

**Call to Order:** Chairman Robert Manners called the Selectmen's meeting to order at 3:12 p.m. Other members present: Joe Judd and John Payne.

Mark Shippee, Highway Superintendent, and Keith Rose from Highway joined; Rick Ormond arrived a few minutes late and Jeremy Betit after him. Steve Hoar did not attend.

**Highway meeting:** Bob asked Joe to outline the purpose for the meeting. Joe responded that the Highway crew had asked to meet with the SB to discuss the change in overtime policy. Previously all hours clocked, including holidays, vacation, personal and medical time have counted towards the 40 hours / week after which the crew can start receiving overtime pay. Based on the Fair Labor Act and criticism from the auditors, the Board eliminated holidays, vacation, personal and medical time from the calculation of the 40 hours worked. As stated in the Fair Labor Act, only hours actually worked count towards the 40-hour overtime threshold.

Joe recognized that the change in policy directly effects compensation and noted the Board might be willing to consider alternatives such as compensation for "on call" status, a winter differential, maximum radius for crew, etc. Also, currently when individuals work on a holiday like Christmas they receive double compensation (holiday pay plus pay for the hours worked.) However if an individual does not work on a holiday but does work the other 4 days of the week, the holiday might be counted towards the 40 hours of formal work time. Finally he introduced the idea of a 4-day, 10-hour workweek in the summer, allowing individuals 3-day weekends.

Mark, on behalf of the crew, stated the main issue is compensation. The crew works hard, is always on call, summer or winter, works through illness and fatigue and performs at a high standard. Yet, the Board appears to have taken away an important part of the crew's compensation. They feel like they are being punished for no apparent reason.

Bob noted that the Town's compensation package is quite good, especially relative to private industry. During the current tight financial times, with decreasing State aid and other revenue declines, the Board made the conscious decision to try to avoid layoffs if at all possible. The Board also did not change the medical insurance benefits from 75% / 25% to the more common 60% / 40% and has tried to increase wages in line with inflation. Private industry and many public entities have cut staff, eliminated salary increases and reduced benefits. Bob also noted that both times in the last few years when the Town has advertised for highway workers, it has received many excellent resumes, suggesting a strong pool of talented individuals eager to work for Shelburne.

John added that the crew has not put itself in the best position to request favorable compensation treatment. While all three Board members and the Highway Superintendent arrived on time for this 3:00 meeting (despite their busy schedules,) two of the four crew members were late and a third one did not attend at all. The crew does have a reputation for taking excellent care of Shelburne's roads, but Board members receive many complaints about disharmony among the crew. The crew seems unable to work as a cohesive team. A crew that strives to work well together, that respects each other, even with various idiosyncrasies and short-comings, that forgives mistakes, that avoids animosities will create a happy, positive work environment to the benefit of all.

John noted that crewmembers time sheets vary widely in completeness and consistency and asked if having a time clock would be helpful. Mark acknowledged that some timesheet training might produce more consistency and that a time clock would be most helpful.

The Board also addressed the issue of respect and profanity. The Board recognize that in a workshop or on a road detail, job pressures can often lead to rough language, but that language must be curbed when in contact with the public, when using the two-way radios or in official communications. One crewmember recently sent the Board an email that included totally inappropriate language. The Board also expects the crew to treat the Highway Manager and other town employees with total respect.

Possible compensation adjustments:

1. Count some of the 9 official town holidays as days worked for purposes of calculating overtime;
2. Count sick time following long hours in a given week as part of calculating weekly overtime;
3. Pay a winter differential;
4. Adjust highway crew pay scale to reflect constant “on-call” status;
5. Allow part-time employees who work more than 40 hours to receive overtime pay;
6. Allow (straight time) pay period to start as soon as crew are notified of an anticipated call-in.

The Board discussed the alternatives above and agreed that Joe and Mark should put forth a formal proposal for the Board to consider.

Special Town Meeting:

The Special is scheduled for Monday, March 11, 2012 at 6:30 pm just before the regular Select Board meeting at 7:00 pm. The Board reviewed the warrant articles as follows:

Article 1 As written - \$6,880.17  
Article 2 As written - \$1,775.00  
Article 3 As written - \$ 300.00

Article 4 As written, subject to an evaluation of the amount (estimate = \$6,000,) which Bev will supply shortly;

Article 5 Bev has submitted a proposal to replace the current voting booths (which evidently do not comply with State guidelines) with 4 to 5 four corner-booths (allowing 4 individuals to vote simultaneously in privacy) at a cost of \$765 / booth; total cost for 5 = \$ 3,825; given the many budget requests we are already seeing for FY 14 and the Town’s tight financial position, John suggested holding this article for the Regular Town meeting in May; other Board members agreed. During the discussion, members of the highway crew volunteered to make new voting booths for the town. John suggested Joe and Mark evaluate that idea.

Article 6 Items requested in Articles 1 – 3 total about \$ 9,000, plus an additional \$6,000 for the two special elections will leave about \$110,000 of the \$125,030 to be transferred to Stabilization Account.

Since the Board is still waiting for the exact amount for election expenses, it could not yet approve the Special Town Meeting warrant, which must be posted by February 22 for the March 11, 2013 meeting.

Adjournment: On a motion by Joe, seconded by John, the Board voted to adjourn at 4:55 pm.

John Payne  
Clerk Pro Tempore