

Town of Raymond  
Selectmen Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, March 25, 2004  
Emergency Meeting

Attendance: Ada Brown, Chairman; Betty McDermott; Charles Leavitt (6:08); Christine McClellan; Dana Desjardins; Elizabeth Cummings, Finance Director; Nathan White, Public Works Director; Denis Morse, Fire Chief; Laurie Forbes, Chairman Technology Committee; Elisa Trepanier, GIS Administrator; Amanda Simpson, Assessor's Agent; and Don Willard, Town Manager.

1. Call to order. Ada Brown opened the meeting at 6:03 pm at the Town Office.
2. Discussion of changes to the 2004-2005 Town Budget.

- a. Technology Department Director

DISCUSSION: Mrs. Brown explained that she had voted to put this position's article alone in the warrant in order to have unity among the Board of Selectmen. She felt that the vote should be reconsidered to put it back in the warrant as a part of the Technical Department article.

MOTION: Ada Brown motioned to reconsider the motion of having the Technology Department budget represented by two articles. Seconded by Christine McClellan.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Desjardins wanted to wait until everyone was present. Mrs. Brown announced that the Technology Director had resigned because of being held to a different standard in the warrant. Mrs. McDermott felt that the Selectmen are not treating him like everyone else in the town's budget articles. Mrs. Brown apologized for having to do this hurried meeting under these circumstances but said that the Budget/Finance Committee was meeting next Monday and this had to be resolved before then. Mr. Desjardins felt this untimely meeting was difficult for working people to attend and that he only got notice of it when he arrived home to hear his phone messages. He continued that Mr. Leavitt works out of town. Mr. Willard said that he had been talking with Mr. Leavitt over the course of the day and that Mr. Leavitt would be attending the meeting. Mr. Desjardins didn't believe that this vote was a misunderstanding and didn't feel that it warranted another vote. Mrs. McClellan said there needed to be some facts brought out about the work that Kevin Woodbrey does and the time he has invested in the Department. She continued that he works 24/7 if needed and puts in more than the 26 hours required under his contract without extra compensation. Mrs. Brown reiterated the reason for the vote on the separation in the warrant. She agreed that the Selectmen have not shown the appreciation for Mr. Woodbrey which they should and asked for a unanimous vote to rescind their previous vote to separate Mr. Woodbrey's position of Director of Technology from the rest of the Technology budget. She felt they needed to clarify his position. Mrs. McDermott asked Mr. Leavitt why the other directors of departments were not standing with their own articles instead of being included within the department budgets. Mr. Leavitt felt that this is the second time the town had been held up by "techno-terrorism". He wanted to know what the people really wanted last year at town meeting concerning the Technology Department. He felt that the action taken last Tuesday would allow the taxpayer

