

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

October 3, 2005, 5:00 p.m.

Corner Meeting House

Chairman Brian Watterson called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m., also present were Selectman Reginald Caldwell, Selectman Ronald Cormier, Jr., Town Administrator K. Jeanne Beaudin, Administrative Assistant Cary Lagace, Police Chief Vincent Baiocchetti, and Ray Carbone with the Daily Sun.

Budget Work Session

Police Department

Chief Baiocchetti was present to review his proposed 2006 budget with the Board. Chief Baiocchetti indicated that the department is renting space for the radio repeater and signed a 2 year contract for a better rate which is why the Radio repair line has increased this year.

There was discussion regarding the hiring of part-time officers, the Chief indicated there are advantages and disadvantages but feels it will be more costly as they will require training. There was further discussion regarding staffing and if part-time officers were needed was it felt there was enough funds to pay them if the Part-time officers line was removed from the budget, Chief indicated that he feels he will fill the full time positions and not need part timers however, there will be enough funds to pay part timers if the need arises. It was decided the line item for part time officers would be removed and the Police budget request changed to \$1,046,947.

Chairman Watterson inquired why the telephone budget had increased sharply; Town Administrator Beaudin explained that the Centrex contract needed to be renewed which created a significant increase for telephone budgets for most departments. Selectman Cormier suggested that VOIP (voice over Internet protocol) service be looked into as a cost saving measure, it allows phone calls over internet lines.

There was discussion regarding the capital request for the department however, the Board will discuss all Capital requests at their October 19th meeting.

Selectman Caldwell moved to approve line items 4210-101 through 719 \$1,046,947 as amended. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Assessing

Town Administrator Beaudin explained the proposed 2005 Assessing budget; which reflects a 37% decrease due partly to the elimination of the Administrative Assessor position. The wage line for the Administrative Assistant/Assessing Clerk has been split between this budget and the Executive Office budget. The part time measurer/lister line item was reduced as she was able to complete the work quicker than initially anticipated; her services will be utilized again this year and will include training for the Assessing Clerk.

Selectman Watterson asked what the Conferences & Dues line item covered, Town Administrator Beaudin explained it is used for conferences, dues and user fees/web hosting for Vision Appraisal, it was felt that the user fees/web hosting should be separated into a new line item called Service Contracts for a more accurate view of the budget request.

Selectman Caldwell moved to approve line items 4152-101 through 710 \$50,902 as changed. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Public Works Administration

Public Works Director Bob Bennett joined the meeting and explained the department's proposed budget.

Town Administrator Beaudin advised the Board that the current propane tanks in Town will be sold to Johnson & Dix who has tentatively agreed to a pre-buy propane price of \$1.81 per gallon.

Selectman Cormier asked why the office supply line had increased so much; Bob indicated that with the hiring of a part time secretary that person will need to get additional supplies that they need. He noted that the line item should be reduced next year once the person gets settled.

Selectman Caldwell moved to approve line items 4311-101 through 505 \$82,527 as proposed. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Highways and Streets

Bob indicated that the salary increases are the 4% as per the union contract. Town Administrator Beaudin discussed the new part-time hire that will work under the direction of Bob. She indicated that this person will shovel, snow blow and some building maintenance in the winter and in the summer, mow lawns, landscaping and building maintenance.

Discussion followed regarding the property on Hurricane road formerly though to be Town owned however, after many years of research and title search the property it was determined to be owner unknown and can be deeded to the Town in April of 2006. Working with the Land Use office and the Town Administrator a site specific application will be filed prior to April, however the property can't actually be used until the deed is filed. With the amount of sand and gravel on the site Bob has determined that he would not need to budget for sand this year, he will use up the sand he has in stock for the balance of the year and carry forward any unexpended funds to cover until he is able to use the property as a gravel pit. The sand line item will be set to \$0.

There was discussion regarding the significant increase in the cost of salt, it was suggested that Bob look into the possibility of a pre-buy option to lock in a price.

