



**BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
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**MINUTES OF THE BUDGET COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING**

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Thursday, January 10, 2019 – 6:30 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

*Members Present:* Jamie Connelly, Mark Connelly, Frank Hansler, Sharon Hussey, Bob Krasko, Don Miller, John Penacho, Patty Porter, Randy Bunnell – School Board Rep, Chip Hussey – Selectmen's Rep

*Late Arrival:* Steve McKenzie

*Also Present:* Karen Anderson, Town Administrator; Amy Ransom – Business Administrator, SAU 50

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Chair Krasko opened the Budget Committee Public Hearing 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. Chair Krasko asked residents wishing to speak to give their state their name and address.

**I. FIRE STATION BOND PUBLIC HEARING**

This hearing for the Fire Station bond is required by the Municipal Finance Act.

MOTION: J. Connelly moved to open the bond public hearing for the construction of a fire station in the amount of \$2,900,000 at 6:32 p.m. Second – P. Porter; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

Chair Krasko read Article 2, Fire Station Bond, into the record. The intent is to build a new fire station to accommodate the larger vehicles and growing needs of the Town. The building will be on Town land in front of the existing Police Station. The public works building will be removed and that department will likely be moved to the existing fire station with space for other Town functions as well.

Chair Krasko opened the public hearing to comments. Tim Collins, Winnicut Road, resident of Greenland for 55 years: stated it was a good idea, but the timing is terrible. The Dearborn Road bond expires in 2024, the School bond expires in 2021; 2022 or 2023 might work perfect. His tax bill increased 19% this year; it's not sustainable. Tom Bates, Osprey Cove: asked for clarity on repurposing the Library bond for a Fire Station bond. Chair Krasko responded "no", he hadn't heard anything about that. T. Bates clarified that the Library bond could not be rescinded and the fire station used to replace that bond. K. Anderson explained that the petitioned warrant article that was received was to rescind the authorization for the current bond; it is not an article to repurpose the current bond. It could potentially happen the following year; however, there is no warrant article being presented to repurpose the bond.

Paul Sanderson, Osprey Cove and Board of Selectmen: there are two State statutes applicable to this—RSA 33:8-f (you can't vote to rescind a bond for five years after it has been issued); the questions of rescission can't properly come before Town Meeting and be accomplished. If there is money left over in the bond or a bond has been issued and not used, the Town can undertake a warrant article to repurpose that bond. The same procedure used to issue the bond must be followed: the necessary public hearings as well as a warrant article that would pass by 3/5 majority vote (RSA 33:3-a). Mr. Bates' concern about that happening at the March Town Meeting can't happen.

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P. Sanderson addressed the Fire Station bond. As a member of the Board of Selectmen, he was also a member of the Fire Department Building Committee. This was being proposed as the result of a study that was done by Municipal Resources Inc. (MRI), a professional organization in the State. They found the existing fire station to be severely deficient in size, the condition of the building and the conditions needed to create a professional firefighting force. Volunteerism in the department has decreased over the last several years. In order to be a professional firefighter it takes a commitment of time, extensive training to become an emergency medical technician, and having the necessary training within the fire service. A lot of effort has been made by the Fire Chief to encourage people to become volunteers. It hasn't happened for a variety of reasons; people don't have the time to commit to the necessary training to be a professional firefighter and EMT.

Hiring firefighters was researched. If you are a professional firefighter, you'd want to be hired where there was a union because of better pay, better working conditions and opportunities for advancement. Discussions were held with neighboring towns about a joint effort between departments. All towns indicated there was no way to create a regional fire service that would work to provide firefighting in Greenland. P. Sanderson added that all fire departments are having difficulties recruiting. Greenland decided to create, over time, a professional firefighting service that will eventually grow to 12 people. There has been effort in the last year to hire two individuals. Six applications were received, five of which didn't meet minimum qualifications. One individual was recently hired.

The effort to build a new station is like a field of dreams: if we build it perhaps they will come. If it's not built, there's a possibility the fire department will go dark. There is no duty for any municipality to have a fire service or fire department; there is not duty for any other town to cover this community if there isn't a fire department in Greenland. If there were no fire department to respond to public safety emergencies, residents could call 911 and no one would come. As far as mutual aid, you have to be able to give as well as receive.

P. Sanderson agreed with T. Collins that the timing was terrible. The best efforts have been put forward to maintain the professional firefighting resources to continue the ability to respond to public safety emergencies and to plan for the future growth of Greenland. P. Sanderson asked for positive consideration from residents on the bond and, hopefully, their vote on election day.

