



BUDGET COMMITTEE
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MINUTES OF THE BUDGET COMMITTEE HEARING

Tuesday, October 20, 2020 – 6:30 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room, Zoom

Members Present: Mike Bilodeau, Todd Cadle, Mark Connelly, Frank Hansler, Bob Krasko, Sharon Hussey-McLaughlin, Don Miller, Zack Pike, Paul Sanderson (via Zoom), Jamie Connelly – Selectmen's Rep, Pat Walsh – School Board Rep, Steve McKenzie - Alternate (via Zoom)

Also Present: Matt Scruton – Town Administrator, Steve Smith – Board of Selectman Chairman, Ralph Cresta – Fire Chief, Michele Kaulback – Cemetery Trustees Chairperson, Tara Laurent – Police Chief (via Zoom), Jack Shephard – Building Inspector (via Zoom), Marge Morgan – Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Gus Gouzoules – Supervisors of the Checklist, Denise Grimse – Weeks Library Director (via Zoom), Marcia McLaughlin – Library Trustees Chairperson (via Zoom)

Chair Krasko opened the Board of Selectmen meeting at 6:30 p.m. A checklist to ensure meetings are compliant with the Right-to-Know Law during the State of Emergency was read into the record by Vice Chair Sanderson. A roll call was taken; it was announced a quorum was present and the meeting was being held virtually through Zoom and recorded by video and audio.

Attendance was taken by roll call: M. Bilodeau - present, T. Cadle – present, M. Connelly – present, F. Hansler - present, S. Hussey-McLaughlin - present, D. Miller – present, Z. Pike – present, P. Sanderson - present, J. Connelly – present, P. Walsh – present, S. McKenzie – present, B. Krasko - present.

1. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: D. Miller moved to approve the minutes of the meeting on Monday, September 21, 2020. Second – F. Hansler; roll call vote: M. Bilodeau - abstain, T. Cadle – abstain, M. Connelly – yes, F. Hansler - yes, S. Hussey-McLaughlin - yes, D. Miller – yes, Z. Pike – yes, P. Sanderson - yes, J. Connelly – yes, P. Walsh – yes, S. McKenzie – abstain, B. Krasko - yes. Nine in favor, three abstain (M. Bilodeau, T. Cadle, S. McKenzie). MOTION CARRIED

MOTION: F. Hansler moved to approve the minutes of the meeting on Monday, October 05, 2020. Second – P. Walsh; roll call vote: M. Bilodeau - yes, T. Cadle – abstain, M. Connelly – abstain, F. Hansler - yes, S. Hussey-McLaughlin - yes, D. Miller – abstain, Z. Pike – abstain, P. Sanderson - yes, J. Connelly – yes, P. Walsh – yes, S. McKenzie – abstain, B. Krasko - yes. Seven in favor, five abstain (T. Cadle, M. Connelly, D. Miller, Z. Pike, S. McKenzie). MOTION CARRIED

2. Review of the Town Budget

Town Clerk/Tax Collector: Marge Morgan reviewed her budget, which included a 3% wage increase. She discussed the records preservation which is an ongoing annual process. She was unable to attend conferences due to COVID; however, she is still on the Executive Board and may need to travel for

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meetings. The Town and School have submitted their paperwork to DRA; the Town is waiting word about the tax rate.

Supervisors of the Checklist: P. Sanderson questioned \$9,500 for election expenses vs. \$2,500; there will only be one election in 2021 vs. four in 2020. Gus Gouzoules explained that additional expenses due to COVID are unknown for next year. Computers have also been an issue over the years and some may need to be replaced. P. Sanderson suggested to members that election expenses be flagged and watched for possible reimbursements that may change that figure. M. Morgan added that computers have been a problem and they are using their personal computers for Town business.

D. Miller questioned the CARES process. TA Scruton explained it was not something the Budget Committee would need to vote on. The Town was looking into any possible reimbursement. The Fire Chief, Police Chief, Emergency Management Director, Finance Director and TA Scruton are working together. The Town received a check from the State for GOFERR Funds in the amount of \$63,000 (plus). Reporting it as anticipated revenue would be a problem: TA Scruton explained that they would not know the funding levels of available programs. Chief Laurent added that under the GOFERR Grant, the Town could receive up to \$97,000. GOFERR Funds are part of the CARES Act. It was unknown if any additional CARES Funds would be released.

TA Scruton, responding to D. Miller, stated that the budget is based on actual expenses, including what was budgeted the previous year, what is anticipated for the remainder of this year and what is expected next year. He reminded members it was a bottom-line budget; some lines may be overspent but must remain within the perimeters of the bottom line.

S. Smith noted that the CARES act and federal funding is only good for this year and will expire December 31, 2020. He cautioned them when looking at the Town budget; federal funding and reimbursements were not guaranteed.

M. Connelly stated that of all his years on the Budget Committee, he felt this was one of the tightest budgets, noting there may be areas to be discussed. He requested that the account numbers be added as well as the actual expenditures from the previous year. TA Scruton will add that information and a column for the Budget Committee's budget.

Police Department: Chief Laurent joined the meeting via Zoom. An updated budget was given to the Board. Wages were submitted at a 3% increase. The SRO was a warrant article in 2020 and is now part of the regular Police Department budget. P. Sanderson suggested that radios be included in the Capital Reserve Fund. Responding to a question from P. Sanderson, Chief Laurent stated there were enough funds in the Special Revenue Fund for a new cruiser without impacting taxes. TA Scruton noted that the Police Department salary line increased approximately 13.6% over the 2020 budget.