Selectman Caldwell moved to approve line items 4312-101 through 999 \$732,098 as amended. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Fire Department

Chief Siegel and Deputy Davis joined the meeting to answer any questions relating to the proposed 2006 budget. Town Administrator Beaudin noted that the Fire Department budget contains a lot of equipment that in the past has been in capital. Chief Siegel explained that in the past they have purchased equipment out of the Comstar funds, now they are reserving those funds for large equipment purchases. It was noted that other than changes in the Secretary and Deputy wages the rest are at the 4% per the Union contract.

Selectman Caldwell moved to approve line items 4220-101 through 999 \$848,413 as proposed. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Winnisquam Fire Department

Chairman Watterson advised that it is his desire to wait until after the work session meeting on October 6th between the Tilton Northfield, Sanbornton and Belmont representatives to discuss the budget for the Winnisquam Fire Department. Selectman Caldwell and Cormier agreed.

Civil Defense/Emergency Management

Chief Siegel explained the Civil Defense budget will allow the Town to apply for any emergency grants that become available during the year that require a match on behalf of the Town.

Selectman Caldwell moved to approve line item 4290-999 \$10,000 as proposed. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Land Use

Town Planner Candace Daigle joined the meeting to review the department's proposed budget.

Town Administrator Beaudin explained that the legal line in this budget was reduced from Candy's original request and additional funds were budgeted in the Legal budget in an effort to consolidate. Chairman Watterson asked if Candy was expecting an additional need for legal funds and she indicated not in the way of a suit, but with other counsel needs. Chairman Watterson asked if staff wage increases were at the 4% as per the contract, Candy indicated that she and Rick Ball received 2 step increases and Elaine received a grade increase, justification of these changes were provided to the Planning Board and can be provided to the Board of Selectmen if they wish. Town Administrator Beaudin noted that Denise's position has been increased to 40 hours, broken out as 26 hours per week in the Accounting office, 8 hours for Land Use, 4 hours for Conservation, and 2 hours for the Building office.

It was noted that Lakes Region Planning Commission had increased their dues and the contract with the current mapper's was renewed.

Selectman Caldwell moved to approve line items 4191-101 through 507 \$182,308 as proposed. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Conservation Commission

Candy noted this budget had only changed by the amount of the wage increases.

Selectman Caldwell moved line items 4600-101 through 999 \$14,472 as proposed. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Legal

Town Administrator Beaudin explained that in an effort to consolidate the legal expenses for the Town into one budget this was increased to accommodate for decreases in other department budgets, as well as to continue to pursue code enforcement issues as arise.

Selectman Caldwell moved line item 4153-275 \$35,000 as proposed. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Executive Budget

Chairman Watterson requested an increase to the Selectmen wage line item to \$12,000. Chairman Watterson asked what the Overtime budget covered, Town Administrator Beaudin explained that it is used to pay for meeting hours for the Administrative Assistant, and allows for tracking of meeting hours.

Chairman Watterson inquired what the printing budget is used for Town Administrator Beaudin noted it is used for printing of the Town Report, stationary, business cards and any other printing needs.

Selectman Cormier asked what the status of getting quotes from an outside source to help with the website was, Administrative Assistant Cary Lagace explained that she had requested quotes from three web design businesses, two municipal focused internet companies and one local company. She noted that the costs varied greatly with the local company being most reasonable, she will provide the quotes to the Board for their review.

Selectman Caldwell moved to approve line items 4130-101 through 4130-999 \$173,365 as amended. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Elections & Registrations

Town Accountant Brenda Paquette joined the meeting and explained the the Moderators Salary of \$85 per session and adding Assistant Moderator pay at \$55 per session. She also noted that there are 4 elections this year raising the costs in all line items.

Selectmen Caldwell moved to approve line items 4141-101 through 999 \$5,000 as proposed. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously

Financial Administration

Town Administrator Beaudin explained to the Board that this is a combined budget with some from the Tax Collector's office and some from the Town Accountants office. She noted there was an increase in the Audit over last year due to GASB 34 requirements.

