education from January 17, 2023.

The motion was seconded by Selectman Kelly O. Rome which passed by a unanimous voice vote (4/0/0) **MOTION CARRIES.**

A. Approval of Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes – January 17, 2023

First Selectman Mark H. Fiorentino made a motion for the adoption of the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Granby Board of Selectmen hereby approves the minutes of the Special Board of Selectmen meeting of January 17, 2023.

The motion was seconded by Selectman Margaret Q. Chapple which passed by a unanimous voice vote (4/0/0) **MOTION CARRIES.**

B. Approval of Three Board Meeting Minutes (Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, & Board of Education) – January 17, 2023

Selectman Mark C. Neumann made a motion for the adoption of the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Granby Board of Selectmen hereby approves the minutes of the Three Board Meeting of January 17, 2023.

The motion was seconded by Selectman Kelly O. Rome which passed by a unanimous voice vote (4/0/0) **MOTION CARRIES.**

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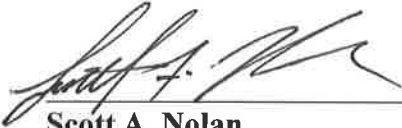
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VI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no more business to come before the meeting, Selectman Margaret Q. Chapple made a motion to adjourn the Board of Selectmen Meeting at 7:20 p.m., which was seconded by Selectman Kelly O. Rome and passed by a unanimous voice vote. (4/0/0) **MOTION CARRIES.**

Respectfully submitted & attested,



Scott A. Nolan
Town Clerk

Received for Record March 13, 2023, at 8:18 AM
By SCOTT A. NOLAN, Town Clerk

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Attachment

From: Contact form at Town of Granby CT <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>

Sent: Saturday, March 11, 2023 10:14:08 AM

To: Erica Robertson <townmanager@granby-ct.gov>

Subject: [Town of Granby CT] Speaking on Behalf of Granby Ambulance (Sent by John Steven Wortley, jswortley1@gmail.com)

Message:

This is a written transcript of the verbal message I shared at the Granby Budget Workshop on 3/9/23:

Hello, my name is John Steven Wortley, I live at 15 Granville Rd in North Granby, CT. I have been an active volunteer member of the Granby Ambulance Association (GAA) for 18+ years as a riding Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and GAA Board of Directors member.

There have been many changes for GAA over the years. Our operational costs and demand for services has increased while our volunteer base has decreased. You can count on one hand the number of active riding volunteer EMT and Paramedics. Whereas in the past, we were almost entirely volunteer based. Now, we must pay for EMT and Paramedics. In a tight and competitive job market, much of operational costs go to paying these increasing salaries and benefits, making it more difficult to make the capital equipment purchase such as new ambulances. In addition, we continue to see insufficient insurance reimbursements and higher costs for medical equipment and supplies, along with higher gas and oil prices.

As the town continues to grow, the demand for emergency medical services (EMS) and other public safety services will grow with it. The town must recognize this demand for more services and contribute more financially to GAA. Other branches of town services appear to get what they need such as fire, police and public works departments. Why does EMS end up with the short end of the stick? To date, GAA has not received any money from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), which in part was intended to help first responders and EMS resulting from the challenges presented by the COVID crisis.

We need the town of Granby to help us now, not waiting until next year or kicking the can down the road. We need to get another ambulance paid for and in service ASAP. With increases in new ambulance costs (~ 275K for a new ambulance) and lead times of 30-36 months, action is required now, not later. We cannot face these challenges alone, we need your help. The town of Granby needs to be part of the solution to the challenges we face now and in the future. Thank you - John Steven Wortley