Vaughan Morgan, Holly Lane and Board of Selectmen: Expanding on P. Sanderson's statements, V. Morgan added that the Committee has been researching the Fire Department over a year. He didn't like to put the Fire Department against the Library. V. Morgan mentioned at the 2018 Deliberative Session that the Selectmen value wants vs. needs. The Library, recreation fields or something similar is a "want"; a fire department or police station is a "need". A fire department is needed as a safety aspect for the Town. The Committee feels they have a very cost effective plan to implement the fire station; V. Morgan recommended that residents seriously consider it. He stated he was aware of the petitioned warrant article and didn't know what the outcome would be; he stressed we need a fire department. According to the experts, if the fire department is built, it will expedite response times by 1 ½ minutes. The current response time is over 10 minutes; 1 ½ minutes could mean the difference between life and death. He urged residents to consider this warrant article.

Chair Krasko noted that Chief Cresta and the architect were available to answer any questions. There were no further comments or questions. Chair Krasko returned to the Budget Committee to close the public hearing.

MOTION: J. Connelly moved to close the public hearing at 6:45 p.m. Second – J. Penacho; all in favor.  
MOTION CARRIED

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Chair Krasko announced that the public hearing was closed at 6:45 p.m.

### II. 2019 TOWN DEFAULT BUDGET, OPERATING BUDGET & WARRANT ARTICLES – PUBLIC HEARING

Chair Krasko announced this was a public hearing on the proposed budget as required by the Municipal Finance Act.

MOTION: S. Hussey moved to open the public hearing to review the default budget, proposed budget and warrant articles at 6:46 p.m. Second – J. Penacho; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

#### ➤ Default Budget

New municipal budget laws require that the default budget must be reviewed prior to the proposed budget. The 2019 default budget is \$4,720,118 which is \$62,155 less than the proposed budget; it's an increase of \$261,771 over the 2018 budget. The 2018 budget was \$4,458,347. Chair Krasko explained the adjustments that were made to arrive at the default budget.

- Decrease: \$29,409 - 2018 revaluation
- Decrease: \$1,900 - one-time expenditure for the purchase of public works equipment
- Decrease: \$12,000 - one-time expenditure for recreation fencing
- Increase: \$30,996 – full year of positions added in 2018 and budgeted at nine months
- Increase: \$242,916 – interest and principal for Library bond approved in 2018

Jane Mann, September Drive: noted that two fire positions were added and asked how many total fire positions there were now. K. Anderson explained that in 2018 two full-time positions were authorized and budgeted at nine months. Most of that money is returning to the General Fund because it was difficult to find qualified firefighters. A full-time firefighter was recently hired and started January 03, 2019. There is now one full-time position in addition to part-time and call personnel. The department responds to predominantly ambulance calls.

Chair Krasko asked for any questions, noting that Chief Cresta was present.

#### ➤ Town Operating Budget

Major changes to the operating budget from 2018 to 2019 were outlined. Chair Krasko explained that an official vote would not be taken. However, a show of hands was asked for to indicate the level of public support for the budget and warrant articles. He continued that based on feedback during this meeting, the Budget Committee would make final recommendations on the budget to be forwarded to Deliberative Session on Saturday, February 02, 2019 (9:00 a.m.). Amendments can be made to the budget and warrant articles at the Deliberative Session; final voting will take place at the polls on Tuesday, March 12, 2019.

The 2019 proposed operating budget for the Town is \$4,782,273 which is an increase of \$323,926 over 2018. The current Town portion of the tax rate is \$3.34; this operating budget reflects an estimated rate of \$3.51. Increased valuations and revenues will decrease that rate.

- General Government - Increase of \$32,193: Significant changes include increase of 2.75% to employee wages; decrease in number of elections in 2019 (State primary and general election only); decrease to assessing due to revaluation; decrease in legal expenses of \$5,000 as recommended by

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the Budget Committee for Planning Board legal fees; increase of 9.5% for health insurance; slight decrease to NH Retirement rates in July 2019 (budget reflects a half year at the lower rate).

