

**BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**FEBRUARY 12, 2013**

**MEMORIAL BUILDING**

**7:00 P.M.**

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

Budget Committee present: B. Manning, Ken Jacques, Jon Poston, George McCusker, Darrin Patten, Jeff Milne, Tim Cook, Bill Huntoon, and John Chiarella, Selectman Representative.

Others present: John Trachy, Brandt Denniston, Dick Kipperman, Leigh Callaway, Justin Hastings, Tim Julian, and Deb Coffin.

Fire Department members: Pete Lacaillade, Chief; Kevin Roberts, Brian Putney and Jack Hedges.

Chairman B. Manning called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The roll was called.

Minutes: Motion made by Jeff Milne, second by Darrin Patten, to accept the minutes of January 29, 2013 as written. Motion passed.

John Chiarella explained changes to the operating budget. An Information Technology (IT) line was added to Planning and Zoning for \$500.00. A laptop will be purchased for the Planning & Zoning assistant. The amount was balanced out by reducing the executive computer support line.

After discussion, the Selectmen took the sand and salt shed out of this year's warrant and added \$4,000 to Executive Engineering/Consulting. The Selectmen will form a committee of board members and consultants to discuss options and review the possibility of an exchange of the conservation easement area.

Supporting the warrant article for the new cruiser, the selectmen decreased the police Crown Vic repair line by \$1,000.

John stated the warrant article for the rescue vehicle results in a change to debt service. The draft article was written to include the cost of financing (gross budget), but the DRA has advised that is not required for this article.

Discussion of Warrant Articles: (The description of the warrant articles included is for discussion purposes only; final versions are to be reviewed and approved by the Department of Revenue before they are considered final).

***Sample Article 2***

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of up to Ninety Nine Thousand Dollars (\$99,000) to purchase and equip a multi-use rescue vehicle for the Fire Department, and to authorize the Selectmen to enter into a three-year purchase agreement for bonds or notes in*

*accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33) and to authorize the municipal officials to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon; and further to raise and appropriate the sum of Eight Thousand, Six Hundred Five Dollars (\$8,605) for the first year's payment for that purpose.*

***The Selectmen recommend this appropriation 2/3 Ballot vote required***

Discussion: B. reported he and Jon Poston met with the Fire Department last Wednesday night to work with them to develop a strategy and long-range planning for their needs. Comparisons were made between new and used trucks.

Brian Putney distributed the presentation he had prepared. A comparison of other communities with similar populations and calls was made. All calls for medical and fire were included in the number. Sutton, Newbury, and Wilmot have similar populations and similar numbers of calls. Their rescue vehicles were included for comparison.

The vehicle they are hoping to purchase would be 11' in length versus 9'. They plan on having the vehicle for 20 years. They are looking for a vehicle that will expand and adapt as new technology and equipment develops. Brian stated the quote they have is a non-negotiated quote from the company that Jon Poston used. Brian stated the intent is to have a budget number before they can start looking at new or used vehicles and doing negotiations.

Jeff Milne reported he had looked at historical information from 1990 forward. Fire and Rescue runs about 3% to 5% of the overall operating budget. In recent years the percentage has been nearer the 5% as the town has included capital improvements, like hydrant replacement into the department's operating costs. The department operating cost share has been consistent. Of the fire and rescue calls, medical calls and accidents represent half of all the calls.

B. noted that Wilmot and Sutton put money in capital reserve accounts. The fire department's operating costs are in line with comparable towns in this area.

### ***Sample Article 3***

*To see if the Town will vote to authorize the selectmen to enter into a three-year lease agreement for Thirty Five Thousand, Nine Hundred, Forty Dollars (\$35,940) (gross budget) for the purpose of leasing and equipping a police cruiser for the Police Department, and to raise and appropriate the sum of Twelve Thousand, Six Hundred, Eighty Five Dollars (\$12,685) for the first year's payment for that purpose. This lease agreement contains an escape clause.*

***The Selectmen recommend this appropriation***

No discussion.

### ***Sample Article 4***

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of up to Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000) for the purpose of supporting the Planning Board's effort to complete a comprehensive assessment of the Town's wetland regulations. This appropriation is contingent upon receiving a grant from the New Hampshire Housing Finance Agency's Community Planning Grant Program in an amount up to \$30,000, with no amount to be raised by taxation.*

*Explanation:*

*The 2005 Springfield Town Plan identifies protection of natural resources, including wetlands and wetland buffers as important natural resources contributing to the quality of life and rural character of the town. This grant application is part of an ongoing process by the Planning Board to support the Town Plan.*

***The Selectmen recommend this appropriation***

John Chiarella stated that without the grant, the wetlands project will not be done.

***Sample Article 5***

*To see if the municipality will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of up to Seventy Thousand Dollars (\$70,000) for the purpose of insulating/roofing the Highway Garage/Fire Station building; this sum to come from the unreserved fund balance (surplus) with no amount to be raised through taxation.*

***The Selectmen recommend this appropriation***

Discussion: Ken Jacques questioned how important is it to do the roof this year? John Chiarella stated that there have been ongoing problems and this project has been waiting to be done. There were problems with leaks in the past but some of those have been fixed. At some point, something needs to be done. Ken stated that he does not agree with what they want to do with it. The engineer looked at the roof as to whether it could support the rubber roof, but had not looked to see if the structure could support some other system. Ken questioned how the existing metal roof went bad in 20 years. He is not sold on the membrane roof. He noted concerns that the building is in the center of town. The sand, salt shed, and culvert storage, etc., are all jammed in that one area. Consideration needs to be given as to what we want that building to look like down the road. He does not think that a membrane roof is the best way to go, and noted concerns with the idea of putting a roof over a roof. Air handling issues inside are also a concern and have also not been addressed. He suggested having an engineer look at what the building would support in terms of changing the roof system, and spending more time looking into alternatives. He has done some research into past warrant articles since the building was built and the town has spent quite a lot of money on that facility over the years. If that is going to be the building that continues to serve the town, then he feels a site engineer and a structural engineer need to look into this further. The building is the center of town and he doesn't feel that a rubber roof will be very attractive.

John Chiarella stated the site had been looked at a few years ago when the drainage project and sand shed replacement plans had been engineered. The Selectmen have discussed the site and agree there needs to be a plan to direct the engineering. The Planning Board should include the building in their short and long-term capital improvement assessments.

Discussion followed with ongoing issues that have been discussed throughout the budgeting process for building roof repair, site planning, and sand shed replacement.

Leigh Callaway stated the Selectmen agreed not to recommend the sand shed. The plan is to get a group made up of members from the budget committee, conservation commission, planning board and also bring in engineers to look at the scope of the recommendations and long-range planning.

It appeared most Board members seemed to be in favor of holding off on the roof project until further study can be done. The Board discussed if the roof project was put off, would it make sense to fund the rescue vehicle from the unreserved fund balance. John stated that the Selectmen try to maintain a minimum of 10% in the fund balance. It doesn't hurt to leave the money in there in anticipation of the projects for next year. Borrowing for the truck makes sense. B. stated with representation from the budget committee at Town Meeting to inform the people what is needed and what the fire department is doing and the services they provide the truck will be supported. It makes sense to keep the money in the fund balance for projects another year. B. noted the Selectmen can propose the warrant article for the roof if they wish.

***Sample Article 6***

*To see if the municipality will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of up to Nineteen Thousand Dollars (\$19,000) for the purpose of steeple preservation and repair and painting windowsill at the Town Hall; this sum to come from the unreserved fund balance (surplus) with no amount to be raised through taxation.*

***The Selectmen recommend this appropriation***

Discussion: Ken Jacques reported that he has done some research as to work and money that has been spent on the town hall. In 1988 \$131,500 was appropriated, \$55,000 of which was to repair the roof and steeple. He would like to know that the proposed repair is going to solve the situation with the steeple so we are not dealing with this again in another 15 years. Leigh noted that there is a professional who deals with steeples coming from Littleton to see what is causing the problems. The project will go out to bid. The Board discussed the idea of using vinyl, especially on the steeple to lower future maintenance costs. Leigh reported that vinyl has been discussed and is an issue with National Historic Registry Standards, which could be an issue with getting future grants.

***Sample Article 7***

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Thousand Dollars (\$4,000) for deposit in the Old Home Day Expendable Trust Fund in accordance with RSA 31:19-a; with said funds to come from the unreserved fund balance (surplus) with no amount to be raised from taxation; (this represents proceeds collected in 2012 by the Old Home Day Committee).*

***The Selectmen recommend this appropriation***

No discussion.

***Sample Article 8***

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee recommended sum of One Million, Two Hundred Thirty Three Thousand, and Forty Five Dollars (\$1,233,045) for general municipal operations. This article does not include special or individual articles addressed*

No Discussion.

John Chiarella stated that the Selectmen will now schedule a meeting before the end of the week to review the recommendations of the Budget Committee. It is likely there will be changes to the warrant.

Revenue:

John stated that revenues have been increased by \$53,000 (20% of the assessed value) to include the sale of municipal property for 3-4 tax properties that were recently tax dedeed.

The Budget Committee voted unanimously to continue the budget hearing to Tuesday, February 19, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. to vote on warrant articles, and go through the operating budget.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Submitted by,

Janet Roberts