

## Municipal Budget Committee

### Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2007, 6:30 P.M.

Corner Meeting House

Chairman Ron Mitchell called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. Also present were committee members Norma Patten, Albert Akerstrom, Mark Roberts, David Morse, Ken Ellis, Ken Knowlton, Cherie Willoughby, Rich Fournier, Linda Frawley, Gary Flack and Selectmen's Representative Ronald Cormier. Others in attendance were Town Administrator K. Jeanne Beaudin, Administrative Assistant Cary Lagace, Fire Chief Richard Siegel, Deputy Fire Chief James Davis, Water Department Manager David McLelland, General Assistance Director Donna Cilley, Police Chief Vincent Baiocchetti(7:10) and Elson Moody.

#### Minutes

Ken Knowlton moved to accept the minutes of the January 2, 2007 meeting as written. Linda Frawley seconded the motion.

David Morse asked that the amount of the increase to the Library budget be corrected to an increase of 3.59% and that the usage rate increase be corrected to 21%.

With no further discussion Chairman Mitchell called for a vote the motion; the vote was in favor as amended, the motion passed.

#### Elections

Ken Ellis moved budget items 01-4141-101 to 01-4141-999, Norma Patten seconded.

Chairman Mitchell indicated that the budget amount represents what it will cost the Town to conduct elections this year. Town Administrator Beaudin pointed out that Town Accountant Brenda Paquette had attached a break down for this account.

With no further discussion, Chairman Mitchell called for a vote; the vote was unanimous in favor, the motion passed.

#### Ladder/Pumper Truck

Chief Siegel ran through his PowerPoint presentation again for the new members of the committee and to refresh the other members on the specifics of the ladder/pumper truck being requested. He noted the ability of the unit to reach 95'; it has a rescue platform and is completely set up with hose for pumper capabilities. Its

greatest need is with large expansion roofs, metal roofs and it can reach the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Mill building. He noted that one unit instead of two can be purchased when looking at the combined ladder/pumper capabilities. The cost of this unit is \$882,239, where two separate units will cost in excess of a \$1 million. He noted the response time by Belmont within Belmont is between 3 and 7 minutes, where the response time of another community to Belmont is between 10 and 18 minutes.

Linda Frawley asked why there is the need for a replacement, Chief Siegel explain that the pumper at the Winnisquam station is in need of significant repairs and instead of looking for two units, 1 pumper for Winnisquam and 1 ladder for Belmont the unit is combined and can be utilized at Belmont and then a unit from Belmont can be sent to the Winnisquam station. Linda asked is the preliminary Fire Department study is recommending any additional equipment purchases, Selectman Cormier indicated not in the next couple of years. Rich Fournier referring to a recent newspaper article that mentioned regional equipment purchases and asked Chief Siegel if there had been any discussions with other communities regarding that consideration, Chief Siegel indicated there hadn't been and that Laconia themselves are looking to replace one of there ladders, which Belmont would be able to assist them with their needs until such time, if Belmont had a ladder/pumper. Albert Akerstrom indicated that many years back there had been talk of a regional ambulance service but no one wanted to pursue it.

Cherie Willoughby asked if the equipment is all wheel drive, Chief Siegel explained that it isn't, but none of the equipment with the exception of the chief and deputy chief vehicles are, but they are equipped with On Spot chain systems which provide the needed winter traction.

Linda Frawley noted that the interest rate quote was only valid until 2/4/07 and asked if they would hold the rate until 3/17/07 for Town Meeting, Town Administrator Beaudin expressed that they don't anticipate increase but Chief Siegel can contact them to verify the rate until Town Meeting. Ken Knowlton inquired what the price difference is between this ladder/pumper truck and one unit proposed last year, Chief Siegel indicated that the present ladder/pumper cost is \$882,264 and last years proposed truck was \$700,000. There was discussion regarding the possibility of bonding the expense, Town Administrator Beaudin noted that the savings to bond instead of lease/purchase would not be significant. Cherie Willoughby commented that with the Comstar analysis report it looks as though that fund will be in the red by \$690,000, Town Administrator Beaudin pointed out that those figures are based on all schedule purchases being made and no increase to the amount of revenue received, both of which are unlikely. All scheduled purchases, 2 or 3 trucks may or may not take place depending on the status of the current vehicle when it is scheduled to be replaced and ambulance revenues are anticipated to increase over the next several years.

Selectman Cormier pointed out that a bond vote requires 2/3 vote with the lease/purchase only requiring a majority vote, however, the lease/purchase affords the opportunity to opt. Bond's can not be prepaid and there is no option to get out of it in the future. There was further discussion regarding call data and it was determined that all that information will be available in the Fire Department study which will be available

January 22 when it is presented at the Board of Selectmen's meeting at 6:00, all Budget Committee members were invited to attend.

Cherie Willoughby moved to defer a vote on the Ladder/Pumper Truck lease/purchase until the February 6, 2007 meeting, Norma Patten seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

### Pleasant Valley

Town Administrator Beaudin explained that after review of the preliminary estimate from Underwood Engineers, although they felt the figures were on the high side the Board of Selectmen agreed to bring the project to the Budget Committee. They have asked Underwood to re-look at the figures to determine if there are any costs saving areas. She noted that the roads included in the Road Management Program will be removed for additional savings in that area. She noted several roads maintenance costs ranging from \$2,600 to 4,200+. Selectman Cormier added that this has been a long time ongoing issue; the Town is in the middle of the application process for a CDBG grant in the amount of \$500,000, but with the initial cost estimates being \$1.5 million it still leaves a 1 million dollar cost for the project. He noted that the Board of Selectmen were not completely comfortable with the cost but also feel the ongoing issues in that area need to be addressed. Once the Board receives any updated costs they will determine whether or not to move forward with the CDBG grant application at their January 22, 2006 meeting.

Rich Fournier moved to defer a vote on the Pleasant Valley Project until the February 6, 2007 meeting, Linda Frawley seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

### Water Department – Well #3

Town Administrator Beaudin explained that the firm doing hydrogeological work for Well # 3 was asked to provide and estimate for the project, which came in at \$180,000. She has determined that the Route 3 project and the Well #3 projects can be bonded together if both are approved, but both projects do have to be 2 separate Warrant Articles. The combined bond amount would be \$517,000 and through Northway Bank for 20 yrs would be an annual payment of \$47,823 the first year, down to \$26949 in the final year 2027, to be paid by water user fees. Rich Fournier suggested that flat rates be looked at so the payment is the same each year of the bond. It was noted that the project will go out to bid.

Ken Knowlton moved to amend line item 01-4909-503 to \$180,000. Ken Ellis seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

### Police Station

At 7:40 p.m. the Committee recessed to allow those members interested to tour the current Police Station. At 7:55 p.m. the meeting resumed.

Selectman Cormier explained that the proposal for the Police Station is being recommended by the Board of Selectmen, they have received the floor plan, site plan and preliminary cost estimates, utilizing the property on Field Lane that is being offered to the Town as a gift and being considered for acceptance Thursday, January 11, 2007 at a Special Town Meeting. The Board voted last evening to put forth \$2.2 million for the proposed Police Station. There is \$125,000 carried over from last year's budget to be utilized for the project. The Board is requesting that the Budget Committee wait to vote on the project until the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) is available, which is expected February 2, 2007. The preliminary estimates came in at \$2.373 million including a 10% contingency. The Board believes these figures are on the high side as they pushed the architect to have figures available for the Budget Committee and believe the GMP will be significantly less.

It was noted that these figures don't include the furnishings but most of that will be moved over from the current station. It was noted there are ways in which to defray some of the cost by the selection of the interior and exterior materials, as well as the use of the Public Works Department for some site work. Gary Flack was opposed to the use of Public Works for this type of project. Albert Akerstrom expressed that flat roofs have leak problems and aren't used much in this area which could be a concern. Chairman Mitchell commented that the sally port seemed small; Chief Baiocchetti indicated that it is large enough for what they need and had cut out the second sally port option.

The discussion then turned to that floor plan which consists of 7850 square feet. Chief Baiocchetti reviewed the plan pointing out that this is a no frills building, large enough for several years to come. He explained that when the Police Department moved to the current station there were 11 employees, there are now 22 plus 2 Animal Control Officers. Linda Frawley expressed that she thought most training was done outside of the station, Chief Baiocchetti explained that there are several aspects of training that takes place at the station and the room would have multiple uses including Emergency Operation Center.

Ken Knowlton inquired if there have been any operational costs projected for the new building, Selectman Cormier indicated that there hadn't been, however the architect is factoring in energy efficient components. It was noted that the heating and ventilation system are located on the roof, so there is no boiler room in the floor plan.

Chief Baiocchetti explained that he had visited a Police Station in Middlebury, Vermont that he liked so this is similar to that but on a smaller scale.

There was discussion regarding the use of the current station for office space for other departments and possibly expanding it in the future to eventually house all of Town Hall. The committee felt it would be a selling point if the community thought that there wasn't going to be a New Town Hall proposed in the near future. Selectman Cormier expressed that it would not be the intent to propose a Town Hall in the future but more likely to add to the existing Police Station and use that and the existing Town Hall for years to come. Selectman Cormier expressed that initially offices such as Water, Sewer, Parks & Recreation and General Assistance could utilize the space with

expansion in the future. He noted the current Town Hall building has no significant future use.

Chairman Mitchell pointed out that the construction of the building involves a lot of steel which has seem a significant cost increase recently, so for those that think the square footage cost may be on the high side, wait until the cost figures are firmed up before looking at from that angle. Linda Frawley pointed out that the \$2 million construction cost is within the national average for this type of structure.

Donna Cilley expressed that if the Town had decided that they aren't going to put any more money into the existing Town Hall, if a New Town Hall isn't built and the offices stay at that location there will be a need to put money into the building. Her concern is that there were previous determinations that there is roof and structural problems with the building. Chairman Mitchell pointed out then when that determination was made regarding the structural condition of the roof at Town Hall, measures to sure up the roof were made and a more recent engineering study showed the roof would hold up for some time to come. Ken Ellis commented that what needed to be looked at is the location of the current Police Station where you want your Town Hall.

Chairman Mitchell reminded everyone of the Special Town Meeting Thursday January 11, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. at the Belmont Middle School cafeteria.

Next Meeting Date

The committee will meet next on Tuesday, February 6, 2007 at 6:30 p.m. at Corner Meeting House.

Adjournment

Ken Knowlton motioned to adjourn; Albert Akerstrom seconded the motion, the meeting adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Approved:

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Chairman Ronald Mitchell

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Gary Flack

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Ronald Cormier, Selectman

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Richard Fournier

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Kenneth Knowlton

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Ken Ellis

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Norma Patten

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Albert Akerstrom

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Cherie Willoughby

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Linda Frawley

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David Morse

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Mark Roberts

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Submitted by:  
Cary Lagace

Date: \_\_\_\_\_