Meeting of the Board of Selectmen held on May 8, 2023 beginning at 7:00 pm in the Ludlow High School Cafeteria, 500 Chapin Street, Ludlow

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Members present: Antonio Goncalves, Chairman, James Gennette, William Rosenblum, Derek DeBarge and Manuel Silva.

Also present: Adam Costa, Town Counsel

Board of Selectmen met before the Special Town Meeting to discuss the Selectmen's Articles.

First Order of Business: Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Gennette: Okay first order of business Mr. Strange.

Mr. Strange: Yes, do you guys want to go through the warrant quickly? We don't really have, we only have less than a half hour.

Mr. Gennette: Yes.

Mr. Strange: Unless you want to go through your motions.

Mr. Goncalves: Is our attorney here? I could have sworn I saw a guy outside with a very expensive suit on.

Talking over each other.

Mr. Strange: Oh really, okay let me go and get him.

Mr. Rosenblum: The motions are on the table out there, aren't they? Out there?

Mr. Goncalves: This is an expensive suit, I can tell.

Mr. Rosenblum: Oh, can I have my packet?

Mr. Goncalves: What's your name?

Mr. Rosenblum: Rosenberg.

Mr. Goncalves: Rosenberg.

Mr. Silva: Would you stop saying that because then you go to say it and…

Mr. Rosenblum: Well, because you guys say it all the time.

Mr. Gennette: Last page. Nope, even further back I think.

Mr. Goncalves: Why is this all confusing?

Mr. Silva: Why did we get the precinct list for 22'?

Mr. Goncalves: Watch that's going to be the guy I saw in the parking lot, I guarantee. He got out of an Audi, drinking a Dunkin Donuts coffee. Looks like he was…, went in the back seat, got his briefcase, put his coat over his arm. Attorney, you can tell. $400-500 per hour this guy.

Mr. Silva: Is it Costa?

Mr. Goncalves: I don't know. He didn't look like a Portuguese, too tall.

Mr. Gennette: This town is loaded with Portuguese.

Talking over each other.

Mr. Strange: Guys, this is Adam Costa.

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Mr. Silva: Told you!

Mr. Goncalves: Adam Costa, there we go!

Mr. Silva: I told you it was Costa.

Attorney Costa: You saw me in the parking lot?

Mr. Goncalves: No, I did. I did.

Mr. Silva: Now is that Costa as in Portuguese Costa?

Attorney Costa: It is Portuguese Costa, yes.

Mr. Silva: See, bang!

Talking over each other.

Attorney Costa: Adam Costa.

Mr. Gennette: How are you?

Attorney Costa: Good, how are you.

Mr. Goncalves: Antonio Goncalves.

Attorney Costa: How are you? Good to meet you.

Mr. Goncalves: Manny Silva.

Attorney Costa: How are you?

Mr. DeBarge: Derek, pleasure.

Attorney Costa: Pleasure to meet you.

Mr. Strange: So, the two golf articles, Sean McBride is going to do them because they were submitted by the committee.

Mr. Rosenblum: Okay, perfect. I've got the big hitter though, of course.

Mr. Gennette: You want to take one, take a few?

Mr. Rosenblum: No, I'm good.

Talking over each other.

Mr. Gennette: Alright, we are in an open meeting guys.

Mr. Goncalves: So, it was kind of funny, I saw you get out of Audi drinking the Dunkin Donuts coffee, he's got an expensive suit. I said that's the guy that's coming to this I guarantee it.

Attorney Costa: I'm glad I look the part.

Mr. Goncalves: That's what Manny said.

Mr. Strange: Why don't we, what do you guys want to do, do you want to go through the articles quickly?

Mr. Gennette: Yes, let's go through the articles real quick.

Mr. Silva: I think we've gone over the articles enough but I'm good if you want to go over them.

Mr. Goncalves: Why did I have to send you a list an hour and a half ago? Did you read them during dinner?

Mr. Silva: Yes. I want to refresh on mine. I just wanted mine, I didn't care about yours.

Mr. Goncalves: Thanks.

Mr. Rosenblum: So, I know 17 is now golf commission.

Mr. Gennette: Well, I just want to make sure we are all on the same page.

Mr. Strange: Yes.

Mr. Goncalves: Who's got the marijuana one?

Mr. Rosenblum: I do.

Mr. DeBarge: Well, let's make sure that there's not an uncomfortable silence when somebody asks a question. We do have to get involved and say stuff.

Mr. Strange: Yes and if you guys you want me to chime in, I mean I'm pretty well versed in all the articles. So if you, you know I'll wait to hear, to take your ques but,

Mr. Rosenblum: Yes, we can go Mr. Moderator, we'd like to refer to the Town Administrator.

Mr. Strange: Yes, I'm happy to…

Mr. Silva: Right and because he's Town Administrator, he doesn't have to get a vote to speak, right?

