



BUDGET COMMITTEE
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MINUTES OF THE BUDGET COMMITTEE HEARING

Wednesday, January 03, 2018 – 6:30 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

Members Present: Chair Bob Krasko, Tibby Fogarty-Cail, James Connelly, Mark Connelly, Sharon Hussey-McLaughlin, Steve McKenzie Don Miller, Patty Porter, Kristen Syphers, Randy Bunnell – School Board Rep, Chip Hussey – Selectmen's Rep

Also Present: Karen Anderson, Town Administrator; Vaughan Morgan, Chairman - Board of Selectmen; Members of the Board of Selectmen; Amy Ransom, Assistant Business Administrator – SAU 50; School Board Members; Tamara Halle, Principal – Greenland Central School; Teegan von Burn, Assistant Principal – Greenland Central School; Sal Petralia, Superintendent – SAU 50

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

1. Approval of Minutes: Tuesday, December 19, 2017

MOTION: K. Syphers moved to approve the minutes of Tuesday, December 19, 2017. Second – S. McKenzie; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

Town Review

Information for the public hearing on Tuesday, January 09, 2017 was distributed and reviewed by K. Anderson (copy on file).

General Government: Personnel Administration increased due to a rate increase with NH Retirement, adding personnel to the Fire Department and the Administrative Assistant at the Police Department.

Public Safety: The Fire Department is the largest increase (\$87,154) in the budget, providing coverage for the two lieutenants. The station would be manned with two people, 12 hours per day/7 days per week as well as overnight coverage 7 days per week. Municipal Resources, Inc. did a full review; one of the first steps they recommended was two lieutenants to oversee the day-to-day operations.

Highways and Streets: There was an overall reduction of \$10,000 due to an equipment purchase that was not made this year. Snow removal was increased by \$30,000; the paving line was increased to \$200,000. There was an overall decrease in this section.

Sanitation: There was a small increase in tipping fees paid to Covanta.

Health: Richie McFarland Health Center requested an increase based on the number of children using their services as well as the inclusion of Seacoast Family Promise.

DRAFT: SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Welfare: Unchanged.

Culture and Recreation: There was an increase of approximately \$39,000; \$3,000 was included for the Town's 300th Anniversary Celebration. The Library's operating budget increased by \$31,000 and the Recreation increase of \$4,500 for fencing at Maloney Field.

Conservation and Development: Unchanged.

Debt Service: Slight reduction due to a drop in interest paid through the amortization schedule.

Overall Budget: The budget to be presented at public hearing will be \$4,458,347, unless changes are made. The increase over last year will be \$279,730.

Town Tax Rate: The current portion for the Town is \$3.38; the proposed budget will be \$3.30 without warrant articles. The draft of warrant articles was given to members for review prior to the public hearing on Tuesday, January 09, 2018. The Selectmen will vote to recommend/not recommend at their meeting on Monday, January 08, 2018.

The Town's 300th Anniversary will be celebrated in 2021; the committee is in the formative stages. K. Anderson commented that the \$3,000 included in the proposed budget was start-up funds.

School Budget Review

An updated operating budget was distributed and reviewed by A. Ransom and R. Bunnell (copy on file). At the last meeting the Budget Committee voted to decrease the budget by \$200,000. The School Board recommended a decrease of \$153,093.79, bringing the operating budget to \$10,790,638 (an increase of 7.41% over the current budget). Cuts to various programs were made including Life Skills, Assemblies, and Clubs (a copy of the recommended reductions is on file). The PHS Tuition line was reduced by \$90,000. There were no changes in proposed positions. Any contractual obligations are included in the default budget.

S. McKenzie noted there was no effort to reduce staffing, which has a major impact on the School budget. Pat Walsh responded that major driver was growth in the number of students. Funding has been lost for two aides and they have no control over Special Education costs. There's approximately \$675,000 in uncontrollable factors. K. Syphers spoke in support of the additional staffing, stating the request was valid based on the number of students in a class. S. McKenzie clarified that he wasn't asking they cut staff, but rather cut increases to staff.

Chair Krasko stated he was concerned about the Town, not only the School, and the Town was facing many issues this year. He was unhappy with the results of the proposed School decreases. R. Bunnell pointed out that there were no changes requested of the Town.

MOTION: M. Connelly moved to accept the revised School operating budget as proposed and forward to public hearing. Second – S. McKenzie.

Discussion: There was a discussion about PHS tuition. K. Syphers suggested discussing the warrant articles before making any decisions as they were an important piece. K. Anderson explained that the motion on the floor was for the \$10,790,638 budget. Another motion could be made to increase that by a specific amount, and bring that budget to public hearing.

DRAFT: SUBJECT TO CHANGE

MOTION: M. Connelly moved to accept the revised School operating budget as proposed and forward to public hearing. Second – S. McKenzie; six in favor, five against. MOTION CARRIED

Warrant articles were reviewed by A. Ransom (copy on file).

- Article 1 – Operating Budget
- Article 2 – Replace the Fire panel; the School is applying for a grant as part of the Safety and Infrastructure Grant: if funding is received, the warrant article will not be needed.
- Article 3 – Special Education Trust Fund
- Article 4 – School Buildings and Grounds Expendable Trust Fund
- Article 5 – Tuition Expendable Trust Fund
- Article 6 – To Discontinue the School Health Insurance Trust

MOTION: D. Miller moved to forward the School warrant articles to public hearing. Second – C. Hussey; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

Town Budget Review

MOTION: M. Connelly moved to reduce the Town budget by \$41,115.

K. Anderson noted that a motion would need to be made for each deduction; it was considered irresponsible for just a bottom line flat reduction.