to vote for the position and then we'll know what they want. He said that he had not heard anyone ask whether they wanted a fire chief or public works director but he had heard comments made concerning the Technology Director's position. He felt that the town was being held hostage over this issue of technology. Mr. Willard asked whether they felt there was an error in management. Mr. Leavitt replied that the quasi employee -- contractor/employee -- was a different situation. He felt that a two week notice would be acceptable but not one week. Mr. Leavitt felt that they should have a discussion of why they voted on this at the last meeting. Mr. Leavitt thanked the Selectmen for holding this meeting when he could attend. Mrs. McClellan asked what Mr. Leavitt's problem was as well as Mr. Desjardins' with choosing Mr. Woodbrey as director. She felt that this position was necessary because of Raymond's intricate computer network with the school and the town departments and Mr. Woodbrey's intimate knowledge of it over the years. She felt that the town has an extraordinary value in Mr. Woodbrey and what he does for Raymond. She felt that this request to isolate Mr. Woodbrey's salary from the Technology budget was a personal vendetta. Mr. Desjardins believed that the discussion, which happened in executive session some time ago, should stay privileged information. Mrs. McClellan felt that it was necessary to mention it in order to discuss the Selectmen's differences. Chief Morse noted that after six years of budget discussion, he felt last Tuesday was the best meeting he had attended so far for its insight and results. He felt that this issue affects everyone because of the question brought up in the meeting. He didn't feel that the vote to divide the salary from the budget article negated faith in Mr. Woodbrey or his position. The question is whether the Technology budget would be voted down in its entirety. He asked if the employee is more important than the position and the essence of the job. He thought the position and the money were endorsed by the Selectmen. Mr. Leavitt noted that originally the board voted 3 to 2 on the position. Mr. Leavitt read an excerpt from the Selectmen's Minutes of September 2, 2003. "Leavitt was very concerned about the bid process. He felt that Mr. Woodbrey's bid didn't meet the specifications of the RFP i.e. his proposal is for a quasi-employee and not a private contractor who would hold the insurance and liability of a private contractor. In other ways his RFP also didn't meet the criteria of the request. He had a problem with choosing his bid because he was a partner in developing the RFP. Mr. Leavitt felt that the town meeting directed the town to get a trial private contractor and not another employee. He felt that a situation like P&K for our snow plowing was the best scenario. Mr. Desjardins agreed that the other four bids were more in line with what the RFP was asking. Mr. Willard noted that there were other people who picked up the RFP packages but didn't submit a bid. He felt that those people might have submitted a bid similar to Kevin Woodbrey's but didn't. Mrs. McClellan asked if Imagistics was in line with the others. Mrs. Forbes said the bids were very hard to determine cost for service because they were written up very differently from one another." Mr. Leavitt believed that the Selectmen had a flawed process - for one reason, a member of the committee put in a bid for the position. He felt that the problem was with the process. Mrs. Brown didn't think that the Selectmen should put Mr. Woodbrey out on a limb by himself. Mr. Leavitt noted that if the town denies the entire budget item then the whole thing will go down. Mrs. Brown reiterated that if the people understood exactly what Mr. Woodbrey does for the town, they would vote for it. Amanda Simpson, Assessor's Agent, felt that her observations were not involved with the previous RFP process and she don't know first hand how Raymond got to this point. However, she said that this was the first time that she had seen the director's

position budget amount taken out of the department for a warrant. She felt that this was an issue of politics because it came across as a personality debate and not whether the job was being done well and to expectations. Employees should have the opportunity to receive criticism or comment as to how they are doing their job. She continued that right now her office was in a very critical position to set up the system which will allow Vision's system (the contract revaluation company) to be installed and she had great concern that this work would not be accomplished if the town had to start from scratch with an RFP for a Technology Director. She indicated that very office in the town and the school is dependent on this system, and we can't leave it to hope that "the process" will allow it to keep going until a new Technology Director is found. Mr. Leavitt took issue with this being called political and noted that there was an annual contract renewal included in Mr. Woodbrey's contract. Mr. Willard agreed that Mr. Woodbrey's bid was not totally cohesive with the terms of the RFP but the Selectmen had voted in concert with the Technology's choice from the bids.

VOTE: 3 for (Brown, McDermott, McClellan) 2 opposed (Leavitt, Desjardins)

MOTION: Ada Brown motioned to put the two articles back together the way it originally was. Seconded Christine McClellan.

Mrs. Brown asked that a dissenting vote explain his/her position.

VOTE: 3 for (Brown, McDermott, McClellan) 2 opposed (Desjardins felt that Mr. Woodbrey had shown a lack of commitment since he quit the position twice; Mr. Leavitt said he had already expressed his position.)

DISCUSSION: Mr. Willard asked that the Selectmen put the \$40,000 in the budget for network consulting services instead of a director's position. This will be necessary for the position to go to RFP for a needs assessment by professionals to determine the best candidate, plus have someone in the interim to keep the system working. He had concern that the town report will have to be done the old way, cut and paste, without Mr. Woodbrey's help. He also felt that any things will have to be put off or not done.

