



BUDGET COMMITTEE
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MINUTES OF THE BUDGET COMMITTEE HEARING

Wednesday, January 11, 2017 – 6:30 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Chair Mary McDonough, Alyson Baryames, James Connelly, Mark Connelly, Sharon Hussey, Bob Krasko, Steve McKenzie, Patty Porter, Pat Walsh – School Board Rep, Paul Sanderson – Selectmen's Rep

Members Absent: Kristen Syphers

Also Present: Karen Anderson, Town Administrator; Vaughan Morgan – Chairman, Board of Selectmen; Department Heads; Chief Laurent – Police Department; Chief Cresta – Fire Department; Ann Mayer – School Board; Salvatore Petralia – Superintendent of Schools

Chair McDonough opened the Budget Committee meeting at 6:30 p.m. A roll call was taken by the Chair; she announced a quorum was present and the meeting was being recorded.

1. Approval of Minutes: Wednesday, January 04, 2017

Approval of minutes was continued.

2. Town Budget Review

Article 11: Proposed operating budget –\$4,151,127; default budget - \$3,960,642; recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Chair McDonough explained that if the requested budget did not pass, the default budget would be in effect. The most significant changes between the 2016 and 2017 budgets include the addition of an eighth police officer and additional coverage for the fire department. Increases were also noted in the New Hampshire Retirement rate and wages for Town employees (2.25%). Chair McDonough briefly explained the need for additional police and fire personnel. She also reviewed the Unassigned Fund Balance informational sheet that was prepared by the Town Administrator (copy on file).

Mark Fleming, Post Road, questioned the need for additional police and fire personnel. Chief Laurent, Police, explained that there are currently seven full-time officers and four part-time officers. Single coverage is run the majority of the time. Neighboring towns are heavily relied upon for back-up on calls; Greenland, in turn, will help neighboring towns. The last officer was added in 2003; 14 years later, the Town has grown (residential and commercial) and the types of calls have changed. An additional officer would allow double coverage in the evenings. Part-time officers can't be ordered to cover a shift; Greenland requires part-time officers to work one shift a month.

Chief Cresta, Fire, responded that over the last few years they were trying to maintain a volunteer status in the department, and it hasn't worked. He plans to retire in two to three years, and included a Deputy Chief position to cover some of the Chief's role. They're also trying to do per diem pay for night coverage. Asked by M. Fleming where he saw the fire department next year, Chief Cresta responded

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that within the next five years there will be a need for a full-time department and new facility; the existing station is too small and is outdated.

P. Sanderson explained the staffing requirements for both of the Town's public safety departments giving 24/7 coverage over a year. Both departments go hand-in-hand: police and fire respond together on many calls. The Board of Selectmen was trying to ensure that both public safety departments provide adequate coverage to residents 24/7. Chair McDonough added that when a volunteer fire department member gets a job in another town, they can no longer be considered a volunteer. The Town has lost a number of volunteer members to full-time positions.

Barbara Fleming, Post Road: Read an article in the paper about local fire departments and how mutual aid masked the shortcomings in employee coverage. She asked if Greenland had researched regional collaboration and if the State assisted in regionalization. Chief Cresta stated that the fire department has met with Stratham and Newington. Departments are trying to regionalize more and more because they're losing emergency personnel; this is happening in the Seacoast area as well as throughout the State. Chief Laurent added that police departments regionalize; there is a regional SERT team in the seacoast and involves 15 or 16 towns, including Greenland. She explained the police department regionalization. Chief Laurent continued that by keeping local control, better service was provided to the community; all departments run differently. Residents were in favor of this article.

Article 12: Purchase of New Truck – Recommended by the Board of Selectmen. There was a discussion about the need for the truck now rather than waiting to purchase if through the capital reserve fund. P. Sanderson explained the difference between Article 12 and Article 16 (creates a capital reserve fund to put money aside for future purchases). Residents were in favor of this article.

Article 13: Road Improvements – Recommended by the Board of Selectmen. A comprehensive road management plan for the Town was completed by Underwood Engineers. Top priorities include Willowbrook Avenue and Great Bay Drive West. John Penacho, Tidewater Farm Road, explained the Fund Balance to those present. Residents were in favor of this article.

Article 14: Library Expansion Capital Reserve Fund – Recommended by the Board of Selectmen. \$35,000 is being requested to be deposited into the fund for future growth of the Weeks Public Library. Residents were in favor of this article.

