

BUDGET COMMITTEE

JANUARY 22, 2019

MEMORIAL BUILDING

7:00 P.M.

The following are to be considered draft minutes until approved by the Board.

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. and roll was called.

Present: Ken Jacques, Chairman; Leigh Callaway, B. Manning, Brian Putney, Tim Cook, Justin Hastings, Darrin Patten, and Ex-officio Tamara Butcher. Jeff Milne was absent.

Others present: Selectmen Dick Hendl, and George McCusker.

This meeting was to meet with departments to review their proposed budgets.

Library: Laura Pauling, Librarian. Their budget shows a 2% increase in wages based on what the Trustee's thought the town was doing. That amount will be reviewed by the Trustees. A slight increase in operating expenses is proposed. Patrons are borrowing more audio books and are asking for newer versions. There are also lines for assistant and substitute librarian wages. A library is required to have paid staff present whenever the library is open. It is helpful also to have more than one person trained and aware of what takes place in the event of an absence.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector: Pixie Hill stated she is asking for an increase as Town Clerk and Tax Collector to \$14,000 for each department. She feels this is reasonable based on her research with other towns. The town is now able to do the State portion of vehicle registrations. There should be no need for any further software upgrades. She estimates revenue from the registration agent fee should be about \$6,000 per year. She hopes to add credit card transactions sometime this year. The office is open 28 hours per week with those hours covered by her and Maryanne Petrin, her deputy. Ken thanked Pixie for her presentation. He noted the budget committee rarely gets into salary discussions. Pixie stated she wanted to let them know they may see a change.

Highway: Peter Abair reported his budget is up about \$20,000 for paving. He plans to pave Shad Hill and Twin Lake Villa. The Selectmen did discuss changes to Nichols Hill Road. He agrees it would be a good time to do something before the road is paved. He said the State of NH DOT is also interested in doing something to improve the catch basin they have in that area, to improve the drainage to keep water from running over the road. This would be a good time to have both projects done. A property owner abutting Nichols Hill is interested in working with the town toward improvements. Tamara reported the Selectboard increased engineering fees to begin investigating the requirements. Pete plans on removing rocks and replacing culverts before paving any roads this summer.

Tamara reported the Selectboard has had a lot of discussion about the highway third position. The Cemetery Trustee's would like to have more control over the duties in the cemeteries, so they are reviewing both departments to see how to best work it out.

Peter reported he would like to change the warrant article for truck replacement to include truck and equipment. The loader has 12,000 hours on it and is using oil and has other leaks. He would not want to spend a lot of money to repair it. He has seen good used loaders less than \$50,000. He also needs to replace a plow and would like to purchase a stainless steel body. Tamara reported the Department of Revenue is not in favor of a warrant article for multiple purposes. The money that was not spent from the purchase of the truck this year, now goes back to the general fund, and would need to be re-appropriated. There was a lot of discussion about how best to proceed in light of Pete's requests. Peter was advised to identify his needs and prioritize specific expenditures. Pete does not expect to have to replace a truck for 2 to 3 more years, but likes to know the money is there if something happens. The Board suggested appropriating money for a plow in the operating budget, and putting off doing anything about a truck and concentrate a loader.

Sand Shed Site: An article last year appropriated \$43,000 for site prep. The State did not approve the permit until late summer, and due to other unforeseen issues the work was not able to be done. Pete does not feel \$43,000 is enough and recommends more like \$60,000. The \$43,000 article has expired, so the money goes back to the general fund. A new article will be required.

Leigh reported he and Jeff had visited a few sand sheds in other towns. A couple of towns sheds are not in any better shape than ours. A couple towns had sheds that were designed more for storage, and do not work well for sand as they have difficulty getting equipment in them. The costs for some of the newer sheds were \$100K or more. Peter says he would like a shed that is 40 x 40 with an added 12 x 40 bay for salt storage. He proposes using waste block with a roof structure, high enough to get in and out. He already has about half of the blocks he could reuse on the project. The Board spent a long time discussing design options and how best to site the building on the lot. Peter agreed that it is possible a sand shed might be proposed for 2020.

Police Department: Chief, Tim Julian reported his budget is up \$400 not including salaries. He has no other requests.

Fire Department: Chief, Peter Lacaillade, and Assistant Chief, Kevin Roberts. Pete reported there is not much change to their budget. Hanover Dispatch has done a study on dispatching services and cost allocations and have gone from \$5,500 to \$13,000 for this year. They are still cheaper than other dispatch services and do a great job. The department is planning to work with Grantham on a hydrant over by the marshy area in Grantham. Grantham has all the supplies needed. Springfield will share in work.

Kevin reported the new tanker is working out wonderfully. Everyone has been trained on driving and operating it.

Peter reported the SCBA equipment is ready now and parts of it have been delivered already. The rest of it will be here on February 6th. All members will need to be trained on the new

system and set up done on the trucks and at the station before the equipment will be entered into service.

Other matters: Tamara reported the Selectboard approved a 4% increase in wages for the regular employees.

The beach project has been put on hold to concentrate on the project at the highway department. Consolidated Communications has said the pole in the beach parking area can't be moved, but they have not proven they have an easement for the pole to be there. Moving forward, there will likely be more sand as permitted. It was suggested that more maintenance throughout the summer would probably improve the sand situation, raking and bringing the sand back up from the high water mark.

The Board wondered if the Selectmen had asked others for projected costs for site prep work for the sand shed and storage area. They suggested the Selectmen ask other contractors to review the site plans and get estimates of the costs.

Total 2018 revenue numbers are not yet known, but should be available for the next meeting. The Board will review again the operating budget, and proposed warrant articles and any other concerns at their next meeting on February 5th.

Miscellaneous Business:

Leigh stated there will need to be a warrant article to give the town authorization to spend money for purchase and installation of the lift at the Meetinghouse. The 250th Celebration Committee is raising funds that are in the Charitable Trust and will need approval to be spent.

Several questions were raised by Board members as to whether other ideas for handicap access were considered or was the lift the only proposal. Concerns were noted regarding ADA and safety requirements, and what plan there may be for evacuation from the second floor in the event of a fire or other emergency since it is recommended not to use an elevator at those times. Leigh reported the lift is not addressing ADA compliance and is only a means to get people who may not otherwise be able to navigate the stairs, a way to reach the second floor. The intent is to make the second floor more user-friendly. He stated, according to the architect, the changes being made with the addition of the lift do not require the building to be made ADA compliant. It was suggested that the Selectmen may want to research this further to be sure the Town is protected.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

Janet Roberts
Administrative Assistant

