

BUDGET COMMITTEE

JANUARY 18, 2016

MEMORIAL BUILDING

7:00 P.M.

The following are to be considered draft minutes only until approved by the Board at their next meeting.

Present: Ken Jacques, Chairman; Bryan O'Day, Tim Cook, Jeff Milne, B. Manning, Bill Huntoon, Darrin Patten, Justin Hastings, and Selectman, Leigh Callaway.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m., and the roll was called.

Motion by Jeff to accept the January 4, 2016 minutes as written, seconded by Bryan and unanimously approved.

Highway: Pete Abair, Road Agent. Pete explained he would like to pave sections of Stoney Brook Road and Bowman Road, and has quotes of \$56 K for Bowman, and \$119K for Stoney Brook. It has been decided to put of paving a short section of the hill on Hogg Hill this year. Ken noted the increased paving wasn't in the CIP plan done about a year ago, and questioned why the change? Pete stated some paving has been put off in past years, and roads have been neglected and now he is trying to catch up. These are two highly traveled roads that he would like to finish up. 1' to 1^{1/2}" of pavement should last quite a few years. Other maintenance costs increase when the road is not smooth. B. asked if \$80K is a number that can be considered every year or is it not enough to bring paving companies in. Ken stated, the extra 100K in the proposed budget this year changes the dynamic of the whole operating budget, and enough other cuts cannot be made to level it out. If 180K of paving were to be done this year, would he not pave next year [2017] and then go back to 80K in 2018. Ken stated, the needs of the other departments need to be taken into consideration.

Leigh reported the Fire Department is considering replacing SCBA (Self Contained Breathing Apparatus) at a cost of just under \$100K. He estimates there will be about \$97K unspent from the 2015 operating budget. Of that, \$10K was not spent in paving in 2015 with a total of \$34K unspent from the highway budget. Leigh would like to see at least \$34K from the fund balance, if not more, go toward paving in 2016. He would not like to see zero proposed for paving next year [2017]. He will work with Pete to put together a list of paving priorities. Pete stated if he could get Stoney Brook Road done this year, he probably could put Bowman off for another year. B. questioned if some of the roads would need to be repaved every 7 years. Pete stated no, he did not believe so. He noted that he doesn't have good information as to when roads were paved before he came to work here.

The Board agreed they need to consider the needs of all the departments and get an idea of the big picture. They would like to see ideas how to work the budget to keep the paving amount in the operating budget as level as possible from year to year.

Library: Trustees Barbara Cooper, Chairman; Art Bobruff, Joyce Guinther, and Alternate Happy Callaway were present. Barbara reported after many years of keeping the library budget flat, they are looking at some infrastructure changes. They are actively recruiting for a librarian as Steve Klein will be retiring. He has agreed to stay on board until a new librarian is chosen, and will do some training. There will be an overlap when the new person begins, so they propose keeping money in consulting for that purpose. The proposal for books and supplies is remaining the same. In the past they have used volunteers to cover Steve's vacation or sick time. They are requesting funds so they can pay someone to cover those hours. They have spoken to or visited 20 libraries in neighboring communities regarding book cataloging software and how best to implement it, and are proposing purchasing open-source software, substantially less costly than other software. They will wait until they have a new librarian on board before making a software decision. \$5K is proposed as a one-time non-recurring cost for manpower and resources to barcode and catalog all the books, DVDs and other materials (of which there are 18K items). \$1,500 for computer upgrades is also included in the proposed budget. The Board agreed this was a good time to do this with a new librarian coming on board. Leigh commented that a lot of thought has gone into their approach to make the library more useful.