Article 15: Road Improvement Capital Reserve Fund – Recommended by the Board of Selectmen. The repair and reconstruction of Town roads continues to escalate; the Board of Selectmen is trying to offset some of the expense. Residents were in favor of this article.

Article 16: Town Equipment – Recommended by the Board of Selectmen. The Capital Reserve Fund will be used to replace or add Town capital equipment as recommended in the annual Capital Improvement Fund; the Selectmen will be appointed as agents to expend. Residents were in favor of this article.

Article 17: Transfer Station Equipment – Recommended by the Board of Selectmen. This fund will be used for repairing or replacing major equipment at the Transfer Station. The two compactors used for trash at the Transfer Station are aging and will need to be replaced. Residents were in favor of this article.

Article 18: Chest Compression System – Recommended by the Board of Selectmen. This equipment has been requested by Chief Cresta and will be used for performing CPR on patients. Funds will be

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withdrawn from the Fire and Ambulance Special Revenue Fund, which has been created for that purpose. Residents were in favor of this article.

Article 19: Professional Fees – Recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Funding has been requested for the purpose of environmental, legal or engineering consultants to assist the Town of Greenland with Coakley Landfill matters. Many members of the audience felt there was a need for additional funding (\$100,000 was suggested rather than \$25,000). Changes cannot be made during the public hearing, but can be done on the floor during the Deliberative Session. P. Sanderson reminded those present that the Portsmouth City Council will be reviewing a report from the Coakley Landfill Group at their meeting on Monday, January 23; there is also a meeting with the EPA and DES on Thursday, January 26 at the Bethany Church. Residents were in favor of this article.

Article 20: Ambulance Billing Fees – Recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Ambulance billing is done by an outside contractor; this amount covers the billing expense. The Fire and Ambulance Special Revenue Fund has been created for that purpose. Residents were in favor of this article.

Article 21: Police Equipment – Recommended by the Board of Selectmen. This fund was established in 2013 to replace equipment at the Police Department. Bullet proof vests were replaced in 2012, and are due to be replaced in 2017. Residents were in favor of this article.

Article 22: Seacoast Family Promise – Recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Seacoast Family Promise has made this request to assist them with their mission to support families in need. Residents were in favor of this article.

There will be three additional non-money warrant articles on the ballot; all have been recommended by the Board of Selectmen: All Veterans Credit, Town Treasurer (appointed vs. elected), and an elderly exemption modification.

With the expected growth in Town, the anticipated impact on the Town's tax rate, including the warrant articles, would be a decrease of \$0.11.

3. School Budget Review

Chair McDonough reviewed the highlights for the School budget. The major increases were tuition to other schools, the LEA's increase of \$127,080, increases to teacher's salaries, the addition of a third first grade teacher, increase in health insurance costs as well as NH retirement, increase in pupil transportation costs due to change in high school hours, and Special Education salary increases. Decreases were in Special Education contracted services, psychological testing (with the addition of the Behavioral Analyst position), Special Education transportation costs, and extended school contracts. Support staff salaries were allocated a 3% increase. New proposed positions are the additional first grade teacher, Behavioral Analyst, an educational aide, and Special Education Aide. Without the warrant articles, the impact on the tax rate would be \$.97.

P. Walsh noted the actual impact on the tax rate would be \$1.06 with the addition of \$41,000: an Assistant Business Administrator for the SAU (Greenland will pay a portion of that salary). The School budget would be \$10,127,123. After reviewing the expendable trusts, the School Board made the following revisions to the budget: the Tuition Expendable Trust is approximately \$290,000 (high school and Special Education costs), and will be drawn down \$170,000; the maintenance account will be

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reduced by \$31,000. As a result, the total budget will decrease to \$9,927,123 or a decrease of \$200,000 (approximately \$.28, bringing the impact on the tax rate to \$.78); warrant articles are not included.

Expenditures to date were unavailable; the fiscal year for the School is July 01 to June 30. The default budget was explained and the budget was reviewed line by line. Tally Westerberg, 15 Holly Lane: questioned the School Board removing the funding for the School security system. Chair McDonough explained that the funds for the security system would come from the expendable trust fund that had been established for maintenance. P. Walsh added that there is a trust fund that could be used; their objective was to put the camera system in place. There were two possible ways: the expendable trust fund and/or a positive revenue situation. P. Walsh assured those present that the security system would be in place.

