

**Board of Selectmen**

Steven Lewis, Chairman  
Dale Harmon, Vice Chair  
Douglas Burnham  
Charles R. Cunningham  
Stephen W. Ham

**Town Manager**

James D. Chaousis II



**Town of Boothbay  
Board of Selectmen Meeting  
Wednesday December 31, 2013  
2:00 PM  
MINUTES**

**Call Meeting to order:** Chairman, Steve Lewis called the meeting to order at 2:00PM. **Present:** Steven Lewis, Dale Harmon, Charles Cunningham, Steve Ham, Douglas Burnham, and James Chaousis II, Town Manager.

**FY 2015 Budget:** All full-time staff was in attendance. Several Selectmen inquired with the Town Manager whether this is a protected discussion in accordance with Freedom of Access Law. Several full-time staff members also expressed their opinion that the meeting should be discussed in private. The Town Manager explained that the discussion was about budgetary proceedings which are in no way protected from the public's right to review the deliberation.

Steve Lewis asked if the group disagreed with the premise that the health insurance plan needed to be adjusted. The group consensually agreed.

Bonnie Lewis stated that the retirement proposal should be eliminated from the budget and just move forward with the health insurance adjustment. Mike Alley reiterated that sentiment adding that the retirement benefit has been in place for 10 years and that employees rely on that as part of their salary.

Steve Lewis stated that the budget has been proposed and not heavily reviewed. Any changes could be made at this point. Chuck Cunningham disagreed that the retirement is not part of the employee's salary and that it is a benefit. He stated that the employee matching requirement should be looked at someday. Mike Alley stated that he agreed that the employee could be asked to contribute but not all at once taking away from salary.

Jim Chaousis gave a high level review of the budget proposal focusing on the loss of revenue sharing in the budget for the future. The town will be relegated to making budget reductions or increasing the budget and ultimately the tax rate.

Steve Lewis was concerned that we were asking the employees to shoulder the load in tighter budgets but Chuck Cunningham was more concerned where the taxpayer's tipping point may be.

Mike Alley argued that morale is at an all-time high and that these changes would affect morale. Dan Bryer added that the town offers good services and reductions would minimize the effectiveness of the good services. Heidi Fuller stated that she took a loss in pay in lieu of better benefits from the town.

Dale Harmon stated that he has spoken to people on the street about this topic. People state that they get a lot for their taxes and that it is a great benefit. This is a great statement for the public employees here.

There was more discussion on how the FOAA law and executive sessions are handled.

Lori Colton discussed that the Selectmen should consider grandfathering the current employees and handle benefit reductions through attrition.

Steve Ham stated that the budget may be technically sound but there are real personal implications to the proposal made by the Town Manager. Dale Harmon and Steve Ham wanted to finish the discussion and move to a vote on the proposals but Chuck Cunningham wanted more time to review.

Heidi Fuller requested more information on how and when the Selectmen would make a decision. The Selectmen consensually agreed that they would make a determination on this subject at the onset of the next Selectmen's meeting to give some surety to the employees.

Chuck Cunningham made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Douglas Burnham seconded the motion. **Vote: 5-0 in favor.**

Respectfully Submitted  
James D Chaousis II, Town Manager