

Municipal Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes

January 13, 2009 6:00 P.M.

Corner Meeting House

Chairman Ron Mitchell called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Committee members present were Norma Patten, Glenda Hill, Tonyel Mitchell-Berry, David Morse, Albert Akerstrom, Mark Roberts, Ken Knowlton, David Morse and Selectman Ron Cormier. Others in attendance were Town Administrator K. Jeanne Beaudin, Town Planner Candace Daigle, Town Accountant Brenda Paquette, Police Chief Vinnie Baioccehetti, Sergeant Rich Mann, Fire Chief Jim Davis, Public Works Supervisor Jim Fortin, Sewer Commissioner Rich Fournier, Town Tax Collector Cynthia Deroy, Donna Cilley, Parks and Rec Director Janet Breton, Water Superintendent David McClelland, Sean McCarty, Building Inspector Steve Dalton, Craig Clairmont and Receptionist Tracey Russo. Ken Ellis was excused, Gary Flack was not in attendance; Fred Wells arrived at 6:10 and Linda Frawley at 6:30.

Minutes:

Ken Knowlton made a motion to accept the minutes of the December 9, 2008 meeting as written. Albert Akerstrom seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Sewer

Rich Fournier presented his budget, stating that he was asking for \$317,000.00. However a new truck was needed for Frank Clairmont of which the funds came from last year's budget. So he stated the Sewer Budget could be decreased by \$15,000. Mr. Fournier explained there is no waste in his budget what he asks for is what is needed to run the department. David Morse made a motion to amend line item 03-4321-403 from \$27,600 to \$ 13,800 and line item 03-4321-404 from \$18,000 to \$16,800, Norma Patten Seconded motion passed unanimously. David Morse had some questions as to why Frank Clairmont's wages are so high. Mr. Fournier responded that Frank carries a beeper with him and is on call 24 hours a day 7 days a week. He is only part time and therefore is saving the town an estimated \$26,000 a year in benefits. Mr. Fournier feels that the Town wouldn't be able to fill Frank's position very easily for the amount of money he is making. David Morse made a motion to amend line item 03-4321-101 from \$42,000 to \$26,000 there was no second motion failed. Albert Akerstrom made a motion to accept line items 03-4321-101 through 03-4321-402 Norma Patten seconded, motion passed 8-2 David Morse and Ken Knowlton were both opposed. Norma Patten made a motion to accept line items 03-4321-501 through 03-4321-888 Mark Roberts seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Union Wages

Town Administrator Beaudin explained that the Town has been in negotiations for the past two years with the Union relative to a new contract. The Fact Finders Report was received on January 5, 2009; the Union met and voted to accept the contract. The Board of Selectmen also voted to accept the Fact Finders Report in a meeting held before the Budget Meeting. Both sides agreed to release the Fact Finders Report. It was decided the Union workers would receive a 3% wage increase (two steps), one for 2008 and one in 2009. They will also be paying 10% of health benefits. Town Administrator Beaudin then reviewed the information contained in the draft warrant article. Ken Knowlton made motion to accept all union position wage increases Norma Patten seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Personnel Administration

Town Administrator Beaudin explained there was a line item adjustment to the total from \$1,252,513.00 to \$1,209,338.00 as a result of the Fact Finders report. Ken Knowlton made a motion to accept line items 01-4155-100 through 01-4155-324 Norma Patten seconded; motion passed unanimously.

Sunray Shores

Town Administrator Beaudin explained this is a self supporting district with no funds raised through taxation. The bottom line Sunray Shores is asking for this year is \$21,270. David Morse made a motion to accept, Ken Knowlton seconded motion passed unanimously.