MOTION: Christine McClellan motioned to label the \$40,000 for network consulting services under the Technology Department budget. Seconded by Betty McDermott.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Leavitt had concern that Raymond didn't have a backup plan for this system. Mr. Willard asked if he believed that Raymond should have had a backup plan in every department should this type of action happen. Mr. Desjardins noted that he had expressed his opinion that the Technology Director should have been bonded. Mrs. McDermott acknowledged that Mr. Woodbrey had brought Raymond to this point over the years and had always been available to take care of it at any time. She said that most towns don't have what we have with the resources available. Mr. Willard noted that if any of the department heads left, he didn't have a backup ready to take over. Mr. Leavitt believed that every department has someone who could take over the department. Mr. Willard indicated that the problem here is the level of sophistication in this particular department and that there is no one who knows the system as Mr. Woodbrey does. Mr. Leavitt expressed a need to have an assessment done to know exactly what we should have in order to go forward. Mr. Willard said that he would begin tomorrow.

b. Village Library

DISCUSSION: Mrs. McDermott asked that the Selectmen reconsider the Library request under the Unclassified Accounts. She gave a report of their business level and activity schedule. She felt that they definitely needed the whole amount considering what they do for Raymond.

MOTION: Betty McDermott motioned to reconsider the vote to reduce the amount requested by the Library. Seconded Dana Desjardins.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Leavitt felt that this was a hurried action. Mr. Willard noted that the agenda was for budget items. Mrs. McDermott felt that this should stand alone in the warrant. Mr. Leavitt stated that all of the Unclassifieds are worthy, but the action was to limit the amount to those entities and to not support the new requests this year. His attempt was to hold the line from last year. He felt that if this was a town entity it would have its own article but it was a request from an outside agency. He continued that all those in the Undesignated Article should have the same opportunity to ask to be heard again. Barbara Thorpe said that they felt they should not be held like outside agencies because they are primarily serving Raymond residents. Mr. Desjardins agreed that the library should be separate from the Undesignated list.

VOTE: 4 in favor (McDermott, Desjardins, McClellan, Brown) 1 opposed (Leavitt)

MOTION: Betty McDermott motioned to put the \$900 back into the library budget which was there originally under the Unclassified Article and give it its own article in the amount of \$23,400. Second by Christine McClellan.

DISCUSSION: Mrs. Brown noted that with the Library standing alone, it risks being cut. Mrs. Thorpe felt that they would take their chances to stand alone. Mr. Leavitt amended the motion to state that they are taking it out of the Unclassified Article.

VOTE: Unanimous.

c. Bond

DISCUSSION: Mrs. Cummings explained that the bond under the CIP would be best split between Public Works and the Fire Department. The new amortization schedule, if we split \$950,000 and \$450,000, will have a better interest rate, and if the Selectmen do it now instead of in January the first payment would be in May 2005 and it will save \$21,713.00 which over 10 years would be \$34,497. She noted that the wording of the article would need to be changed as well as the amount of \$15,170. As of May 2005, Raymond would have a first payment of \$8,783 for the fire trucks.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Willard wanted clarification and authorization that he had the authority to hire a consultant short term for the Technology Department and to begin the process to evaluate the system and produce an RFP.

MOTION: Betty McDermott motioned to authorize the Town Manager to hire a consultant and accomplish an RFP for the Technology Department. Seconded by Christine McClellan.

NOTE: Mr. Leavitt asked that the Town Manager first attempt to talk with our current employee/contractor to ask that he do the right thing by the town and give the town just notice and at least a two-week notice before leaving.

VOTE: Unanimous.

NOTE: Mr. Willard explained that he had done his best to talk with everyone about this agenda. He continued that the question wasn't put forth because of the late time of bringing the library issue to the Board and the need to discuss the figures concerning the bond split.

MOTION: Betty McDermott motioned to approve the dividing of the bond and the creating of two warrant articles for the two bonds: 1) the Public Works bond and 2) the Fire Department bond. Seconded by Dana Desjardins

VOTE: Unanimous.

### 3. Adjourn.

MOTION: Charles Leavitt motioned to adjourn. Seconded by Betty McDermott.

VOTE: Unanimous.

ADJOURNMENT: Ada Brown adjourned the meeting at 7:20 pm.

Louise H. Lester  
Town Clerk