

## **BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**DECEMBER 17, 2013**

## **MEMORIAL BUILDING**

**7:00 P.M.**

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll was called. Present: B. Manning, Chairman; Jon Poston, Darrin Patten, Bryan O'Day, Tim Cook, Bill Huntoon, Ken Jacques, Jeff Milne, and Leigh Callaway.

Minutes of December 2, 2013: Motion made by Darrin to accept as written, seconded by Bryan and unanimously approved.

B. noted there is a conflict with the budget meetings scheduled for Tuesday, January 7<sup>th</sup> and February 4<sup>th</sup> with Zoning Meetings. The Board agreed to reschedule those budget meetings to Monday, January 6, 2014 and February 3, 2014.

B. extended compliments to the Capital Improvements Committee. Ken stated it is scheduled to be approved by the Planning Board on December 19<sup>th</sup>. The information was extracted from presentations with department heads, similar to what is done during the budgeting process. The CIP provides a document where past and planned capital expenditures are all in one document. It is expected that the document will change as priorities change. The CIP is also a driver if the Planning Board ever finds itself in a position to impose impact fees.

The Board would like to meet with department heads on January 6<sup>th</sup>. Highway @ 7:15; Fire @ 7:45; Police at 8:15. Leigh reported the Police Department has no big ticket requests. Tim is looking for a new mobile computer for one cruiser, and has prices for new equipment but is also researching refurbished. Pete Abair has a quote of \$94,800 for the chassis only to replace the blue truck. He is waiting for estimates for a new plow and wing. The Board will discuss this further when they meet with departments in a couple of weeks.

Leigh presented an overview of line items in the draft budget and the rationale behind them:

Engineering/consulting line is reduced. Jeff Evans has completed the wetlands survey of the highway property and an application has been submitted to DES. The energy audit for the highway garage/fire station has been completed, and the personnel manual has been updated.

The Selectmen are proposing a new line item for zoning compliance as an added contingency. IF the wetlands ordinance changes are passed, the Selectmen will need more expertise with zoning compliance.

The Selectmen have approved a 2.5% wage increase for hourly and salaried employees who receive a weekly paycheck. The increase will be effective 4/1/2014. There were no wage increases last year. The Selectmen based their decision on Social Security COLA. Leigh has calculated the net cost to the town for the increases, including payroll taxes and retirement is \$9,340.00.

Custodial wages are reduced as the office and library cleaning has been cut to 2 times per week.

Leigh presented the board with a list of property repairs and projects that took place last year, and those that are still pending. B. noted with the amount of money left unspent in the grounds and buildings repair line item and questioned why there are still projects that need to be done. Leigh stated that organizing the projects has been an issue the Selectmen have been working on. More work is needed to prioritize the projects on the list. Some work had been scheduled that did not get completed. The estimate and bid process adds to time involved. B. stated he felt if there is money appropriated then there is a need to pay attention to the list and get projects done. Jeff cautioned that deferred maintenance can become capital maintenance if projects are not taken care of when they need to be.

The Planning and Zoning Budget numbers are “place markers”. He will send a request to Board Chairpersons Kevin Lee and Susan Chiarella to review their budgets with their members.

A bid of \$60,000 has been received for the revaluation which will start with listing and measuring in late 2014, with the project to be completed in 2015. The Selectmen have discussed funding the revaluation from the Unreserved Fund Balance.

Leigh reported the Selectmen kept health insurance costs level by slightly lowering the benefits to employees with a less expensive plan.

Pete Abair has talked about discontinuing uniform rentals. The current contract with Unifirst expires in March 2014. A clothing allowance is being considered.

Ken Jacques reported the Conservation Commission has talked about cutting of the Kinsley Lot. He suggested perhaps the net revenue from that cutting might be considered to be applied to facilitating a project on the land across the street at the highway garage/fire station.

Leigh reported he has a bid from Foster’s painting of \$31,000 for painting the town hall, and an estimate of \$5,600 from Bill Huntoon for the carpentry work needed there. He would like to see this as a 2014 project. It was discussed whether the whole building needed painting, or could money be appropriated in the building repair line to do one side per year. It was agreed, at this point, the building should all be done at once, but future planning could include repainting one side per year.

Leigh reviewed examples of retention percentages for several scenarios funding projects through the unreserved fund balance. The Board briefly discussed the FB and options for funding proposed projects.

B. questioned how committed Pete A. is to a “new” truck. Several on the Board were in agreement that the process of having an appropriation in place to allow time to find a used truck in good condition has worked well.

The Board discussed options for the highway garage/fire station property. The status of the DES application should be known soon. Leigh stated Pete Abair has estimated \$30,000 to clear the land, build the road, and install the culvert. Leigh would like to see that done in 2014. Bill stated and the board agreed there needs to be more information as to what the whole project will cost before any money is spent on site prep. It makes sense that the project be done in two phases. Ken suggested when the DES has issued a decision; funds from engineering/consulting could be used during this year to come up with a viable option.

Leigh reviewed the energy audit performed by IBEA for the highway garage/fire station. The Sarnafil roof has a 34 year payback and is out of the question. Other smaller energy saving measures could be taken within the grounds and buildings budget. The report indicated the building is performing well the way it is.

The next Budget Committee meeting will be Monday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014 @ 7:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Submitted by,

Janet Roberts