Brenda referenced the new Centrex contract that has affected the telephone budget requests for most departments, she noted that the two previous contracts were for 7 years each and the present contract is for 3 years. She explained that the Centrex system allowed simplified contact between buildings and added many features. The renewal of the contract however, sharply affected the rates.

Selectman Cormier moved to approve line items 4150-101 through 999 \$138,342 as proposed. Selectman Caldwell seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Town Clerk Functions

Town Administrator Beaudin indicated Town Clerk Carol Lacasse had requested the part-time clerk hours be raised to 32; however after reviewing the position together the request was changed to 30 hours. Carol has also requested again this year that Terri be given a weeks vacation, she doesn't receive benefits and is very dedicated when Carol is out of the office.

Selectman Caldwell moved to approve line items 4140-101 through 505 \$66,056 as proposed. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Solid Waste Disposal

Town Administrator Beaudin noted the curbside pick-up contract is up 3% and a new contract will need to be negotiated in 2006. There will be a new tonnage rate effective January 1, 2006 and the Board will be advised what it is once the COOP has set it. An off-setting revenue of approximately \$125,000 is anticipated.

Selectman Caldwell moved approve line items 4323-470 through 4325-450 \$441,000 as proposed. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Town Beach

Town Administrator Beaudin reviewed the Beach budget, noting no wage change, reduced water rental and reduced maintenance costs. She suggested that a job description for the positions at the Beach be developed prior to next season so that there is more efficiency and clarity in the jobs to be performed there.

Chairman Watterson asked why the budget for a telephone had been removed, Town Administrator Beaudin explained that there was a phone provided initially and it was abused, so it was removed and for the most part everyone that was hired had their own cell phone, which has worked out well. Selectman Caldwell felt strongly that there should be a phone at the Beach even if it is in the storage area, Town Administrator Beaudin will look into putting a phone at the Beach.

Selectman Caldwell moved to approve line items 4521-101 through 505 \$23,500 as proposed. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Principal Debt

Selectman Caldwell moved to approve line items 4711-001 through 003 \$52,500 as proposed. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Interest Debt

Selectman Caldwell moved to approve line items 4721-001 through 003 \$9,982 as proposed. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

TAN Debt

Selectman Caldwell moved to approve line item 4723-001 \$5,000 as proposed. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Patriotic Purposes

Selectman Cormier inquired why the Town doesn't have fireworks on the 4th of July, Town Administrator Beaudin explained that the 4th of July and Old Home Day are so close together that they have always just had fireworks at Old Home Day.

Selectman Cormier asked what BAD day is, Town Administrator Beaudin noted that it was for an appreciation day for volunteers and employees that was very successful in the beginning and then over time it was a lot of work for very little turn out so the line item is now used for a Christmas luncheon for employees and for employee and volunteer of the year awards.

Selectman Caldwell moved to approve line item 4583-453 through 4584-999 \$22,000 as proposed. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Parks & Recreation

Town Administrator Beaudin advised the Board that she has worked closely with Tina Fleming, Chairman of the Parks & Recreation Commission, to develop the job description and salary level for the part-time Recreation Director position. Discussion followed regarding where the office for the Director will be located. Options for creating space at the Corner Meeting House and temporarily utilizing the vacant office at Town Hall were discussed. The discussion also touched on the old Public Works garage which does not have water/sewer hooked up right now and has no heating system and is in need of desperate renovations if it is to be considered for use. There was also discussion of removing the building and putting in an office trailer. Town Administrator Beaudin will get costs for demolition of the building and an office trailer.

As Tina did not show up for the meeting this budget will be taken up again at another time.

