

TOWN OF BRANDON
MINUTES FOR EVENING MEETING
JULY 15, 2014

Moderator Art Doty called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Doty then read the warning and outlined housekeeping for the evening. He requested that folks use the microphone provided at the front of the room for questions. Attending the meeting were Selectboard Chair, Maria Ammatuna, Selectboard members, Dave Atherton, Blaine Cliver, Devon Fuller, Ethan Swift, Town Manager Robin Bennett, Superintendent of Public Works, Brian Sanderson, Recreation Director Bill Moore, Town Clerk, Sue Gage and 61 registered voters.

The following business was transacted:

Article I. To hear a presentation by the Brandon Select Board of its recommended budget for fiscal year 2014 / 2015.

Mr. Doty asked Chair Maria Ammatuna to open the budget discussion. Ms. Ammatuna requested a motion to permit individuals from outside of town to speak at the meeting, specifically Town Manager Robin Bennett and Public Works Director Brian Sanderson. Bill Moore moved and Wayne Rausenberger seconded a motion to permit people from out of town to speak. The motion passed with some dissent.

Ms. Ammatuna introduced the format of the informational meeting and the order in which information would be presented. Presentations of budget cuts and department responsibilities were presented by Town Manager, Robin Bennett, Department of Public Works Director Brian Sanderson, Police Chief Chris Brickell and Recreation Director Bill Moore.

Voters asked for clarification on budget cuts, line item reductions, property tax increases, and municipal tax rate increases. Some voters expressed frustration with cuts in the Department of Public Works, and felt that cuts should be across all departments. Select Board members stated that the Department of Public Works was scaled back to a level that they operated at two years ago. Also clarified that cuts were made in other departments by shifting workload, direct cuts and cuts in employee benefits.

Other voters felt the Police Department should be downsized, either by sharing vehicles or scheduling fewer officers. Chief Brickell explained that sharing vehicles can cost the Town more, by requiring vehicles to be turned over more frequently with larger mileage. He also explained that scheduling fewer officers can increase costs by needing overtime assistance.

Some voters felt the Recreation Department should be cut. One voter felt the Town employees should not be cut, but additional revenues secured. The Town's collection policies were questioned and concern expressed about large tax and sewer delinquencies. Town Manager Robin Bennett stated that the Town is pursuing collection of the delinquencies and that these policies have changed from past years.

Meeting was recessed at 9:10 PM until the polls open on July 22 at 7:00 AM.

Maria Ammatuna, BCA Chair

Art Doty, Moderator

Susan Gage, Clerk