MOTION: M. Connelly moved to reduce General Government Supplies - \$500, Officers Expense - \$500, Tax Office Expenses - \$2,000, Tax Office Supplies - \$1,000, Longevity Bonus - \$750, Planning Consultants - \$1,000, Advertising Planning/Zoning - \$500, Gas/Propane - \$1,000, Maintenance Town Property - \$2,000 and Cemetery Supplies - \$3,000. General Government reduction of \$12,250. Further to reduce Police Supplies - \$500, Tires - \$500, Police Building Maintenance - \$350, Cruiser repair - \$500, and Conference - \$1,000. Police reduction of \$2,850. Further to reduce Fire Replacement Equipment - \$1,000, Fire Training - \$2,000, Fire Prevention - \$400, Fire Maintenance Communication Equipment - \$500, and Fire Pagers and Portable Radios - \$2,000. Fire Department reduction of \$5,900. Emergency Management - \$5,000. Public Works reductions to Drainage - \$5,000, Tree Care - \$2,000, and Engineering - \$2,000. Public Works reduction of \$9,000. Reduce Property Tax deferrals - \$1,000. Recreation and Culture - \$1,100 from Part-Time Labor, Damages - \$500. Recreation and Culture - \$1,600. Conservation Education - \$100. Conservation - \$100. Reduce all wages by \$3,415 to reflect a 2.75% increase rather than 3% to match the school increases. Total recommended decrease: \$41,115. Second – R. Bunnell

Discussion: M. Connelly felt that the proposed reductions would not negatively affect the operation of the Town. Further, it was his belief that every dollar spent should be voted on by residents. Wages were discussed at length. M. Connelly stated that the Town is facing “severe stress” on the budget; 2.75%, given those circumstances and that everyone’s taxes are going up, is a fair raise. It’s also a fair raise in the business world. T. Fogarty-Cail stated the first 39 cuts suggested by M. Connelly were great points and may have gotten lost because of the wages. She asked him to reconsider his motion without a cut to wages; it may be more palatable to people. M. Connelly was not willing to give the Town an extra \$3,400; if they want to give employees that much of a raise, that was fine with him and they could find it someplace else in the budget.

MOTION: M. Connelly moved to reduce the Town budget by \$41,115. Second – R. Bunnell; MOTION FAILED.

DRAFT: SUBJECT TO CHANGE

M. Connelly commented that if the budget is allowed to go as presented, he didn't believe the Budget Committee was doing their job. J. Connelly noted there were things he liked and things he didn't; it was difficult for him to say "yes" to the whole motion. Other members were in agreement. M. Connelly responded that a \$41,000 cut would not affect the Town negatively and they would be able to operate.

School Budget

K. Syphers thanked the School Board for their work on the budget. She appreciated the decreases made by them and what they were willing to burden the parents with. She didn't feel comfortable taking \$90,000 from PHS Tuition; money may have to be taken from the Operating Budget.

MOTION: K. Syphers moved to increase the proposed School budget by \$90,000 to \$10,880,638 to fund high school tuitions. Second – J. Connelly

Discussion: S. McKenzie noted there is a warrant article that's passed every year that will restore the money. K. Syphers responded it wasn't in its entirety based on the number of students this year. R. Bunnell noted that if they money were put back, the School Board may revisit that warrant article.

MOTION: K. Syphers moved to increase the proposed School budget by \$90,000 to \$10,880,638 to fund high school tuitions. Second – J. Connelly; 7 in favor, 3 against. MOTION CARRIED

S. McKenzie noted for the record that he opposed the motion.

MOTION: T. Fogarty-Cail moved to increase the School budget by \$10,391 to add back the cuts to field trips and athletic trips. Second – P. Porter

Discussion: T. Fogarty-Cail voiced her concerns that it would have somewhat of a discriminatory effect on children who could not afford field trips and/or athletic trips, and it wouldn't affect the bottom line of the budget. M. Connelly stated the administration wouldn't let that happen; everyone would go on a field trip. S. Petralia assured the Budget Committee that they would not put the District, the Board or Town in jeopardy because of any discriminatory practices; they would make a concerted effort that all students attend the field trip. His role as Superintendent was to prevent discriminatory practices from happening. C. Hussey suggested this question be asked at the public hearing when the School Board was present. R. Bunnell stated that T. Hallee and her team would be reviewing field trips.

Marcia McLaughlin, Nantucket Place: Not speaking definitively for the Women's Club stated they have a standing policy with the School for students in need. Chair Krasko added that the Veteran's also do a lot. P. Walsh recommended that if there were a problem, the teacher should be contacted on a private basis.

R. Bunnell noted that participation in athletics is down, and they may not be able to fill some teams next year. There are some opportunities to reduce that budget, and there were other priorities on the list.

MOTION: T. Fogarty-Cail moved to increase the School budget by \$10,391 to add back the cuts to field trips and athletic trips. Second – P. Porter; 2 in favor, 8 against. MOTION FAILED

Adjournment: C. Hussey moved to adjourn at 8:43 p.m. All in favor; MOTION CARRIED.

DRAFT: SUBJECT TO CHANGE

P. Walsh stated that A. Ransom would prepare a budget to reflect \$90,000 going back in and the Board would discuss removing the warrant article.

Town warrant articles were distributed to the Budget Committee. K. Anderson noted that the Board of Selectmen had not voted to recommend/not recommend any of the warrant. She stressed the numbers were a draft.

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, January 09, 2018 – 6:30 p.m., Public Hearing, Greenland Central School

Respectfully Submitted: Charlotte Hussey, Secretary to the Boards

Approved: