

Municipal Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes

December 1, 2009 6:00 P.M.

Corner Meeting House

Chairman Ron Mitchell called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Committee members present were Mark Roberts, Fred Wells, Tonyel Mitchell-Berry, Ken Knowlton, Glenda Hill, Albert Akerstrom, Ken Ellis, Norma Patten and Selectman Ron Cormier. Others in attendance were Town Administrator K. Jeanne Beaudin, Budget Clerk Tracey Russo; Town Welfare Director Donna Cilley, Parks and Recreation Director Janet Breton, Town Clerk and Tax Collector Cynthia DeRoy. Ward Peterson was absent.

Minutes: Ken Knowlton made a motion to accept the minutes of 11-24-09 as written, Ken Ellis seconded all were in favor motion passed.

Parks and Recreation: Parks and Recreation Director Janet Breton gave a brief summary of the preceding year for her department. Stating it was a good year there were several new programs implemented, some at the Winnisquam Fire station. Parks and Rec. received a grant pkg. to run some children's programs which she will try to incorporate as some after school activities. Janet is busy working with the schools on bus schedules to see if they can make this happen. The ski program did really well with 84 children in attendance; it will run again starting in January. The summer camp program was full every week with the exception of a few drop outs at the last minute only 8 children were turned away. This program ran for 6 weeks which is all the time the school is able to give. This year looks to be about the same amount of time. Chairman Mitchell asked if they went on any field trips this year. Janet replied that no however she is trying to plan an outing to see a Boston Red Sox game. She is trying to be cautious on what is offered due to the troubling economy. An adventure trip for teens is also being looked into. Ken Knowlton would like to commend Janet on the outstanding job she did on Old Home Day as well as to remind her that the Town Forest is now open for nature walks and such. Linda Frawley would also like to have Janet look into Prescott Park in Laconia as well for activity ideas. Chairman Mitchell wanted to know if there had been a lot of vandalism in Sargent Park. Janet said there has been some but certainly not as much as in past years. Chairman Mitchell also wanted to know what the liability is for the park. Town Administrator Beaudin explained that there are signs suggesting the use of helmets when skateboarding or bike riding, however people are assuming their own liability. As long as the equipment is in good condition we are not responsible for accidents. Tonyel Mitchell-Berry asked what the ages of the summer campers are. Janet relied they are between 1st and 7th grade, 8th graders may apply for counselors in training and pay a ½ fee. Fred Wells wanted to know why the lease was still being paid on Janet's trailer, when it seems as if the Winnisquam Fire Station is being used more and more. Selectman Cormier explained that the Fire Station is not ready to be used full time and, the Board of Selectmen were considering the option to purchase the trailer outright for a cost of around \$1800.00. There was some general discussion of the new playground equipment that

parcs & Rec. wants to purchase for Sargent Park. Discussion over dividing the cost between two years. It was not recommended by the manufactures to do that. Ken Knowlton made a motion to accept line items 01-4520-102 through 10-4520-719, Fred Wells seconded all were in favor motion passed.

Town Beach: Parks And Recreation Director Janet Breton gave a brief overview of this budget. Stating that attendance has been up especially on the weekends, which is why we are going back to the sticker program. Town Administrator Beaudin explained the Police Department will be the ones enforcing this, with a parking ticket if necessary. Selectman Cormier commented that the road name has been changed to reflect that this is not a public beach rather a town beach. Tonyel Mitchell-Berry wanted to know how much it would cost to have a gate keeper for the weekends. Janet replied that the figure was around \$2,652.00. Norma Patten made a motion to accept line items 01-4521-101 through 10-4521-505, Ken Ellis seconded all were in favor motion passed.

General Assistance Services: Town Welfare Director Donna Cilley gave a brief overview of the past year, stating it has been the worst year in history and that the economy is reflecting this. There was 7.9% unemployment rate in Belmont vs. 8% in Laconia which is a much larger city. This does not reflect all those self-employed. She has seen a higher crime rate in accordance with this. Linda Frawley asked for an indication of the number of families being helped. Donna explained she doesn't have that information. The technology was not available to her this past year to track those numbers, however a new program should be available beginning in January 2010 to keep better track. At this time Donna is getting between 3-5 first timers a day, on average she receives 5-11 calls per day and currently has 7 homeless people placed. The Landmark Inn has offered a great program where they have rooms for \$25.00 per day for extended periods of time (7 days). However she does use a bartering process so people do not have to stay as long as that, it is on a case by case basis. Linda Frawley asked what happens when she Donna is on vacation. Donna explained that there is an emergency number people can call if they are homeless. There is someone who can step in if needed to do what Donna does. Town Administrator Beaudin explained that Donna's budget does provide wages for a part-time person to cover for Donna when she needs to be out. Ken Knowlton made a motion to accept line items 01-4441-101 through 01-4441-505, Ken Ellis seconded all were in favor motion passed.

General Assistance Vendor Payments: There was some discussion about if donut hole Medicare has been a problem for seniors. Donna explained that is really hasn't been a problem however seniors really don't know how to navigate the pharmacy system. Ken Knowlton asked if there is anywhere for seniors to get the information to help them through processes. Donna said they can go through Med connection however they would have to go through their Doctor and the process takes about 6-8 weeks and again they do not know how to navigate through that. Ken Ellis made a motion to accept line items 01-4445-430 through 01-4445-441, Norma Patten seconded all were in favor motion passed.

Town Clerk: Town Clerk Tax Collector Cynthia DeRoy gave an overview of her budget. She would like to thank the Board of Selectmen for her classes to complete her training. She is now a certified Town Clerk Tax Collector. Cynthia stated that in the last year the clerks' office has processed 12,000 registrations, of which the value is down due in large part to people driving

older vehicles. They have been online with e-registration since August 15th and done 70 registrations so far through that system. They have also processed 1,300 dog registrations and 250 vital records. The dog registration can be a lengthy one, postcards are sent in May, followed by civil forfeiture letters in July for those not inclined to pay, then in August a police summons for a court appearance, of which 44 were issued this year. Cynthia stated that now that we are a SB2 town there have been many more absentee ballots. Chairman Mitchell wanted to know how we are doing on taxes collected. Cynthia replied that 91% were collected in July and it is too soon to tell for the December bill. Ken Knowlton made a motion to accept line items 01-4140-101 through 01-4140-505, Fred Wells seconded all were in favor motion passed.

Financial Administration: Town Administrator Beaudin gave an overview stating that this budget is made up of Financial Services, Town Accountant, and the Treasurer. Fred Wells wanted to know why there was a decrease in Title searches. Town Administrator Beaudin explained that we would be doing more of that research in house. Ken Knowlton wanted to know why there was going to be an extra hire in the Tax Collector office. Tax Collector Cynthia DeRoy replied with all the additional work taking over the water and sewer bills, that staffing needs to be adjusted to fulfill the needs which will be clarified when the water and sewer budget is presented. Ken Knowlton made a motion to accept line items 01-4510-101 through 01-4510-999, Ken Ellis seconded all were in favor motion passed.

Elections and Registrations: Town Administrator Beaudin explained since we have gone from one election a year to four we now need additional staffing, the increase reflects this. Ken Ellis made a motion to accept line items 01-4141-101 through 01-4141-999, Norma Patten seconded all were in favor motion passed.

Personnel Administration: Town Administrator Beaudin gave an overview of this budget. She explained that health insurance rates are up by 16.4%, dental insurance rates are up 5.5%, and retirement rates are up by 5%. The state used to pay 70% towards retirement however they now only pay 65%. We are looking at an increase of 23% in retirement system in the year 2011, due to market losses. Town Administrator Beaudin explained how the Town of Belmont is part of an under 100 pool as part of the Local Government Center. What that means is we have less than 100 employees, so we are grouped with other under 100 employers for rating purposes. The claim base was high this year due to several factors that had nothing to do with the Town of Belmont. She is hopeful we will be able to find lower insurance rates as we move forward in 2010. Linda Frawley asked what broken down what the costs are. Ms. Beaudin explained the Town portions for Matthew Thornton are as follows single \$651.80; two people \$1303.61, family \$1759.85 for Blue Choice single \$680.42; two people \$1360.84; family \$1837.13 this is a monthly portion. Selectman Cormier commented that they are talking to other communities to group together to form an over 100 pool thereby reducing costs. However this can only be done if you form a Co-Op, pooling together to buy other items as well. Norma Patten made a motion to accept line items 01-4155-100 through 01-4155-324, Fred Wells seconded all were in favor motion passed.

Next Meeting: December 8, 2009 @ 6:00

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Motion to Adjourn: by Fred Wells, seconded by Norma Patten motion passed meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Chairman Ron Mitchell

Ward Peterson

Selectman Ron Cormier

Tonyel Mitchell-Berry

Ken Ellis

Kenneth Knowlton

Linda Frawley

Glenda Hill

Norma Patten

Fred Wells

Mark Roberts

Albert Akerstrom

Submitted By: Tracey Russo

Date: _____

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