



BUDGET COMMITTEE
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MINUTES OF THE BUDGET COMMITTEE HEARING

Monday, December 15, 2021 – 6:30 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Mike Bilodeau, Todd Cadle, Mark Connelly, Frank Hansler, Bob Krasko, Zack Pike, Paul Sanderson

Members Absent: Sharon Hussey-McLaughlin, Don Miller, Jamie Connelly – Selectmen’s Rep

Late Arrival: Pat Walsh – School Board Rep

Present: Matt Scruton – Town Administrator; Steve Smith – Chairman, Board of Selectmen; Chief Ralph Cresta; Chief Tara Laurent; Marcia McLaughlin – Weeks Library Trustees Chairperson

B. Krasko opened the Budget Committee meeting at 6:30 p.m. A roll call was taken; B. Krasko announced a quorum was present and the meeting was being recorded. The purpose of this meeting was to review the Town budget.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION: F. Hansler moved to approve the minutes of the meeting on Wednesday, December 01, 2021. Second – M. Bilodeau; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

Town Budget Review

Members received an updated copy of the Town budget. D. Miller emailed that he was in favor of the Selectmen increasing wages by 5%. The Library Director emailed the Budget Committee updated wage and benefit information for increasing the part-time librarian to full-time. The total cost of the full-time position would be approximately \$80,369. M. McLaughlin, 47 Nantucket Place and Library Trustee Chairperson, noted that the Assistant Library Director would be retiring in August. As with similar positions, an entire year had to be budgeted with benefits for that position. The current Assistant Director draws no benefits. M. McLaughlin continued that they have checked with NHMA and were told it was not a requirement to include benefits for the entire year. NHMA recommended budgeting for six months in case she retired early. M. McLaughlin will have figures available for the next meeting.

TA Scruton explained that the updated budget included the 2020 actuals as requested by the Budget Committee. In addition, the 2021 expenses have been updated through November 30th. The 2022 budget recommended by the Board of Selectmen did not change.

Recreation: Equipment Permanent from \$6,000 to \$2,000; Groundskeeping from \$6,500 to \$10,500. The bottom-line budget remains the same.

Library: Discussion continued to next meeting when recommended numbers were available.

DRAFT: SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Patriotic Expenses: Funds from the 2021 budget were moved forward. TA Scruton did not know of any events where the Town would need \$3,000. TA Scruton recommended leaving the funds to cover any unexpected expenses because this was a bottom-line budget. The Selectmen will make adjustments as needed. P. Sanderson did not advocate zeroing the line but did not think \$3,000 was the right number; he recommended \$1,000.

MOTION: P. Sanderson moved to decrease the Town Events line from \$3,000 to \$1,000.

P. Sanderson stated that at the very end he was not going to recommend a budget as large as the Selectmen proposed. S. Smith suggested the Town Events line be left at \$1,500. F. Hansler recommended leaving \$1 in that line.

MOTION: F. Hansler moved to decrease the Town Events line from \$3,000 to \$1. MOTION WITHDRAWN

MOTION: P. Sanderson moved to decrease the Town Events line from \$3,000 to \$1,000. Second – M. Connelly; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

General Government: TA Scruton commented that the budget included the Selectmen's recommended wage increase of 3%.

Elections:

MOTION: P. Sanderson moved to increase Elections, Registrations & Vital Statistics from \$19,900 to \$29,950. Second – Z. Pike; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

General Government Buildings:

MOTION: P. Sanderson moved to decrease Total Government Buildings from \$110,006 to \$100,006. Second – F. Hansler; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

Insurance: TA Scruton will have updated insurance costs available at the next meeting.

Total General Government: P. Sanderson explained there is one more manifest for Selectmen approval at their meeting on December 20th. They will also encumber funds for contracts not completed in 2021 but will be completed in 2022. Totals will be adjusted based on the encumbrances and expenses to date.

Police: Chief Laurent will provide the Budget Committee with a justification for filling the vacant position. F. Hansler recommended the amount for the K-9 be submitted as a warrant article and let the voters decide. P. Sanderson explained the Special Detail Fund; use of that fund was discussed at length. P. Walsh suggested expanding the use of the Special Detail Fund. Chief Laurent stated it was created for a specific purpose.

MOTION: F. Hansler moved to ascertain the funds going into the Special Detail Fund since 2008, the disbursements from the account and the purpose of the disbursements. Second – M. Connelly; three in favor, four against. MOTION DENIED

Fire Department: TA Scruton stated a new ambulance is needed. It was not included in the warrant articles; it may be possible to purchase it through ARPA funds and will be discussed at the Board of Selectmen meeting on Monday, December 20, 2021. Full-time and part-time wages were discussed.

DRAFT: SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Highway, Streets & Sanitation: TA Scruton informed the Budget Committee that invoices for Bayside Road are still being finalized. The estimated cost is \$246,000; payment is pending due to final inspection by Altus Engineering. Meloon Road, Sanderson Road and Fairway Drive were not done due to the cold weather; those funds (estimated at \$144,910) will be encumbered because it is contractual. The Contract Snow & Roads line was questioned. TA Scruton stated there have been years when \$700,000 has been reached. There is a Storm Expense CRF (\$69,000) that can also be used. Salt was discussed; TA Scruton will discuss purchasing salt before December 31st with the contractor. Lane striping was not done due to how late Bayside Road was completed; funds will be encumbered. Meloon Road, Sanderson Road, Fairway Drive and Bayside Road will be striped.

Sanitation: Revenue figures were not available. If the markets are going down, the Selectmen may want to look at fees. S. Smith stated Transfer Station fees have been discussed. TA Scruton added that the Town has a zero-cost recycling contract with ecomaine; there is not cost and little revenue. The contract may change when renewed and could be fairly high.

Conservation Commission: P. Sanderson reminded members that the Conservation Commission wanted to increase their budget: add 'Intern' in the amount of \$1,000; total budget increase was \$1,975.

MOTION: Z. Pike moved to increase the total Conservation Commission budget by \$974 to \$1,975. Second – M. Bilodeau; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

P. Sanderson stated a total number for the Town budget could be not given; additional information from various departments was needed. There was a discussion about meeting dates and room availability. The Budget Committee was reminded that streaming of meetings was not available in other locations.

Adjournment

MOTION: F. Hansler moved to adjourn at 8:34 p.m. Second – M. Bilodeau; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

NEXT MEETINGS

Tuesday, December 28, 2021 - 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room – Town Budget Review
Tuesday, January 04, 2022 – 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room – School Budget Review
Tuesday, January 11, 2022 – 6:30 p.m., Greenland School – Public Hearing

Submitted By: Charlotte Hussey, Administrative Assistant