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BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES
January 12, 2017

Members Present: Virginia Doerpholz, Carl Hagstrom, Natasha Michelson, Martin Nolan, Kathleen Stark, Ben Thomas, and Selectmen's Representative Nancy Carney

Members Absent: Win Wright

Mr. Hagstrom convened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Hagstrom asked if everyone had reviewed the minutes of last week's meeting.

Ms. Stark made a motion to approve the January 5, 2017 Minutes. Ms. Michelson seconded. Ms. Doerpholz and Mr. Nolan abstained. The motion was approved.

Budget Work Session:

Committee members reviewed the following budgets and approved preliminary budgets:

Executive:

Mr. Hagstrom stated they were asking for 1% over last year - \$156,429. Mr. Nolan stated salaries throughout the town had an increase of 1.5% and he originally heard that there wasn't going to be any because the cost of insurance was going to go up. Ms. Favreau shared that she didn't know where Mr. Nolan heard that because there was only one discussion in the Board of Selectmen's meeting. Mr. Nolan asked if the Town automatically paid for insurance. Ms. Favreau shared that employees pay a portion of the premium and there was an increase this year for employees as well.

Ms. Michelson recommended \$156,429. The recommendation was approved.

Town Clerk:

Mr. Hagstrom stated the budget was pretty much the same except for salaries. Ms. Carney shared the budget was reduced by 3%. Mr. Hagstrom shared the budget request included voter registration.

Mr. Nolan recommended \$57,989. The recommendation was approved.

Financial Administration:

Tax Collector – There was little discussion.

Ms. Michelson recommended \$63,950. The recommendation was approved.

Revaluation of Property: \$42,000.

Legal: \$75,000 – Ms. Carney shared the Selectmen didn't know the prosecutor had resigned so money was already put into the budget. Currently looking to find a prosecutor.

Ms. Doerpholz recommended \$75,000. The recommendation was approved.

Planning and Zoning:

Mr. Hagstrom shared the salary was up. Ms. Carney shared the hours were reduced but there was a cost of living increase. Mr. Nolan noted the hours were more realistic. Ms. Stark noted postage was up and asked for an explanation. Ms. Favreau shared it was public notices which have to be certified. Mr. Hagstrom stated that some costs are reimbursed. Ms. Favreau shared the cost for all of the postage expense has to be budgeted. Ms. Favreau also shared that Ms. Gillis had prepaid some of the postage last year.

Ms. Michelson recommended \$66,008. The recommendation was approved.

Economic Committee:

Mr. Hagstrom shared this was part of the Selectmen's budget. They are going to do a new brochure and are working with the Selectmen on that. Mr. Nolan noted a 71% increase. Mr. Hagstrom stated the brochure wasn't done every year but it was expensive to do. Mr. Nolan mentioned it was only \$1,000.

Mr. Hagstrom recommended \$2,560. The recommendation was approved.

General Government Buildings:

Mr. Nolan asked if this was where oil was pre-bought last year. Mr. Hagstrom shared that oil wasn't pre-bought this year and it accounted for the increase. Ms. Stark asked what buildings this included. Ms. Carney shared it was all buildings owned by the Town except the Library.

Ms. Doerpholz recommended \$49,739. The recommendation was approved.

Cemetery:

Ms. Stark asked how part-time employees got overtime. Ms. Favreau shared if they have to do a burial on the weekend, they get overtime. Ms. Favreau also shared that any part-time employees get overtime, if they work on a Holiday.

Ms. Michelson recommended \$30,906. The recommendation was approved.

Insurance:

Ms. Favreau explained the reduction.

Mr. Hagstrom recommended \$46,199. The recommendation was approved.

Public Safety - Police:

Mr. Hagstrom shared the number of employees within the Police Department. Mr. Hagstrom noted the biggest increase was the cost of gasoline. Mr. Nolan noted last year the Budget Committee was told the Police Department was running the SUV because one of the officers couldn't ride in the car. Originally, the SUV was to be used during the winter. Now we have another care like the one we're getting rid of. Mr. Nolan stated the Police Department wasn't doing their job – not available for calls. Mr. Nolan shared that he hears from the State Police that they have to pick up. Mr. Nolan mentioned on a Saturday afternoon there are 2 officers working and if we have 2 in the afternoon, should have in the evening. Mr. Nolan stated this was not good management.