Capital-Fire Truck

Chief Davis headed up a discussion about the new engine his department is requesting. He stated the Board of Selectmen has approved a new truck at a cost of \$350,000.00. The average age of the trucks is 16 years and the last time an attack engine was bought was in 1992. Chief Davis discussed the feasibility of keeping the Winnisquam Fire Station in operation. Stating the money would be better spent downtown. He is willing to give up two engines for one new one, thereby getting quality over quantity. Chief Davis feels we are getting back to the level of service that was there before the merger of the two firestations. Looking forward this will bring the average age of the trucks to 10 years in 2010 and 6 years in 2012. Albert Akerstrom asked what someone is willing to pay for the two vehicles. Chief Davis said he got an amount of \$40,000.00 for the 1998 International and the N.E. Fire Academy has offered \$10-12,000 for the Pearce. Linda Frawley asked is this in keeping with the management study recommendation. BOS Chairman Cormier replied that yes we had more equipment than a town this size needs. Chief Davis came up with a plan to consolidate. Ken Knowlton was concerned that in the future the Winnisquam Fire Station would be needed and hopefully that was taken into consideration by the BOS. Chairman Cormier explained in a purely hypothetical sense that if that were to happen they would hope to build a new station in a

more centralized location able to access the whole town. Ken Knowlton made a motion to accept line item 01-4902-004 Tonyel Mitchell-Berry seconded; motion passed unanimously.

Capital Reserve

The BOS approved a \$20,000.00 increase in line item 01-4915-004 due to the fact they were concerned about depleting the funds in this account. There is still work to be done on the Route 140 and 106 sidewalks along with the work on Church Hill. Linda Frawley wanted to know if there is a list of upcoming infrastructure projects for the Federal Economic Stimulus Package. Town Administrator Beaudin explained that there is and it went in a few weeks ago. Ken Knowlton still has some concerns as to who will be maintaining the sidewalks. Town Administrator Beaudin explained the BOS passed an ordinance on 11/1/08 that the Mosquito Bridge sidewalk will not be maintained, nor will the Route 3 sidewalk be maintained. When such a time as the sidewalks on Route 140 and 106 along with Church Hill are completed they can be either added or taken out of the policy. Ken Knowlton made a motion to accept line item 01-4915-004 Fred Wells seconded; Linda Frawley opposed motion passed 9-1.

Public Hearing 7:30

Chairman Mitchell reviewed each line item contained on the proposed MS-7 for those present and the Budget Committee. Ms. Lisa Clutters had a few questions regarding Birch Hill Kennels now having the Town Contract for animals instead of the Humane Society. Ms. Clutters was invited to the next BOS meeting to address her questions. Mr. Don Carpenter of Birch Hill Kennels will be invited to that meeting so her questions may be answered. Ms. Clutters also wanted to know what items fall under Patriotic Purposes. David Morse proceeded to read all line items under Patriotic Purposes; she then questioned the amount of money spent on fireworks versus the amount of money that would have been spent on the Humane Society contract. This will also be addressed when Ms. Clutters attends the BOS meeting. Donna Cilley had a question about the tax rate and how will it affect homeowners and what comes out of their pocket. Town Administrator Beaudin explained that the Town does anticipate an overall decrease in assessed value which will impact the tax rate. She further explained that our equalization ratio has been factored at approximately 107%. A 7% reduction in total value has been applied to the estimated tax rate calculations. The estimated increase is .89 cents. At today's rate the tax bill on a \$200,000 home would be \$1,246; if a value adjustment of .07 is applied the value would reduce to \$186,000 times the estimated rate the tax bill would be \$1,324 or an increase of \$78.00 per year. There being no further questions on the budget from those present; Chairman Mitchell closed the public hearing after noting that the final budget being proposed will be \$9,271,048 with estimated offsetting revenues of \$4,289,560. It was noted that the Deliberative session will be held on Monday, February 2, 2009 beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the Belmont Middle School Cafeteria. It was noted that the 2nd public hearing scheduled for January 20th would not be necessary.

Chairman Ron Mitchell thanked everyone for their hard work on the budget this year, and wanted to let it be known there are a few seats coming up for re-election and the dates to file for that are 1/21/09 to 1/30/09.

Motion to Adjourn: by Norma Patten, seconded by Albert Akerstrom motion passed meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Chairman Ron Mitchell

Gary Flack

Selectman Ron Cormier

Tonyel Mitchell-Berry

Ken Ellis

Kenneth Knowlton

David Morse

Glenda Hill

Linda Frawley

Fred Wells

Norma Patten

Albert Akerstrom

Mark Roberts

Submitted By: Tracey Russo

Date: _____