Fire Department: Present, Peter Lacaillade, Chief. Ken commented that the fire department's budget request is pretty level and not unreasonable. B. commended Pete on a nicely managed budget. Ken noted there was a good presentation on January 5th at the fire station regarding the SCBA, which several members of the Budget Committee attended. Ken questioned if Pete had more information. Pete noted the existing SCBA equipment was purchased in 2003. New equipment would cost just under \$100K. A hydro test is done every 5 years. The equipment has a 15 year life span, so the existing equipment would be due for replacement mid-2019. The department is looking to replace the existing 10 packs with 10 new packs. The department will stay with the MSA tanks. It was noted because of continuously changing technology, it is not practical to buy a couple of new sets every year. Keeping them all the same allows members to be comfortable with what they are wearing. The supplier does not lease equipment. The department proposed replacing the equipment this year as part of CIP planning, knowing in the next few years there will be a need to replace the Tanker and eventually Engine 2. NFPA standards is the guide, based on age, they use for replacing equipment. The recommendation is for a frontline truck at 15 years, and a backline truck at 20. Currently, there are no issues with the Tanker. Darrin said to keep in mind that a highway truck replacement is coming up, and is in the CIP for 2017. The red truck that was just purchased is older than the truck that is coming up for replacement. Ken stated the worst case scenario would be to purchase the SCBA equipment now, leaving 2 years of life expectancy on the table. SCBA equipment must be purchased in 2019. According to the MSA representative, an order can be filled in 3-4 months. The Board asked Chief Lacaillade to firm up prices.

Police Department: Chief, Tim Julian. Ken commented Tim has proposed a level funded budget. A cruiser purchase has been anticipated for this year. Tim has quotes for \$27,260 for a Ford Interceptor, and \$6,000 to equip. He is checking on the warranty and will look into a three-year lease versus the quote for 5 years. The Board asked Tim to see what Ford would allow for a

trade-in. They questioned leasing versus a local loan, which has a lower interest rate. Purchasing the cruiser from the fund balance was also discussed.

The Board discussed the remaining fund balance with Leigh and questioned the inclusion of the \$200 K that has been held for a possible worst case scenario outcome of pending pole litigation. Leigh feels the possible expenditure of \$200K has to be included in the remaining fund balance percentage recommended by the Department of Revenue. B. discussed the possibly using the fund balance to buy the cruiser outright, putting 40K toward paving (with the remaining \$80K in the budget for Stoney Brook Road) putting Bowman off for another year. That would also leave money available to offset 2016 tax rate, if necessary, and still stay within DRA recommendations. Everyone agreed the fire department should replace their SCBA equipment, but not necessarily when there is still have 20% life left.

Zoning Compliance: Leigh shared the draft of a position description. This version has not been vetted by the Select board, and was amended from one they recently reviewed, which he drafted four years ago. He has researched wages through the NHMA wage and salary survey. The Selectmen are in agreement they need assistance with review of applications, “boots on the ground” inspections, and regular monitoring of construction. The position is proposed for up to 15 hours per week, and will be managed by the Selectmen. Regulations will be enforced by the Selectmen, not this person. B. stated, he can see the Selectmen are having to be involved in a lot of field work and noted his concern with the amount of time involved on this issue, being a deterrent for future interest to anyone considering being a Selectman. Bryan stated, he feels this is not a matter of inspection, it is a matter of enforcement. Leigh noted his concern with added field work, and what could happen if the proposed changes to the Zoning Amendments are approved. Ken stated the coarse filter being proposed, means this does not fall on the shoulders of the Selectmen. The Ordinance, as written, involves members of other Boards as well. Leigh noted, Tom Duling has currently been the person doing inspections for years, and will continue in his position, as he wishes. This new person will be someone who will work with and assist Tom. Most of the Board was in agreement the Selectmen should move forward with the position.

Ken noted the proposed operating budget is relatively flat. The proposed big ticket items, and those in the future are putting a strain on things.

Darrin stated there is a solid 2 years before the SCBA packs need to be replaced. Last year a chance was taken on when to replace the white International highway truck. The International failed, and the red replacement truck was purchased. It is as old as the Sterling and which will also need replacing soon. He suggested getting one highway replacement truck out of the way this year, not throw away 20% of the pack life, take a closer look at the tanker and engine replacement schedule, and try to spread those larger ticket purchases out. The Board agreed a replacement truck should not be new but rather a newer second-hand six wheeler. Darrin suggested a non-lapsing warrant article.

Ken asked Leigh to further discuss with the Selectmen:

1. Highway Truck due to be replaced soon.
2. How do they feel about prematurely replacing the SCBA tanks?

Details of the big ticket items and financing need to be worked out.

The Board's next meeting is Monday, February 1, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

The Public Hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, February 9, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Submitted by,
Janet Roberts.