S. Petralia explained the increase in the SAU budget, which was due to Greenland's share of the SAU cost as well as Greenland's portion of the Assistant Business Administrator position. A new position will be created in preparation for the retirement of the Business Administrator. The position will be temporary; the SAU is looking at two to three years. It was also noted that the School Principal is retiring at the end of this school year.

Article 1: Proposed operating budget –\$9,927,089; default budget - \$9,785,951; recommended by the School Board. Residents were in favor of this article.

Article 2: Full day kindergarten – Recommended by the School Board. Increase the 2/3 day kindergarten to full day, hire additional staff and purchase supplies, etc. More information will be available at the Deliberative Session on Monday, February 06, 2017. Cost: \$119,553. There was extensive discussion by many parents supporting full day kindergarten. Residents were in favor of this article.

Article 3: Raise and appropriate up to \$25,000 to be placed in the Special Education Expendable Trust Fund – Recommended by the School Board. To be funded from the remaining June 30, 2017 Unassigned Fund Balance. Residents were in favor of this article.

Article 4: Raise and appropriate \$24,000 to be placed in the School Buildings and Grounds Expendable Trust Fund – Recommended by the School Board. To be funded through the rental income received from the property. Residents were in favor of this article.

Article 5: Raise and appropriate up to \$75,000 to be placed in the Tuition Expendable Trust Fund - Recommended by the School Board. To be funded from the remaining June 30, 2017 Unassigned Fund Balance. Residents were in favor of this article.

The public hearing was closed at 8:43 p.m.

4. Budget Committee Recommendations

The Budget Committee met to make Town and School Budget recommendations following the public hearing. Motions were made by P. Sanderson and seconded by Chair McDonough.

- Town
 - Article 11 – Operating Budget: Recommended by the Budget Committee (8-1)
 - Article 12 – Purchase of New Truck: Not Recommended by the Budget Committee (5-5; the Town Administrator will check with DRA how this should be handled)

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- Article 13 – Road Improvements: Recommended by the Budget Committee (10-0)
- Article 14 – Library Expansion CRF: Not Recommended by the Budget Committee (3-7; discussion that the funds should go to Article 19 to be used for the Coakley Landfill. Money amounts of the two warrants may be changed during Deliberative Session.)
- Article 15 – Road Improvement CRF: Recommended by the Budget Committee (10-0)
- Article 16 – Town Equipment CRF: Recommended by the Budget Committee (10-0)
- Article 17 – Transfer Station Equipment CRF: Recommended by the Budget Committee (10-0)
- Article 18 – Chest Compression System: Recommended by the Budget Committee (10-0)
- Article 19 – Professional Fees: Recommended by the Budget Committee (10-0)
- Article 20 – Ambulance Billing Fees: Recommended by the Budget Committee (10-0)
- Article 21 – Police Equipment CRF: Recommended by the Budget Committee (10-0)
- Article 22 – Seacoast Family Promise: Recommended by the Budget Committee (10-0)
- School
 - Article 1 – Operating Budget: Recommended by the Budget Committee (6-4; members were not happy hearing about the added expense to the budget due to the increase from the SAU at the last minute. They did commend the School Board for using funds from the expendable trust fund to reduce tax payer burden.)
 - Article 2 – Full Day Kindergarten: Recommended by the Budget Committee (7-2-1; S. McKenzie abstained)
 - Article 3 – Special Education Expendable Trust Fund: Recommended by the Budget Committee (10-0)
 - Article 4 - School Buildings and Grounds Expendable Trust Fund: Recommended by the Budget Committee (10-0)
 - Article 5 - Tuition Expendable Trust Fund: Recommended by the Budget Committee (10-0)

Chair McDonough addressed electing a new chairperson. It was decided to table the issue until the next meeting following the election.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Saturday, February 04, 2017 (Snow Date: Saturday, February 11, 2017) - Town Deliberative Session, 9:00 a.m., Greenland School Multi-Purpose Room
- Monday, February 06, 2017 (Snow Date: Wednesday, February 08, 2017) - School Deliberative Session, 6:30 p.m., Greenland School Multi-Purpose Room
- Tuesday, March 14, 2017 - Town Voting Day; Town & School budgets on the ballot as well as election of officers

Respectfully Submitted: Charlotte Hussey, Secretary to the Boards

Approved: