

TOWN OF CHELMSFORD

PATRICIA E. DZURIS

TOWN CLERK

Approved 5/14/18

Town of Chelmsford
Board of Selectmen Minutes
Senior Center
75 Groton Rd.
Chelmsford, MA 01863

**Meeting MINUTES
April 30, 2018**

Attending:

Glenn Diggs, Chairman
Kenneth Lefebvre, Vice Chairman
Emily Antul, Clerk
George Dixon, Jr., Selectman
Patricia Wojtas, Selectman

Paul Cohen, Town Manager

Please note that all documents referenced in these minutes are on file at the Town Manager's Office, 50 Billerica Rd., Chelmsford, Mass.

Chairman Diggs called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

RECOMMENDATION FOR TOWN MEETING WARRANT ARTICLE

Article 6 – General Operating Budget

Chairman Diggs noted that the Board had previously voted to support the Town Manager's budget for general municipal purposes (Article 6). However, subsequent to recently receiving the arbitration award for the Firefighters' union, it was necessary to adjust the Public Safety portion of that budget.

Mr. Cohen explained his requested increase in personnel costs for Public Safety (\$304,557), due to increases in wage rates and stipends mandated by the arbitration award. That award also requires a minimum staffing level of three Firefighters on one piece of fire apparatus. The Fire Chief has indicated he will meet that requirement by closing one Fire Station, and changing current staff assignments as needed.

When asked for the expected additional cost to keep all five Fire Stations open, Mr. Cohen stated that would be an additional \$245,000, bringing the increased personnel costs for the Fire Department to almost 10% over the Fiscal Year 2018 amount. He also briefly reviewed critical needs for other departments, and reminded the Board that the Town is still awaiting arbitration decisions for two Police unions.

Chairman Diggs expressed concern about the timing of the announcement, and of closing a Fire Station at this time. Mr. Cohen noted that a Special Town Meeting could be convened prior to the beginning of the next Fiscal Year to make further adjustments to the budget, if needed.

Selectman Lefebvre asked when the station closure would take effect. Mr. Cohen replied that it would begin with the new Fiscal Year on July 1.

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Selectman Dixon stated that he is opposed to the closing of a Fire Station under any circumstances.

Motion: by Selectman Wojtas to recommend approval of Article 6, as presented by the Town Manager. Seconded by Selectman Lefebvre. **Motion carries, 4-1, with Selectman Dixon opposed.**

ADJOURN

Motion: by Selectman Wojtas to adjourn this meeting at 6:45PM. Seconded by Selectman Lefebvre. **Motion carries, unanimous, 5-0.**

Respectfully Submitted,
Pat Wojtas,
Board of Selectmen

List of Reference Documents:

- Fire Department Funding recommendations
- Departmental operational needs