Mr. Nolan made a motion to cut \$5,000 from the budget. Ms. Stark stated the Board of Selectmen recommended a budget of \$320,000, which was close to what Mr. Nolan recommended. Mr. Hagstrom asked Mr. Nolan for his recommendation. Mr. Nolan recommended \$319,000. After discussion, Mr. Hagstrom recommended \$320,000. 4 were in favor of \$320,000 and 1 was in favor of \$319,000. Ms. Doerpholz abstained. \$320,000 was approved.

Ambulance:

Mr. Nolan stated it should be a lot lower than that but as long as people keep getting sick. It relates to people using the ambulance. Ms. Carney shared they ended the year with 399 calls. They have had 15 calls already this year and four people have died. Ms. Carney stated a lot of their budgets are hard to anticipate and as far as the ambulance budget, they have no control over. Ms. Stark asked what happened if they ran out of money. Ms. Carney shared that money could be moved from another budget. This year the Selectmen took money from the Fire Department budget and put it in the Ambulance budget to cover the overage.

Ms. Michelson recommended \$33,800. The recommendation was approved.

Fire Department:

Mr. Hagstrom shared they are getting a lot more calls as well. Ms. Carney stated there was an increase in calls all across the board.

Mr. Hagstrom recommended \$45,350. The recommendation was approved.

Forest Fire:

Ms. Carney shared we have the ability to bill other towns when responding to another town – can bill the State or the town. Mr. Hagstrom asked what happened if there was another truck at the town's fire station. Ms. Carney shared it was Mutual Aid. Ms. Carney explained the coverage.

Ms. Stark recommended \$3,500. The recommendation was approved.

Building Inspector (Code Enforcement):

Mr. Nolan recommended \$6,500. The recommendation was approved.

Emergency Management:

Ms. Carney shared the \$400 increase was for purchasing office supplies to write grants.

Mr. Thomas recommended \$2,685. The recommendation was approved.

Fire Mutual Aid:

Ms. Carney shared there was no increase. The cost was the same as last year.

Ms. Stark recommended \$28,141. The recommendation was approved.

Highway/Streets:

Mr. Nolan recommended \$430,727. The recommendation was approved.

Street Lighting:

Mr. Hagstrom recommended \$15,000. The recommendation was approved.

Mr. Nolan asked if the town had looked into solar. Ms. Carney shared they had approached doing a program with Eversource – the Town wanted to change all of the lights but haven't been able to verify the location of lights.

Transfer Station - Solid Waste Disposal:

Mr. Nolan recommended \$134,550. The recommendation was approved.

Animal Control:

Mr. Nolan recommended \$8,006. The recommendation was approved.

Health Agencies:

Ms. Favreau shared that an additional \$250 request was received from Hundred Nights Shelter for a total of \$16,122. Ms. Carney shared there were people from Fitzwilliam that received services.

Mr. Hagstrom recommended \$16,122. The recommendation was approved.

Administration & Direct Assistance:

Mr. Thomas recommended \$25,000. The recommendation was approved.

Mr. Nolan asked about the budget when Wendy Carney was the Welfare Officer, was she stricter. Ms. Carney shared that Mary Drew, Paula Thompson and Debbie Favreau have all handled welfare assistance. Ms. Drew had good guidelines and followed them closely and Ms. Favreau was as well. Ms. Carney noted that people are finding other resources.

Parks and Recreation:

Mr. Hagstrom stated the budget was pretty much the same as last year. Ms. Stark asked for the balance for the revolving fund. Ms. Favreau shared it was \$13,513 last year and was pretty much the same this year.

Mr. Thomas recommended \$41,565. The recommendation was approved.

