



BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

Cotuit Fire District

Water Department

**4300 FALMOUTH ROAD, P. O. BOX 451
COTUIT, MASS. 02635**

04/11/2018

A special meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners was held at The Cotuit Fire Department at 6:00 p.m. Chairman Don Campbell, Commissioner Vic Mastro and Superintendent Chris Wiseman were present, as was the Treasurer, Ray Pirrone. Commissioner Hoppensteadt joined the meeting late due to a scheduling conflict.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to review the fiscal year 2019 budget with the treasurer, specifically regarding the proposed compensation adjustments for the Water Department employees and address any questions that the commissioners or treasurer had.

Chairman Campbell began the meeting by recapping the discussions that had led to this meeting, noting that the goal was to present to the district a proposal that was fair and equitable for both the employees and the district and would ensure employee retention and plan for future continuity in the district.

He noted that there was hesitation from the Prudential Committee to approve a one-time adjustment and the commissioners wanted to understand the impact of the adjustment on the overall budget and tax rate. They also discussed the upcoming cost of service study and how future increases would be incorporated into the anticipated rate adjustment.

Superintendent Wiseman spoke of the value that the current staff brings to the district, the licenses and education requirements, the hours of his time and the Senior Operator's time invested in training and the associated cost of replacing an employee if they were to leave. They reviewed pay scales from nearby districts (direct competitors in the employment market).

Mr. Pirrone noted that the proposed district budget would have an 8% growth impact on the taxation rate for the district taxpayers and said that he felt trying to make the adjustment in one year would not be palatable to the district residents. When asked by the commissioners if eliminating or reducing the proposed salary increase would substantially impact the taxation increase, Treasurer Pirrone said that it would only have a minimal impact on the rate and that the largest impact was coming from the proposed appropriations, health care cost increases, and overall debt service.

They continued to discuss the possibility of spreading it over two years but ultimately felt concern that they would continue to be "behind the eight-ball" with competitive pay rates making it difficult to get caught up. Commissioner Campbell's primary concern is presenting a budget that is not approved by the district and having to hold a special meeting at a later date.

Superintendent Wiseman and the Commissioners answered some questions for Treasurer Pirrone regarding the proposed security system upgrade, life expectancy of the equipment, the tank cleaning and the chemical safety upgrade project timeline. Treasurer Pirrone then left the meeting. Commissioner Hoppensteadt arrived and was brought up to speed on the discussion. Commissioner Hoppensteadt expressed his desire to move forward with the one-time adjustment and noted the importance of meeting attendance to raise public awareness and support for these initiatives.

Commissioner Campbell will attend the Prudential Committee meeting on Friday, April 13th to inform them of their decision.

The meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald Campbell, Chairman