



BUDGET COMMITTEE
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MINUTES OF THE BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, November 30, 2017 – 6:30 p.m. – Town Hall Conference Room

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

Members Absent: Steve McKenzie

Late Arrival: Sharon Hussey

Also Present: Karen Anderson, Town Administrator; Vaughan Morgan – Chairman, Board of Selectmen; Members of the Board of Selectmen; Department Heads

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. Chair Krasko announced that he would not vote unless there was a tie.

TOWN BUDGET REVIEW

A wage increase of 3% has been requested by all departments.

1. Town Clerk

Marge Morgan, Town Clerk/Tax Collector, addressed the Committee. The only significant change in her budget was a 3% salary increase. M. Morgan explained that the increase in Staff Development was due to the Deputy Clerk attending meetings to become certified and the cost of conventions has increased. They have to attend at least one convention/meeting a year. Additional training is needed due to changes in election procedures. This will be the third year of certification training for the Deputy; there will be one more year. Certification will not increase the salary; it's more about dealing with difficult situations. There was a brief discussion regarding income through year-end. M. Connelly questioned Staff Development being underspent last year and an increase requested for 2018. M. Morgan explained she was unable to attend the conference last year; next year both Clerk and Deputy Clerk will be attending a conference. Clerk-Work software support is paid at year-end. The audit has been done.

Chair Krasko noted that audience members could follow the budget discussion on the screen.

2. Police

Chief Laurent distributed updated copies of her department budget. The increase in the telephone line was explained: only three lines are available with an older phone system and people calling the Police Department often got a busy signal. The Town Hall recently upgraded their system through Comcast. Chief Laurent informed members that Lt. Sawyer will be retiring and a new officer will be hired and outfitted. The Police Department secretary retired in October; the position has been submitted as full-

time in the 2018 budget. Chief Laurent explained gas pricing; she tried to balance the cost of gas, the State locking in a rate and where it would be more advantageous to purchase gas (driving to Hampton for State priced gas vs. Cumberland Farms). She didn't feel comfortable cutting the gas line in the budget—she felt it was too important to patrol the neighborhoods and be visible throughout the community. Chief Laurent also reviewed tire replacement and the clothing allowance.

3. Library

There was no discussion regarding the proposed expansion or warrant article. The biggest increase was the wage increase of 3%. M. Connelly thanked D. Grimse for the time she spent reviewing the budget with him earlier.

4. Building Department

The Building Inspector was unable to attend. That budget was “flat”; the salary increase was submitted at 3%.

5. Public Works

P. Hayden explained that he requested \$75,000 for a new truck, sander and plow in the 2017 budget. He was able to locate a new 2015 truck, full package with dump bed, for \$41,000. The total cost, including the outfitting, was approximately \$52,000. The biggest expense at the Transfer Station is to replace the shed that recycling employees work out of (\$10,000). The original building was donated in the 1980's. The heaters for the compactor area are on hold; bids are in the process for this year. Street lights have been replaced with LED lights. Fuel costs are similar to the Police Department. K. Anderson explained that the Catch Basin line was catch basins and stormwater management, which is the majority. There will be an annual bill for vacuuming the catch basins. The EPA has been working on new stormwater management regulations for several years; the Town is working off the 2008 permit. The new permit has been approved and is effective July 01, 2018; funds have been carried over for the implementation of the new permit rules. One of the new regulations requires street sweeping in Town twice a year; the dirt has to be collected, measured and analyzed for the type of materials. Roads in Town are not sanded; however, Greenland is an MS-4 community and must comply. K. Anderson noted that the Snow Plow line was reduced last year to \$390,000; that line is currently overspent by \$54,000.

6. Fire Department

Chief Cresta explained the increase in the EMS budget was due to the medications that must be carried on the ambulance. The Fire Department has applied for a grant for three sets of vests; the money must be expended (\$6,000) and will be reimbursed. Two full-time lieutenants have been submitted as part of the Fire budget. A study has been done by Municipal Resources, Inc.; they recommend two full-time lieutenants be hired. They would work four days on, four days off; a lieutenant would be on duty 12 hours per day. Per diem staff would be used to cover the shifts. Full-time staff would receive benefits. Fuel is the same situation as the Police Department. Shift hours are 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.; standby pay is paid from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. Currently, four people are paid stipends. Chief Cresta's stipend was increased \$15,000 by the Board of Selectmen. Preparing payroll is time consuming based on the number of calls and people responding. An on duty lieutenant would be responsible for preparing payroll. Ambulance billing fees are put into a revolving fund and used to purchase equipment. Comstar does the ambulance billing. Chief Cresta and D. Miller reviewed the training program. A non-compete program was suggested. Chief Cresta responded that there could be a non-compete clause or pay back to the Town if

people left before a specific amount of time. Chief Cresta added that another problem is the age of fire gear that must be replaced.

7. General Government

Responding to a question from J. Connelly regarding the proposed wage increase, K. Anderson stated that the Board of Selectmen makes the determination. Tax rate breakdown sheets were discussed; taxes decreased from \$16.65 to \$16.64. The Selectmen opted to use \$85,000 from the Undesignated Fund Balance to keep a flat tax rate. There are no significant changes to General Government. There are lines that are not expended due to the \$54,000 deficit in the Snow Plowing line. Reductions were made in the Legal line; there is a non-lapsing warrant article for Coakley legal matters. Assessing is the largest increase in the budget due to the revaluation in 2018. Residential statistical update is \$23,000; commercial statistical update is \$13,000; both are required and were done through the bid process. The increase in Personnel Administration is due to an increase in Retirement. Health Insurance decreased 6.9%; employees are paying a deductible. K. Anderson explained that every year 20% of the Town is assessed as part of a statistical update. When the revaluation is done, the entire Town doesn't have to be measured. The cost is \$26 per property; approximately 400 properties will be done within the next two weeks.

The outstanding bond is for Dearborn Road and Caswell Drive reconstruction and paving. K. Anderson explained that Tuttle Lane was paved this year. In the fall of 2016, Underwood Engineers surveyed the roads in Town and determined when every Town road needs to be done and the cost. Pavement prices came in lower than expected. There was a brief discussion about reconstruction to Willowbrook Avenue, which is partnered with Great Bay Drive West; a warrant article was approved last year. There is a capital reserve fund for Maintenance of Roads.

At this time, the Town is under budget by approximately \$36,000, which will go back to the General Fund. Any over anticipated revenue will also go into the General Fund. In the case of an emergency or overage, K. Anderson explained that the Superior Court or DRA could allow the Town to use funds from the Undesignated Fund Balance for a verified emergency. There is currently \$2.2 million in that fund.

T. Cail left the meeting.

Health and Human Services: There is a small increase for Seacoast Family Promise; the warrant article from last year is included in the 2018 budget.

Welfare: This account will be overspent by approximately \$2,000. Throughout 2017, ten applications were received for assistance.

Recreation: New fencing at Maloney Field has been requested as part of the Recreation budget. \$10,000 is kept as an on-going capital improvement for recreation facilities. Last year \$10,000 was approved for the Harley rake which has not been purchased. It will be rented in 2018 to see if it meets the Town's needs.

Patriotic Purposes: Added was a line for the 300th Anniversary Celebration in amount of \$3,000. The anniversary date is 2021. Jim Rolston stated that the committee is in the preliminary stages of planning. Stratham spent approximately \$168,000; however, they made \$15,000 to \$20,000. Greenland hopes to raise some revenue through souvenir sales, etc. The initial funding will be used for banners and similar items.

Park Maintenance: Includes all of the Town parks---Rolston Park, the Gazebo, the Bandstand area, fields, etc.

Culture and Recreation: The part-time labor is the part-time employee who assists the Property Maintenance Supervisor with field maintenance. An increase in hours was not requested. 20 hours per week for 27 weeks in 2017 has worked well; a wage increase from \$12 per hour to \$15 per hour has been requested.

The School Budget will be reviewed on Wednesday, December 26, 2017, at 6:30 p.m. Budget books were distributed; Chair Krasko asked that members review thoroughly and have questions ready for the meeting. An additional date for final review of the School Budget may need to be added.

MOTION: Chair Krasko moved to adjourn at 8:31 p.m. Second – J. Connelly; all in favor. MOTION CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, December 06, 2017 – 6:30 p.m., School Budget Review, Town Hall Conference Room

Respectfully Submitted: Charlotte Hussey, Secretary to the Boards

Approved: Wednesday, December 14, 2017