

## MEETING MINUTES

Easton Board of Selectmen  
January 19, 2017 – 7:30 p.m.  
Town Hall Conference Room A

Adam Dunsby called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Adam Dunsby, Carrie Colangelo and Robert Lessler.

1. Robert Lessler moved to approve the minutes of the Easton Board of Selectmen Meeting of January 5, 2017 with the following corrections:  
Agenda item #5, in the first sentence, the second "letter" should be deleted. Carrie Colangelo seconded.  
Motion passed unanimously.
2. No public comment.
3. Carrie Colangelo moved and Robert Lessler seconded to approve the following tax refunds as recommended by Krista Kot, Tax Collector: 1. MICHAEL J. CONWAY - \$159.13; 2. ELIZABETH D. MALLOZZI - \$84.89; 3. FINANCIAL SERVICE VEH. TRUST - \$1,005.80; 4. JEAN M. WARICHA - \$80.93.  
Motion passed unanimously.
4. Adam Dunsby presented the Easton's Grand List October 1, 2016. The overall valuation was down 4.2%. This is in line with what the revaluation company is observing in much of the state.
5. Adam Dunsby met with Rob Fitzpatrick, Sr. V.P. at Brown & Brown Inc., the Town's insurance broker to discuss coverage changes for the non-represented employee for fiscal year 2017-2018. After some discussion and a request from Robert Lessler that the board be mindful to keep the non-represented employees (including elected and stipended officials) contributions and benefits slightly different than those of the negotiated union represented employees, Adam Dunsby proposed that the premium share for these employees be left at zero; that the Town's portion of the deductible go from 75% to 60%; that a prescription Rx plan of \$5/\$25/\$40 co-pays be adopted and a 2.25% wage increase be instituted for fiscal year 2017-2018. Robert Lessler moved to set the non-represented employee general wage increase at 2.25%. Carrie Colangelo seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Robert Lessler moved to set the non-represented town-funded portion of the HDHP deductible at 60% with a \$5/\$25/\$40 co-pay Rx plan which matches the Rx plan of most of the union represented employees. Carrie Colangelo seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
6. Tom Hermann brought forward the issue of who has authority over negotiating the Police Chief's contract and setting compensation: the Board of Selectmen or the Police Commission. Mr. Hermann made the case that the authority should lie with the Police Commission, and approval by the Board of Selectmen/First Selectman is a formality. The Police Commission wishes to alter the contract, to give it the authority to determine the Chief's wage increase. The contract currently states the Chief will receive the same wage increase as other non-union employees of the Town. Discussed were the General State Statutes, the Special Act of 1937, the Town of Easton Ordinance - Chapter 152 (enacted by the Town after the 1937 act), and past practice.  
Adam Dunsby made the following points:  
1) The Police Chief's contract does not expire until 2020. Even if the Police Commission has the authority it claims, such authority does not give it the power to abrogate a contract.

2) The 1937 act is probably voided by a subsequent 1949 public act. In any case, the Town did pass an ordinance and clearly intended to be governed by the ordinance. For instance, the 1937 special act states that the police commission shall have three members, while we currently have five members.

3) The Town ordinance specifically and often refers to the Board of Police Commissioners when describing it and enumerating its powers. It does not use synonyms. However, when the ordinance addresses salaries, it says "... salary as fixed by the Town". This language is clearly used to mean other than the Board of Police Commissioners. In this context "Town" is customarily taken to mean the Board of Selectmen.

4) What the Police Commission wants to do in regard to compensation is a change from past practice. This has never been an issue in the past.

5) An important principle is at stake. Outside of education, all compensation is approved by the Board of Selectmen, including union, non-union, elected, and stipended wages. There are important public interests in this practice: a) Controlling wage costs, b) Treating similarly situated employees in different departments similarly, c) Allowing the planned coordination of cash and non-cash benefits, such as health care, and d) Avoiding the natural tendency for boards and commissions to want to pay the employees under their control more than employees not under their control.

6) As part of the yearly human resource process, the Board of Selectmen invites departments who feel certain employees should be changed in status to present the case. There is a mechanism to deal with changed individual circumstances.

The Board of Selectmen and the Police Commission will continue this discussion.

7. Phil Tamallanca and Robert Klem from the Park & Recreation Commission spoke of the need for restroom facilities on the Morehouse property in line with the expectations of a town such as Easton. Some user groups are interested in building more than just bathrooms, and there is an ongoing dialogue. Carrie Colangelo moved to request the Board of Finance create a special fund for restroom and related facilities at Morehouse Civic Park. Robert Lessler seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

8. Robert Lessler moved to re-appoint Irving Snow as Measurer of Wood for the term 1/2/2017 expiring 1/2/2018. Carrie Colangelo seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Robert Lessler moved to re-appoint David Katz to the Board of Fire Commissioners for the term 1/2/2017 expiring 1/2/2022. Carrie Colangelo seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Robert Lessler moved to re-appoint Linda Dollard as an alternate to the Commission for the Aging for the term 1/2/2017 expiring 1/2/2020. Carrie Colangelo seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Robert Lessler moved to re-appoint Tom Cable to the Park and Recreation Commission for the term 1/2/2017 expiring 1/2/2020. Carrie Colangelo seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Robert Lessler moved to re-appoint A. Reynolds Gordon to the Pension and Employee Benefits Commission for the term 1/2/2017 expiring 1/2/2021. Carrie Colangelo seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Carrie Colangelo moved to re-appoint Ray Longo as an alternate on the Agricultural Commission for the term 1/2/2017 expiring 1/2/2020. Robert Lessler seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Carrie Colangelo moved to re-appoint David Gombos to the Park and Recreation Commission for the term 1/2/2017 expiring 1/2/2020. Robert Lessler seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Carrie Colangelo moved to re-appoint Robert Maquat to the Planning and Zoning Commission for the term 1/2/2017 expiring 1/2/2022. Robert Lessler seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Carrie Colangelo moved to re-appoint Mary Ann Freeman to the Senior Center Advisory Board for the term 1/2/2017 expiring 1/2/2020. Robert Lessler seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

9. No board member comment.

10. Robert Lessler moved to adjourn at 9:35 p.m. Carrie Colangelo seconded. Motion passed unanimously.  
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