Chief Laurent explained that the GOFERR Grant is part of the CARES Grant due to COVID. It is federal monies that were allocated to each state. The State then allocated amounts to each town based on population. Greenland's allocation was approximately \$97,000; supporting COVID related documentation is required. TA Scruton noted that GOFERR is the Governor's Office for Emergency Relief and Recovery.

Fire Department: Chief Cresta reviewed his budget with the Board. Administrative Expenses increased due to supplies. Personnel were onsite 24 hours per day due to COVID. Portable radios will need to be replaced. Responding to a question from D. Miller, Chief Cresta stated that the part-time wages will decrease if full-time personnel are hired. The annual salary for one full-time individual, with benefits,

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will be approximately \$100,000. D. Miller stated that hiring two full-time individuals would give the Fire Department four full-time personnel. He was concerned about the tax impact.

TA Scruton explained that the Selectmen have not finalized the warrant articles. The initial discussion was to have two separate warrant articles for the full-time personnel. One would be to fund the two full-time positions; if that failed, the other would be to fund one full-time position. Those positions will not be included in the budget; they will be warrant articles.

The Board received an updated balance sheet for Trusts and Special Funds; balances were as of September 30, 2020. J. Connelly questioned why there was not a fund for fire equipment. Chief Cresta noted that within the next one to two years that ambulance will be replaced using funds from the Fire and Ambulance Special Revenue Fund. The preliminary cost is currently \$240,000. There is not a fund for fire equipment. When a check is received from ambulance billing, it goes to the Fire and Ambulance Special Revenue Fund. The power stretcher for the ambulance was paid from this fund.

GOFFER Grant reimbursement will go into the General Fund; the original cost was from the General Fund. It will show as an expense on the Expense Sheet.

M. Bilodeau asked if the cost of the full-time firefighters could be broken down to include the cost of gear, equipment, pay rate and benefits. He felt that would be beneficial and helpful to the Budget Committee.

Chief Laurent explained the Police Special Detail Fund. Revenues from police special details are deposited in this account. Funds from that account are used to purchase police cruisers and there is no tax impact. The Finance Director added funds do not transfer over to the General Fund, they remain in the Police Special Revenue Fund. P. Sanderson stated this is not a fund that can be used to reduce some other aspect of the police budget.

Building Inspector: Jack Shephard reviewed his budget via Zoom. The Administrative Expense line has increased. Remote inspections are now being done due to COVID. The purchase of an iPad and software were COVID expenses. TA Scruton added that the Building Department brings in revenue that partially offsets the cost. As of October 13, 2020, the Building Department revenue was \$39,307. J. Shephard noted that last year at this time 228 permits were issued; this year 384 permits have been issued. Permit fees have not been increased since 2013. The Board of Selectmen will look at fees in 2021.

Cemetery Trustees: Michele Kaulback reviewed her budget with the Board, explaining that their biggest costs were mowing and cleanings. Responding to M. Bilodeau's question about the increase, M. Kaulback stated that the budget was cut last year before it went to the Budget Committee; she is going out to bid this year. TA Scruton clarified that the Cemetery Trustees manage the cemeteries; their mowing contractors can potentially be different from the Town. They have sole authority to hire. F. Hansler asked if the mowing could be consolidated. TA Scruton responded it would have to be agreed upon by the Selectmen and Cemetery Trustees. The RSA is very clear that the Cemetery Trustees have sole authority over managing the cemeteries. There was a discussion about the number of contractors mowing fields in Town. There are currently three: School, Cemetery, Town each have their own.

Recreation: S. Hussey-McLaughlin reviewed her budget. There was not a lot of programming due to COVID.

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Library: Marcia McLaughlin and Denise Grimse joined the meeting via Zoom. Supplemental information was emailed and distributed to the Board. The Library is scheduled to be completed in 2021. Additional staffing hours were included for Saturday's and coverage for sick/vacation time. New personnel are not being added. Three people are needed at all times: someone downstairs, another person upstairs, and someone to cover breaks and/or help where needed. Wage increase is 3%. The Library is currently closed to the public due to COVID. People are working from home doing virtual programming or working in the building. D. Grimse explained that even though they are not open to the public, services are still being provided. The anticipated opening date of the Library is April 01, 2020.

J. Connelly questioned how they arrived at the cost for utilities. D. Grimse stated she based it on \$1.10 per square foot. She was told it may be closer to \$1.50 per square foot. The building is slightly over 10,000 sq. ft.

Town: It was clarified that the budget is a bottom-line budget

Discussion on the Town budget was continued to the meeting on Tuesday, October 27, 2020.

3. Adjournment

MOTION: D. Miller moved to adjourn at 8:16 p.m. Second – Z. Pike; roll call vote: M. Bilodeau - yes, T. Cadle – yes, M. Connelly – yes, F. Hansler - yes, S. Hussey-McLaughlin - yes, D. Miller – abstain, Z. Pike – yes, P. Sanderson - yes, J. Connelly – yes, P. Walsh – yes, S. McKenzie – yes, B. Krasko - yes. All in favor.
MOTION CARRIED

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| NEXT MEETING |
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Tuesday, October 27, 2020 - 6:30 p.m., Town Hall Conference Room and Zoom

Submitted By: Charlotte Hussey, Administrative Assistant