

Town of Greenland
Budget Committee Meeting
January 15, 2008

Present: Mary McDonough, Chairperson, John Weeks, R.B. Laurence, Pat Walsh, Ron Gross, Sandra Trull-Smith, Paul Sanderson, Selectman's representative and Jim Haslam, School Board representative

Absent: Bob Krasko, Mike Marsh

Also present: Karen Anderson, Town Administrator
Jim Katkin, School Administrator
Denise Grimes, librarian (in audience)

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

The article for the Greenland Grapevine was reviewed. Mrs. McDonough will e-mail the article for publication in the next issue. It was decided at our last meeting to use the Grapevine and website to relay information to the town rather than spending the money to send a separate mailer, especially in light of the fact there do not appear to be many outstanding issues this year. In the future, the board may decide that they also need to compose a mailer, however we will trial it this year.

Mr. Katkin was introduced to the board. He distributed the proposed 2009-2010 school budget to the committee members. The chair did request a copy of the budget be held at town hall so that all the townspeople can easily access it if they so desire. Mr. Katkin then proceeded to review the highlights for the upcoming year. These include the following:

- The total proposed operating budget is \$7,465,341 which represents a 1.78% decrease over the previous year's budget.
- There is a projected increase in the district assessment of \$242,762 or 3.63%
- The current estimated increase on the tax rate is \$0.39 (for the operating budget, not including any warrant articles)
- The 10 major increases are as follows
 - Tuition to Portsmouth High School due to an increase in tuition per pupil
 - Pupil transportation due to the fact our contract was up for renegotiation
 - NH Retirement for school staff
 - Special education aide salaries (added one aide)
 - Special education transportation (mandated to transport one special needs child)
 - Natural gas (used to heat the building and for cooking)
 - Snow plowing
 - Electricity
 - Pre-school aide salary
 - Custodial salaries (salary increase of 3.9% for 5 positions)

- The 10 major decreases are as follows:
 - Transfer of expendable trust (not technically a decrease since this needs to be done via a warrant article.
 - Tuition to other high schools (special needs student no longer in need of services)
 - Classroom teacher salaries (one teacher who is retiring and the position is not being replaced.
 - Tuition to private school (special education, there are no students needing this service next year)
 - Tuition to private high school (decrease from 2 to 1 students in need of services)
 - Maintenance objectives: in light of the current economy, the school board decided to postpone all non-emergency repairs and renovations this coming year and thus decreased from \$30,000 to \$10,000
 - Special education transportation: no students in need this year
 - Interest on bonds
 - Health insurance; fewer staff taking the insurance in conjunction with a lower than anticipated premium for 2008-2009
 - Professional growth: last year \$10,000 was appropriated to offset the costs of the NEASC accreditation team. The accreditation is done and thus no longer need this fund. Accreditation occurs every 10 years.

Warrant Articles:

- The cost of the collective bargaining agreement for a total of \$134,274
 - Deficit appropriation of \$150,000 to cover the cost of high school tuition
- *The board did speak to Mr. Katkin regarding putting together another warrant article to cover the cost of a generator for the kitchen, multipurpose room, and bathrooms so that in the case of an emergency, the school could act as a shelter for townspeople. Mrs. Anderson is going to forward the name of the company which installed the police department's generator to help start the process. Ideally, in light of the fact we recently lost power for several days due to the ice storm

The Budget Committee will meet with the entire School Board next Thursday to review the school budget line by line. At this time, the school board can answer specific questions regarding the proposed budget.

The committee then continued review of the town budget on a line by line basis:

Mr. Sanderson has not received the answer to the questions for the fire department as of yet, thus this will be revisited at a future meeting. Mrs. McDonough has not received an answer regarding the planning board question, thus this will also be re-visited.

Line 01-4240-272 Office Expenses

Mr. Laurence made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Gross to reduce this line to \$500. Mr. Cushman had told the board we could reduce this line by

\$2,800 since he does not anticipate purchasing a portable data entry computer this year. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Line 01-4311-207 Vehicle Maintenance and repairs

Discussion: Concern was voiced that the town truck is being used to plow our streets, thus we are taking the wear and tear on our trucks. Mrs. Anderson did explain that we are charged a lower rate when the contractor uses our truck. Since there was still some uncertainty by some members of the committee as to whether this was the best solution, Mrs. Anderson will put together a cost effective summary to share at a later date. Mr. Weeks also suggested that in future budgets, snow plow blades and plow repairs be listed in a separate line to help quantify how much is being spent on this particular item.

Line 01-4324-777 Solid Waste Special Assessment

Mrs. Anderson may have a new number for this special assessment (Lamprey Regional Cooperative Assessments) and will get back to us at a future meeting.

Line 01-4442-259 Direct Assessment Utilities

Mr. Laurence made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Walsh to raise this line to \$6,000. It was felt that there may be more of a need this coming year due to the economy. If there is a need, it does need to be covered, even if we overspend the bottom line of this section. The motion passed by a vote of 6-1

The total adjustments made to date bring the total budget to \$2,724,208 which represents a 3.35% change from column H (BOS).

The next meeting is January 22, 2009 at 6:30 at the school. The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary McDonough
Chairperson