

BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
TOWN OF CONWAY, MA  
MINUTES  
March 28, 2011

**Meeting Open: 7:00PM**

**Present:** Maureen Chase, Victor C. Trombley, Jim Moore, Tom Spiro

**Others present:** Jan Warner, Elizabeth Braccia, Rick Bean

**Appointments**

**7:00 FRCOG Accounting Program – Bob Dean**

Bob gave everyone an outline of the program. He noted various aspects of the service. The Council provides accounting services for municipalities in the county. They contract with each Town as the 'host agency'. Towns can pick and chose between various offerings within the program. If hired, Conway would pay a flat fee, and all administrative tasks would be done by the COG. He mentioned that Joyce Muka was his program manager. Bob said that the software they use was called Fundware and was the same for all of their clients. Jim asked what the software conversion process would involve. Bob said that this would include bringing the accounting history forward from past fiscal years, and would cost \$3,000.00 to \$5,000.00 for "start-up" costs. Jan asked how much the Town would be able to access their data. Bob said the software would be housed at the FRCOG office and would be accessible by COG staff and authorized Town personnel as read-only. Bob told Tom that reports would be available for access as well. Elizabeth asked Bob if there would be a payment for retrieval of data if the Town stops using their service. This was not known and Bob will answer this later. Maureen noted that each Town pays approximately \$16,000.00 per year, and Bob reminded that there would be an additional \$1,000.00 for software maintenance per year.

Chuck asked Elizabeth how much time she spends in the Ashfield accountant's office, and she responded that she spent between 6-8 hours but that demand changed according to changing needs. Chuck then explained that it was important for an accountant to have consistent 'face-time' with other staff. There was discussion about budgeted salary and what money was available for an accountant over the next year. Bob spoke about the possible development of new universal software by the DOR for all Towns but that was in the future. Maureen said that she estimated a first year cost of \$24,000.00-26,000.00. Rick asked if expansion of this program would effect Conway should they decided to hire the FRCOG now or in the near future. Bob replied that their program may or may not expand due to the number of clients, but reassured Rick that Conway could be well served with current FRCOG staff levels.

**7:30 Jan Warner – Treasurer and Tax Collector Positions**

Jan proposed to the Board that the Treasurer/Collector position be separated and requested that she be appointed as Tax Collector. She gave everyone a spreadsheet of salaries for comparison with which she had develop an hourly wage for the Tax Collector's position. She said that the Collector's position should pay \$20.00 per hour and \$22.00 per hour for the Treasurer's position. She also noted her retirement payment from her last job would prevent her from drawing benefits from Conway and limited the amount of hours she could be paid for in general. Elizabeth supported her request, as both she and Jan had job-shared in the past. These two positions could be appointed by the Selectboard without Town meeting vote.

**8:00 Elizabeth Braccia – Transition to new Treasurer**

Elizabeth told the Board that she was going to work in Greenfield. She offered to be available during evenings to close the cash book for April to balance the cash. She also spoke about the Lindeman property and the need to hold an auction. She mentioned that there were two other properties that may need to go to auction and presented the files for review. Chuck offered her financial compensation for any time put in after April 8<sup>th</sup>. She agreed to submit time sheets for hourly payment. The Board then approved extra hours for Jan so that she can perform the extra work after Elizabeth is gone. Jan noted that there must be a fresh warrant to collect taxes in addition to a reconciliation from the assessor's office.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
TOWN OF CONWAY, MA  
MINUTES  
March 28, 2011

**8:30 Beverly Cooper** – Interview for Accounting Position

Maureen ask Beverly for an update on her position. She noted that she could not be available to work in Conway during the week, during the day. She had been coming in on the weekends, and could not commit to office hours. This resolved the issue of permanent status for her in this position with the Town. She agreed to remain as temporary accountant until a permanent hire is made.

**meeting items**

- The weekly and Town meeting warrants were signed.
- The minutes from 3/21/11 were approved as amended.
- The Board discussed the matter of filling the positions of Treasurer, Tax Collector and Accountant, as well as auditor. Chuck explained that the Treasurer and Tax Collector used to be stand-alone positions and that he was in favor of going back to this structure. Chuck asked Jan if this would be feasible. It was determined that it was. The Treasurer's position would be salaried at \$34,320.00 and posted for 25-30 hours per week. Chuck noted that in light of what had been learned, it seemed that the accountant's position should fall to the FRCOG as the best alternative. Tom will wait for more financial information from Joyce Muka and will advise Jane Wall of this decision.
- Tom explained the options for an FY2010 audit. He noted that the DOR had recommended a partial audit in light of a new financial staff, and the lack of clarity around some issues with the general ledger. Tom noted that a partial audit would make it easier for new staff to ease into their positions, and also serve to keep Town records partially in tact until a full audit could be performed. Tom reported that he had checked three references, all of which were positive, and would call Roselli, Clark and Associates to tell them that the Board wished to hire them as the Town's auditor.
- On the issue of finding someone to take meeting minutes for the Selectboard, Tom mentioned that he had found that the Town of Whatley had an executive secretary to take their minutes, but did not work exclusively for the Selectboard. There was conversation about what alternative should be considered to that there is an independent and dedicated person who would talk minutes at Board meetings. Tom will do more research on other alternatives.
- Chuck noted that Craig Warner's/the Parks & Recreation Commission suggestions regarding amendments to the mowing bid were well thought out and considerate. However, they determined that most of their changes could be placed in the Commission's operating budget, and that the bid will be advertised as written by Maureen and Bob.
- The Board spoke about the Thayer request. Tom will write a letter for the Board to sign, approving of the celebration and work to be done on his great great grandfather's gravestone.
- The Board opened the boiler replacement bids. Adams Plumbing came in at \$62,000.00 and B&G Mechanicals came in at \$62,578.00. The Board will ask Ken for info before making an award.
- The Board will meet at 8:30PM after the Potluck meeting next Monday.

**Mail and Other Items**

- Mail items were reviewed.

**10:15 PM** Motion to adjourn meeting was made by Maureen, seconded by Chuck, all in favor.