Health Agencies

Town Administrator Beaudin explained that she has received requests from all the Health Agencies, some with slightly increased requests, others are unchanged. Chairman Watterson reminded the other Board members that last year the Youth Services Bureau's request had been reduced by the Board and then taken up at Town Meeting and increased from the floor. He would like to meet with the health agencies in an effort to come to an agreement, so that this situation doesn't arise again. Chairman Watterson noted that the Police Department doesn't use that program, so referral of Belmont youth is coming from other agencies.

The Board asked Town Administrator Beaudin to invite the Health Agencies to attend their meeting October 17, 2005, 4:00 p.m. at the Corner Meeting House.

General Government Buildings

The Board was advised by Town Administrator Beaudin that she is working with a local plumbing contractor on the sewer problem at the Mill building, there will need to be a grease trap installed at the Senior Center and sheetrock repair in the Restaurant. The heating costs have been increased because the system needed to be changed to kerosene due to the oil congealing. She noted that the heating costs are passed onto the tenants.

Town Administrator Beaudin also advised the Board that she has gone ahead with posting the part-time maintenance position, which will show a reduction in the maintenance line item in many of the budgets. The position would require the individual to be on call and available during the early morning hours for the winter for snow removal and ice control, then on a more regular basis for lawn mowing and landscaping functions. She noted that she has received two contract from the current landscaper, one for winter services and one for summer service, so if an individual is not found to fill the position for the winter we could still contract with the current landscaper and hire someone in the spring

Selectman Cormier moved to approve line items 4194-201 through 980 at \$120,590 as proposed. Selectman Caldwell seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

General Assistance Administration

General Assistance Director Donna Cilley joined the meeting to review her Department's budget request for 2006. She noted the increase in her telephone line item as in all departments it was affected by the new Centrex contract.

Selectman Caldwell moved to approve line items 4441-101 through 505 \$44,417 as proposed. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

General Assistance Vendor Payments

Donna explained the increases in housing costs and other expenses proposed for 2006. Heating is up as well due to the increased prices for fuel and she was able to take advantage of a pre-buy program. She noted that she has had 23 homeless to date and anticipates a great deal of need for heating assistance.

Donna explained that she was able to reduce her medical line item request due to the amendment to her prescription assistance program and DHMC/Concord has a new prescription program that she can refer people to as well.

Town Administrator Beaudin noted that Donna has been able to recoup funds through the lien process creating revenue for her department of approximately \$35,000.

Selectman Caldwell moved to approve line items 4445-430 through 441 \$143,500 as proposed. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Regular Meeting

Chairman Watterson opened the regular meeting at 5:00 p.m., also present were Selectman Reginald Caldwell, Selectman Ronald Cormier, Jr., Town Administrator K. Jeanne Beaudin, Administrative Assistant Cary Lagace, Chief Siegel, Dawn Kidd, David Morse, Ruth Campbell, Melanie Nelson from the Citizen and Ray Carbone with the Daily Sun.

Those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

Selectman Reginald Caldwell moved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on September 19, 2005 as written. Selectman Ronald Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Public Hearing

Chairman Watterson opened the Public Hearing at 5:01p.m. in accordance with RSA 31:95 (b) to accept a grant in the amount of \$3595 for the Belmont Fire Department under the First Responder State Homeland Security Program portion of the 2005 Homeland Security Grant Program.

Chief Siegel explained that the grant is to be used for equipment to enhance rope rescue capabilities, ropes, pulleys and other climbing equipment will be purchased through the grant. Chairman Watterson closed the Public Hearing at 5:05 p.m.

Selectman Caldwell moved to accept the grant for \$3595.00. Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Sargent Lake Roads

Town Administrator Beaudin advised that staff has been looking at the situation with the Sargent Lake Roads, specifically Morgan Road, Arnold Road, Dock Road and the private portion of Sargent Lake Road; it is their recommendation to move forward with naming the roads as emergency lanes. The Board of Selectmen will hold a Public Hearing on October 17, 2005, 5:00 at the Corner Meeting House, Town Administrator Beaudin will notify the property owner's.