Library:

Mr. Hagstrom shared the budget decreased 15% over last year. Fred Wilkinson asked to speak and stated that he didn't think the Budget Committee should approve the budget at this time. There are many items the Library claimed as income. Mr. Wilkinson reviewed his discussion with Terry Knowles. Mr. Wilkinson stated the Budget Committee should not consider the Library budget at this time as they don't have a valid budget. Mr. Wilkinson shared that no one has responded and he can't see the Budget Committee approving a budget that isn't valid. Mr. Hagstrom stated he received Mr. Wilkinson's e-mail. Mr. Wilkinson reviewed the e-mail he sent to Budget Committee members.

Mr. Hagstrom asked that the Library Trustees be contacted to address the concerns. Ms. Stark asked if they didn't get answers already. Mr. Hagstrom stated it was different. Mr. Wilkinson asked Ms. Favreau if the Town had a way to do a conference call between Terry Knowles, the Budget Committee, and the Library Trustees. Ms. Favreau stated she couldn't conference that many callers. Mr. Hagstrom suggested that since the Water District budget would be presented next week that the Library be added to the agenda for 7 p.m. Mr. Wilkinson shared that he didn't know if the Trustees could respond quickly in order to have the discussion with Ms. Knowles next Thursday.

Ms. Favreau would contact the Library Trustees to try to get a response before next Thursday.

Mr. Hagstrom thanked Mr. Wilkinson.

Mr. Hagstrom made a motion to delay the Library budget until January 19th. Mr. Nolan seconded. The motion was approved.

Patriotic Purposes:

Ms. Doerpholz recommended \$800. The recommendation was approved.

Village and Depot Common:

Mr. Nolan recommended \$3,000. The recommendation was approved.

Conservation:

Mr. Hagstrom recommended \$3,331. The recommendation was approved.

Committee members reviewed Capital Projects and Capital Reserve:

Highway Chipper:

Mr. Nolan recommended not approving this year. Discussion was held on the rating of the CIP requests. Ms. Favreau shared that the Selectmen were recommending all of the projects that were on their spreadsheet. Mr. Hagstrom asked for a vote. Mr. Nolan stated he wanted to discuss further. Mr. Nolan talked about a chipper with a winch or without. Ms. Carney shared the Selectmen looked at it as saving someone's back from pulling trees out of the gutters and removing from the road. Ms. Carney also shared the Highway Department doesn't ask for a lot of things – they recycle a lot of their equipment and the Selectmen felt that piece of equipment would last a considerable amount of time. Mr. Nolan stated they do get the most out of their equipment but the size chipper wouldn't be big enough to remove large trees and they would be cutting them before moving. Mr. Thomas asked if the Highway Department had other vehicles with a winch. Ms. Carney noted that one of the dump trucks has a winch. Mr. Nolan shared they have a couple pieces of equipment. Mr. Thomas stated it seemed like a lot of money for a winch.

Mr. Hagstrom recommended \$65,000. 5 for and 1 opposed. The recommendation was approved.

Cemetery Shed:

Mr. Hagstrom recommended \$18,000. 5 for and 1 opposed. The recommendation was approved.

Police Radar Board:

Mr. Nolan stated CIP was recommending to purchase down the road. Discussion was held on what the camera could be used for. Mr. Hagstrom shared he had talked with Chief DiSalvo about the camera. Chief DiSalvo mentioned if there was a crime in town – could get information on a specific vehicle. Mr. Hagstrom asked if there was other discussion. Mr. Nolan stated there were other alternatives than this and Police Officers could be sitting on Rt 12.

Mr. Thomas recommended \$9,600. 5 for and 1 opposed. The recommended was approved.

Painting of Library building:

Ms. Stark recommended \$1,800. The recommendation was approved.

Library Fire Escape:

Ms. Carney shared that in order to use the space upstairs the sprinkler would have to be moved near the window to allow access to the fire escape because the door was difficult to open.

Ms. Michelson recommended \$2,500. The recommendation was approved.

Road Repair Expendable Trust:

Mr. Nolan asked about the list of roads to be repaired. Ms. Carney reviewed the roads. Mr. Nolan asked if there was money left over from last year. Ms. Favreau shared that \$74,500 was left over and originally Mr. Cuomo was asking for \$300,000.

