



TOWN OF KINGSTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
OPEN SESSION MINUTES
TOWN HOUSE-26 EVERGREEN ST. ROOM 200 & VIA ZOOM
January 16, 2025

6:00 p.m. – CALL TO ORDER – ROOM 200

OPEN FORUM:

APPOINTMENTS:

Joint Meeting with Superintendency Union #31 and Silver Lake Regional School Committee

- Town Budget Update
- Full Regionalization Study and Formation of Communication Committee
- Kingston Middle School SRO (School Resource Officer) discussion Chief Holmes

The meeting was opened by Gordon Laws, the Chair of the Silver Lake Regional School Committee. Jeanne Coleman called the Union 31 meeting to order.

Chairman Eric Crone called to order the meeting of the Board of Selectmen at 6:03 p.m.—selectmen in attendance: Tyler Bouchard, Donald Alcombright, and Melissa Bateman by roll call vote.

Mr. Law stated that he would like each town to discuss their budget.

The Town of Kingston started and Mr. Crone, stated that the Board just saw the budget for the first time this week. A 4% increase budget was presented and then Police and Fire had additional requests.

Mr. Crone discussed that the Board will be meeting on Tuesday January 21st to review the budget. Mr. Crone also stated that the Board will need to discuss the school's budget as well.

Mr. Hickey stated that the Budget Advisor committee met in October, and they asked for no more than 4% increase. Mr. Hickey worked with Department Heads to get a 4% increase, to show the residents what it would look like if a proposition 2 ½ failed.

The Town of Halifax discussed their budget, to which it was stated anything over a 3.5% increase Halifax would require an override or significant cuts.

The Town of Plympton discussed they are in the same boat as Halifax.

Mr. Law discussed that a level service budget for Silver Lake would require a 13% increase.

Ms. Coleman mentioned that Union 31 would discuss the budget at their February 25th Budget Discussion meeting.

Mr. Crone mentioned that the State has instituted the millionaire's tax and he hasn't seen anything in transportation or circuit breakers that has affected the schools. He discussed that special ed has grown over the years and would like the State Rep or Senators involved.

Mr. Bouchard had a question regarding the shelter program to which Kingston and Silver Lake have 60 students, it has been requested the number of students and the cost per student to request reimbursement money from the State.

Mr. Crone needs to know if any of these 60 students are being sent out of the district and sped cost if any of those students require it, and they want to know if the State is reimbursing the Town. Ms. Hickey of the School Administration stated that the State does not pay 100% of any student.

Mr. Crone would like to know as these individuals were placed here by the State and they should reimburse the Town.

Ms. Emberg joined the meeting virtually at 6:47PM.

Mr. Hickey discussed that the Town lost a significant amount of money on rooms taxes as if an individual lives in a room for longer than 30 or 60 days you don't have to pay a rooms tax. In the beginning State Rep LaNatra worked with the State to get that missing funding back. If we can work with the State Reps and Senator to potentially receive some additional revenues to help offset the expenses the Town is incurring and try to balance the budget.

Mr. Hickey mentioned that the risk of not having the school budgets and not having a finalized budget and the longer we wait for it the Town will be at a larger the risk of a proposition 2 ½ failing.

Mr. Laws ended the budget discussion at 7:05PM

Full Regionalization Study and Formation of Communication Committee

Dr. Jill Proulx discussed this and one rep from each of the Town's school committee, each Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee to discuss regionalization.

Mr. Hickey discussed participation in UMass Collins Center research papers regarding regionalization studies. The information will be presented to the residents for them to vote if they want to regionalize.

Kingston Middle School SRO (School Resource Officer) discussion Chief Holmes 7:27pm

Chief Holmes began by saying that if layoffs are happening at the schools, he will not pursue this position. If there is an override, he will be requesting a Full Time SRO at the Middle School only under the condition of

Chief Holmes feels as though it is more important than ever to have this position as they find a lot of the problems begin in the middle school and move to the high school.

Motion by Mr. Bouchard, seconded by Mr. Crone and a 5-0-0 vote, by roll call

VOTE: I move to adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Tucker

Assistant to the Town Administrator and Board of Selectmen