Mr. Costa: Correct.

Mr. Silva: You're fine,

Mr. Strange: Because last time they had to allow me to speak first.

Mr. Silva: And they didn't, but okay.

Mr. Gennette: Well, I will defer to you anyway.

Mr. DeBarge: Yeah, I don't think we need to go over all of them unless, my question was answered so.

Mr. Strange: So, the one thing I do want to, I realized as I was finalizing the budget stuff today and people let me know. So, there were two upgrades that did not make it into the budget and this is a question for you Adam. So, I guess the bottom line numbers that we have for the budget are going to change a little bit. So, I don't know, would that require some kind of amendment on the floor?

Attorney Costa: So, it can be done one of two ways, you can either amend the motion when you first present it. So, you don't need to make the motion, wait until it's seconded and then move to amend or you can do it the other way. Either way works. Generally speaking when were dealing with numbers, budget or otherwise it's usually the preference of the Select Board to just simply quantify the motion. And then in the explanation you give afterwards, I don't know if you have a budget presentation or is someone going to just briefly speak to it, you can say you may notice the number differs from what you have in your handout or differs from what we preferenced on the warrant, we do have the following updates and then explain why there is a difference.

Mr. Strange: Okay. So, what we would have to do is change the numbers that are in the article 18 motion to update them and increase them by $7,791, I can do that for you.

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Mr. DeBarge: Is there a way to do that, is there a way to say that and can I ask first of all how much is the difference?

Mr. Strange: So, it's $7,791, that's in the operating budget but there's also Ryan Linton's went up $7,791 but that is in the enterprise funds. So, our budget is only going up $7,800.

Mr. DeBarge: Okay. $7,800?

Mr. Strange: Yes.

Mr. DeBarge: Okay, that's what it's all about, with this audience, the only thing that matters is the number. Can we tell them before we read the motion because if we read the motion and it's a different number all hell's going to break loose and then we'll have to calm it down and then tell them why it's changed. So, can we say we have a motion in front that's amended? Can we do that first, to let them know?

Mr. Strange: I guess we could read the motion as it was presented and then amend it, right?

Attorney Costa: Right, it's really moderator's discretion. So, if that's how it's done or however it's been done in past years where the moderator will give the presenter the opportunity to preference a motion by saying I'm going to make a motion, but the number will be different than what you see in your warrant.

Mr. DeBarge: That's exactly what I'm talking about.

Attorney Costa: If that's been done before then fine. If that's not typically how the moderator does it, or the moderator is uncomfortable doing that then I would say go with the option two and make the motion that's in the warrant and then have somebody stand up and amend it with the explanation.

Mr. Strange: Yeah, that's what we should do, yes.

Mr. Goncalves: Dolly is moderating tonight, right?

Mr. Strange: Dolly is, yes.

Mr. Goncalves: Good.

Mr. Strange: And I pointed that out during the FinComm so she's aware of it.

Mr. DeBarge: That's what we should do, whoever is reading the article should say I have an amendment to this article, you know, when I read it there will be a difference in numbers.

Mr. Goncalves: So, what's the new number for James to write over here.

Mr. Strange: The new number is, I don't know where it is. I don't know where, yes so, it's that number plus $7,791.

Mr. DeBarge: I mean I'm just trying to tamper you know unnecessary…

Mr. Strange: Yeah, absolutely.

Mr. Rosenblum: People will yell from the floor, it's not in here like that!

Mr. DeBarge: Well, I mean…

Mr. Rosenblum: Which, I get it.

Mr. Strange: $80,868,618.

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Mr. Gennette: What is it again?

Mr. Goncalves: $8,088,618.

Mr. Strange: $80…

Mr. Goncalves: Oh, you're missing a zero.

Mr. Strange: $80,868,618. Eight zero comma…

Mr. Gennette: $80,868,618.

Mr. Strange: Correct.

Mr. Goncalves: Should play that number. A lot of sixes and eights.

Mr. Strange: Hang on one second.

Mr. Gennette: Do you want to take this? Are you comfortable with this?

Mr. DeBarge: What is it?

Mr. Gennette: It's the budget.

Mr. DeBarge: No, that's for you, you're the chairman.

Mr. Gennette: Are you sure you don't want it?

Mr. DeBarge: Nope.

Mr. Strange: James, you also have to add down towards the middle it says $891,517.

Mr. Gennette: Oh, yes.

Mr. Strange: You are going to have to add $7,791 to that one as well.

Mr. Gennette: Do you know what it is?

Mr. Strange: Which is…

Mr. Gennette: Instead of me scribbling out math on this.

Mr. Strange: $891,517 plus $7,791 equals $899,308.

Mr. Gennette: Thank you.

Mr. Strange: So, those numbers will be different than what they're looking at in the background information.