- Police Department – Increase of \$30,383: Increase is due to 1.5% plus salary adjustments ranging from 0% to 18% to bring personnel to average of other seacoast departments.
- Fire Department – Decrease of \$5,152: Changes include increase of \$1,000 for medications; full year of two positions approved in the 2018 budget; reduction in stipends.
- Building Inspector – Increase of 2.75%: Wages
- Emergency Management – No Change: Expenses are offset by grant revenue.
- Public Works – Increase of \$44,384: Snow removal increased \$55,000 due to contract rates and historical averages; 2.75% wage increase; increase of \$4,500 for planned culvert maintenance; decrease of \$3,000 in street lighting due to LED conversion; decrease of \$5,720 for one-time expenditure to rebuild Transfer Station shed; decrease in new equipment purchases as a one-time expenditure in 2018.
- Health/Human Services – Decrease of \$1,000: This account funds health agencies, mosquito control and the Health Officer. One agency did not request appropriated funds in 2017 and 2018; by policy, they were removed from funding.
- Other Programs: The annual budget of \$25,000 covers the deferred property taxes for some residents. Funds are returned to the Town when the property is transferred.
- Welfare – No Change: This account (\$18,802) funds rent, utilities and other emergency needs for residents who qualify for welfare assistance.
- Conservation – No Change: This account (\$1,000) covers only the operating/office expenses of the Conservation Commission.
- Patriotic Purposes – No Change: This account (\$3,725) funds flags and flowers for Remembrance Park; \$3,000 is earmarked for the Town's 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2021.
- Library Budget – Increase of \$4,744: Overall the budget decreased by \$16,056. The increase is due to a correction in an appropriation error for health insurance.
- Culture and Recreation/Parks – Increase of \$1,000: The increase is due to contracted irrigation services.
- Debt Service – Increase of \$236,060: The increase is due to the principal and interest for the first year of the Library bond. Ron Gross, Windsor Green: Asked if the money would be returned to the General Fund if the bond wasn't used. K. Anderson explained that the money will be paid because the bond has been issued and is in a Town account.

Chair Krasko requested a show of hands in favor of the \$4,782,273 budget as presented. The response was positive.

### ➤ Warrant Articles

- Article 4 – School Resource Officer: This would be a nine month position for a School Resource Officer at Greenland School; cost is \$77,500 and includes salary and benefits. The cost for a full year will be \$103,244. This has been recommended by the Board of Selectmen.

Maria Emory, Stone Meadow Way and Greenland School Board, asked Chief Laurent to address this article. Chief Laurent stated that School Resource Officers have become more and more popular; people are more familiar with them than in the past. The Governor's Committee on School Safety met over the summer and established 58 findings and recommendations for school safety. One recommendation was for a School Resource Officer in every school. Chief Laurent felt the School is very, very safe; however, it's not from within that you worry about. Concerns would be someone with mental health issues, feuding and/or divorced parents, the stressors of today, etc. Having an officer in the School would mean a quicker response time. Chief Laurent is a big proponent of

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School Resource Officers. The SRO would be support for students and staff, assist with some classes and reading to kindergarten students. Chief Laurent noted that there will be a School Safety Forum on Wednesday, January 16, 2019, 7 p.m. at Greenland School. K. Anderson clarified the language of the article explaining that the nine month position would begin after Town Meeting in March if approved. It will be a full year position in the Town budget next year.

Tally Westerberg, Holly Lane and Social Worker in a neighboring district: Spoke on behalf of the warrant article. She stated that the SRO is an invaluable member of the school community. The SRO becomes a staff member who is able to respond to an emergency situation. It must be the right person in order to fit and build relationships with the students.