Mr. Nolan recommended \$250,000 if Mr. Cuomo has \$74,500. Ms. Michelson asked about the difference between the road projects from last year to this year. Ms. Carney shared they have no idea of costs. Ms. Favreau shared the money gets carried forward.

Mr. Nolan recommended \$250,000. Mr. Thomas agreed. Mr. Hagstrom asked if a road was almost done – does Mr. Cuomo have to stop if no money left in the budget. Ms. Favreau stated Mr. Cuomo can't spend more than he has in the budget. Mr. Hagstrom asked if there was any further discussion. There were 3 for and 4 opposed to the recommendation of \$250,000. The recommendation failed.

Ms. Doerpholz recommended \$280,000. 4 for and 2 opposed. The recommendation was approved.

General Government Buildings:

For steeple work. \$119,000 carried forward.

Mr. Thomas recommended \$80,000. The recommendation was approved.

Conservation Expendable Trust:

Mr. Nolan recommended \$5,000. The recommendation was approved.

Revaluation Capital Reserve:

Mr. Hagstrom recommended \$20,000. The recommendation was approved.

Fire Vehicle Capital Reserve:

Mr. Nolan stated that traditionally \$10,000 was put in. Ms. Carney shared last year it was \$20,000. Ms. Carney noted the fund was at \$70,604.31.

Ms. Doerpholz recommended \$20,000. The recommendation was approved.

Fire Vehicle & Equipment Repairs Expendable Trust:

Ms. Stark recommended \$2,500. The recommendation was approved.

Highway Equipment Capital Reserve:

Ms. Stark asked about the balance in the fund. Ms. Carney share the balance was \$5,711.

Ms. Michelson recommended \$20,000. The recommendation was approved.

SCBA Expendable Trust:

Ms. Carney shared SCBA was self-contained breathing apparatus and radio. Ms. Favreau shared there was \$10,465 in the fund. Ms. Carney was hoping to write a grant. The equipment lasts 10 years and theirs are 11 years old.

Ms. Doerpholz recommended \$5,000. The recommendation was approved.

Town Hall Painting Expendable Trust:

Ms. Stark recommended \$4,000. The recommendation was approved.

Highway Equipment Repair Expendable Trust:

Ms. Favreau shared there was \$681 left in the fund.

Mr. Thomas recommended \$5,000. The recommendation was approved.

Fork Lift Expendable Trust:

Ms. Carney shared the Selectmen would be putting in a Warrant Article to change from a Capital Reserve to an Expendable Trust for equipment purchase and repairs at the Transfer Station.

Mr. Hagstrom recommended \$3,000. The recommendation was approved.

Mr. Nolan noted money for culverts should be considered as it was discussed in CIP. Adding \$10-20,000 for culverts 4 foot or bigger. Ms. Favreau stated that Mr. Cuomo didn't put in a request. Ms. Carney shared that Mr. Cuomo has purchased culverts but not that size. Mr. Nolan shared the State would need to be involved for that size. Ms. Carney reviewed the Warrant Article for 2016. Mr. Cuomo didn't use any of those funds and he didn't put in a request this year.

Ms. Carney shared that road work on East Lake Road would include culvert work and Mr. Cuomo would have to apply for a permit because it goes into Laurel Lake. Ms. Carney stated when Mr. Cuomo met with the Selectmen last week – he didn't put in a request. Ms. Carney shared it was up to the Budget Committee. Mr. Nolan recommended putting in \$10,000 for culvert repair. Mr. Hagstrom asked how to proceed voting on something that wasn't requested. Ms. Carney stated there wasn't anything to vote on – it wasn't requested and the Selectmen didn't request. Mr. Hagstrom stated it was something to think about for next year.

Ms. Stark asked about Mr. Wilkinson's questions and Ms. Knowles response. Ms. Stark shared she doesn't know what Mr. Wilkinson was asking. Ms. Stark shared she received the e-mail from Ms. Knowles but she didn't receive Mr. Wilkinson's e-mail. Mr. Wilkinson explained the budget law and how the Library prepared their budget.

There being no further business, Mr. Hagstrom adjourned the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Submitted by,

Sheryl White
Secretary