Mr. Gennette: And the change is the Westover Golf Course?

Mr. Strange: They were upgrades, they were upgrades that were a result of our classification plan for the Town Planner and for the Golf Course Superintendent.

Mr. Gennette: I will just defer that to you.

Mr. Strange: I'm happy to explain.

Mr. Gennette: Yeah, I will just defer to you.

Mr. Goncalves: Doug is getting a raise?

Talking over each other.

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Mr. Rosenblum: That was when we changed it, the classifications M1, M2, M3.

Mr. Strange: Yes. I actually went through the budget and I,

Mr. Goncalves: Didn't we just change classifications on some of them and not,

Mr. Strange: correct, but Doug was one of them. Doug was one of them. In fact, I went through the budget book, and I said Doug is not getting a $10,000 raise and I put it back to where it should have been and that was my fault.

Mr. Gennette: Manny, you want the budget? You would do it for me, right?

Mr. Silva: I could but…

Mr. Gennette: What was that change on that last one, what was the amount that you added to that? What did you add to that? That second one, how much?

Mr. Strange: $7,791.

Mr. Gennette: Oh, okay. I just want to make sure that when I'm reading it, that I get the right,

Mr. Goncalves: She is a precinct member.

Mr. Gennette: So, when I'm reading this motion, where is the actual motion? This is the description, right.

Mr. Goncalves: You got the background somewhere else. That's right there, yes. Read it from there. I don't think you have to read 14 pages.

Attorney Costa: It's only 7:14 sir.

Mr. Strange: Oh, one more thing you are going to have to change, which is the bottom line where it says $77,716,282 has to be raised and appropriated, that number will be that plus $7,791. $77,716,282 plus $7,791 is $77,724,073.

Mr. Gennette: $77,724,073.

Mr. Strange: Correct.

Mr. Silva: So, Marc they wrote Manny Silva I guess I won't say Manuel.

Mr. Strange: Yes, yes. It will be like Prince with a symbol, may he rest in peace.

Mr. Gennette: Am I reading off all of the values for each of these positions for their increases?

Mr. Strange: Yes.

Talking over each other.

Mr. Strange: So, I printed all of the motions for you, the warrant, the background and then for the special town meeting as well.

Attorney Costa: Yes, that's great.

Mr. Gennette: Did you tell him about Carlton?

Mr. Strange: Oh, so one of the more vocal members of town meeting, his name is Carlton, Carlton Leonard. So, he's objecting to the Board of Selectmen acting as the Board of Public Works.

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Attorney Costa: Because you didn't follow the statute?

Mr. Strange: Yes.

Attorney Costa: Yes, I've already met him.

Mr. Strange: Oh really?

Mr. Gennette: Did you?

Mr. Rosenblum: So, is he going to want to stand up and say it again just to be heard?

Attorney Costa: I suspect so, he just talked my ear off.

Mr. Rosenblum: The state approved it.

Attorney Costa: I got a call about that too.

Mr. Goncalves: But why would he be able to talk, it's not part of the business today, right.

Mr. Strange: Well, yes, there's a couple of articles that would normally be submitted by the Board of Public Works. Like the Chapter 90 stuff.

Mr. Silva: Oh yeah, right. So, it is part.

Mr. Goncalves: Right. Take it to another level.

Mr. Silva: Listen you can only mess up.

Attorney Costa: What were his concerns.

Mr. Strange: I'm not, James what did he tell you about what his concerns were or what he was saying?

Mr. Gennette: Well, he was saying that he looked into it and that he had contacted the Attorney General and the Attorney General confirmed that how we did our process, whatever it was, wasn't accurate.

Mr. Goncalves: But the Attorney General approved it after we did it.

Mr. Gennette: That's what I told him. He said no it's not, I talked to him and they didn't.

Mr. Rosenblum: We got an email back.

Mr. Gennette: That's where we are at.

Mr. Rosenblum: Didn't we get an email from your office?

Mr. Gennette: I just figure there's going to be a conversation at some point.

Attorney Costa: You might have. I mean the Attorney General would communicate directly with your town clerk in writing with a letter of approval with a warrant article. So, you either have that or you don't. He wasn't so adamant with me. He showed me the statute. He didn't say explicitly that the Attorney General told him you did it wrong. He said the Attorney General discussed it with him and that he expressed his concerns to the Attorney General's office and they said that they would look into it. Those were his words to me.

Mr. Gennette: Oh, that's not what he told me.

Mr. Strange: That goes in your packet.

Mr. Gennette: That's the bills.

Mr. Strange: That's the background for the budget article.

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Mr. Goncalves: Is everybody all set?

Moved by Mr. Goncalves to adjourn this meeting at 7:19 p.m., seconded by Mr. Rosenblum. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Chairman

All related documents can be viewed at the Board of Selectmen's Office during regular business hours.