- Article 5 – Fire Station Siding and Windows: The building has the original aluminum siding and windows; this will replace all siding and windows and create an entry way that will help with energy costs. The intent is that the building will continue to be used for a municipal purpose at such time a new fire station is built. Cost: \$74,000. This has been recommended by the Board of Selectmen.
- Article 6 – Purchase of Safety Gear for the Fire Department: Firefighters exposed to carcinogens from firefighting have a higher risk of contracting various types of cancer. The extra set of gear will insure that contaminated gear does not have to be worn until after it is clean. Cost: \$60,000 from the Special Revenue Fund; approximate fund balance is \$115,414. This has been recommended by the Board of Selectmen.
- Article 7 – Full-Time Laborer: This position would replace the budgeted part-time seasonal laborer. The cost for nine months with salary and benefits: \$51,814; a full year will be \$79,885. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen. T. Collins questioned the health insurance cost.
- Article 8 – LED Lighting Conversion: Conversion of lighting in the Town Office and Police Station to LED. A rebate from Eversource is anticipated in the amount of \$7,430 to offset the costs. The payback period is three years. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen. K. Anderson explained all fixtures in the Town Office and Police Station will be changed, including smart controls.
- Article 9 – Conservation Commission: To be used for the maintenance of Town conservation lands, Town controlled trails, conducting natural and water resource research, etc. The Conservation Commission has accepted the responsibility for the Town's open space on Van Etten Drive which will require an annual mowing and some new native plantings. This is a non-lapsing three year fund. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen. C. Hussey explained that bog bridges and trail expansion will be done.
- Article 10 – Establish a Police Station Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund: This will be a new fund to balance the large expenses associated with an aging building. The roof will need to be replaced within five years. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen.
- Article 11 – Ambulance Billing: This is revenue neutral. The amount will be increased from \$3,000 to \$4,500 due to the increased number of ambulance calls and the corresponding revenue. The cost is based on a percentage of the revenue. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen.
- Article 12 – Police Equipment Capital Reserve Fund: The balance in this fund is approximately \$3,653 and is used to replace bullet proof vests every five years. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen.
- Article 13 – Road Improvement Capital Reserve Fund: \$50,000 will be added to the CRF from the Unassigned Fund Balance. The Unassigned Fund Balance has approximately \$350,000 that could be used to make deposits into a CRF without negatively impacting the importance of the Fund Balance. Recommended by the Board of Selectmen.

MOTION: J. Connelly moved to close the public hearing at 7:24 p.m. for the Town budget and warrant articles. Second – J. Penacho; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

K. Anderson stated that because this was a budget meeting, only money articles would be discussed.

### III. SCHOOL OPERATING BUDGET AND WARRANT ARTICLES

MOTION: Chair Krasko moved to open the public hearing at 7:28 p.m. for the Greenland Central School budget and warrant articles. Second – P. Porter; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

Randy Bunnell, School Board Representative, presented the School Budget.

- Article 1 – Operating Budget: The overall budget increase is 4.5%. The default budget is an increase of 2.37% over the previous year. R. Bunnell explained the budget increases. A reduction in the PHS tuition is anticipated. Technology needs for staff and students are addressed in this budget.
- Article 2 – Energy Project: This article was not discussed; it's a non-money article.
- Article 3 – Special Education Expendable Trust Fund: Funds will be added to the Special Education Expendable Trust Fund that was previously established.
- Article 4 – School Building and Grounds Expendable Trust Fund: Funds will be added to this account through the rental income received from the property.
- Technology Trust Fund: This will be a new fund for future technology needs at Greenland School; funds to come from the remaining June 30, 2019 unassigned fund balance.

### IV. BUDGET COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 1. Town

- Article 2 – Fire Station: Not Recommended (7-3)
- Article 3 – Operating Budget: Recommended (10-0)
- Article 4 – School Resource Officer: Recommended (8-1, 1 abstain)
- Article 5 – Repairs to the Existing Fire Station: Recommended (10-0)
- Article 6 – Firefighter Safety Gear: Recommended (10-0)
- Article 7 – New Position - Grounds Maintenance Laborer: Not Recommended (8-2)
- Article 8 – LED Lighting Conversion: Recommended (10-0)
- Article 9 – Conservation Commission Funds: Recommended (8-1, 1 abstain)
- Article 10 – Capital Reserve Fund for Police Station: Recommended (9-1)
- Article 11 – Ambulance Billing Expense: Recommended (10-0)
- Article 12 – Police Equipment Capital Reserve Fund: Recommended (9-1)
- Article 13 – Road Improvement Capital Reserve Fund: Recommended (10-0)

#### 2. School

- Article 1 – Operating Budget: Recommended (10-0)
- Article 2 – Energy Project (not discussed; non-money)
- Article 3 – Special Education Expendable Trust Fund: Recommended (10-0)
- Article 4 – School Buildings and Grounds Expendable Trust Fund: Recommended (10-0)
- Article 5 – Technology Trust Fund: Recommended (8-1, 1 abstain)

### V. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: J. Connelly moved adjourn at 9:00 p.m. Second – J. Penacho; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

## **DRAFT: SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

NEXT MEETINGS
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Saturday, February 2, 2019 – 9 a.m., Greenland School, Town Deliberative Session

Monday, February 6, 2019 – 6:30 p.m., Greenland School, School Deliberative Session

Respectfully Submitted: Charlotte Hussey, Secretary to the Boards

Approved: 