Ray Carbone asked for an explanation of the emergency lane, Town Administrator Beaudin indicated that RSA 231:59-a allows the Town to maintain the roads to the extent of being passable for emergency vehicles. Ray asked if it was still the Board of Selectmen's intent to have them apply for a road layout. Town Administrator Beaudin emphasized that this does not change the status of the roads.

David Morse inquired if there will be any additional roads in this process, Town Administrator Beaudin responded that they would be looked at on an individual basis and only roads that may be Town maintained at this point. She noted that the Land Use office is involved in the road inventory process which will identify the status of all roads in the Town.

Ruth Campbell was present to ask why she hadn't received the informational mailing regarding the Sargent Lake, it was determined that it was sent to an incorrect address, the information will be re-sent.

Dispatcher Position

Town Administrator Beaudin reviewed with the Board a memo submitted by Chief Baiocchetti requesting approval to hire Jane Cormier to fill a full time dispatch position, effective September 28, 2005.

Selectman Caldwell moved to hire Jane Cormier for a fulltime dispatch position at grade 10 step 1 on the 2005 union scale and after her successful completion of her probationary period, she will move to grade 10 step 2 on the 2006 union scale and participation in the New Hampshire Retirement System, Selectman Cormier seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Town Administrator Beaudin noted the other hiring stipulations on the memo, including successful completion of Department Field Training Program, completion of State Police SPOTS training period, completion of Telecommunication School, and successful completion of the criminal background.

Mooney Correspondence

Town Administrator Beaudin reviewed a letter received from Mark Mooney requesting the paving of Old Prescott Hill Road be put on the priority road repair list. In previous discussion it was believed that Laconia was to contact Belmont before paving their end of the road so it could be done as a joint project and the entire road

would be paved. Laconia did not contact Belmont prior to paving the Laconia end of the road. Old Prescott Hill Road has not appeared on prior priority road lists provided to the Board of Selectmen. Town Administrator Beaudin will gather facts regarding the paving of that road and send a letter to Mr. Mooney.

Other Business

A Belmont Elementary School student has sent a letter to the Board of Selectmen asking them to put no swimming signs at Silver Lake because it is unsafe. The Board will send a reply letter advising they have received the letter and are taking his request under consideration.

Library Budget

David Morse and Dawn Kidd were present to review the Library budget, David advised the Board that Librarian Jackie is doing a wonderful job and she ran a great summer reading program. He noted a 5.5% wage increase for the Librarian and a \$1.00 per hour raise for the Assistant with one of the Assistant positions remaining vacant. He indicated they had anticipated an 18% increase for benefits based on the increase last year. David reviewed the list of general expenses noting a return of funds from the excess funds from last year. Chairman Watterson asked what excess funds, David explained that if the library budget isn't expended that those funds are returned to the Library and put into the Library's checking account. It was noted that other departments that don't expend funds, the funds go back to the general fund and in turn go back to the taxpayers.

Selectman Cormier inquired why funds hadn't been expended, David indicated that the Trustee's are conservative; they can't over expend the budget so are very cautious with spending. Chairman Watterson asked how much they planned to spend prior to the end of the year; David thought they would spend approximately \$35,000 by year end. David noted that last year the Library received \$20,000 back that wasn't expended, Chairman Watterson asked if he anticipated receiving that much again this year, David said yes.

Chairman Watterson expressed that they wouldn't allow other departments to present a budget that was above what was needed because they would get the funds back if they weren't expended. What the Library is proposing appears to be 25-35% over budget on a regular basis as indicated by the return of \$20,000 on a yearly basis. The Board felt the Library Trustees and Staff should look at their budget again and put together real figures for what is truly needed taking into account the funds that will be returned again this year, and then re-present their budget to the Board on October 19 at 5:00 p.m.

Next Meeting

The next meeting was set for October 17, 2005 at 4:00 p.m. at the Corner Meeting House.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:12 p.m.

Brian Watterson, Chairman

Reginald Caldwell

Ronald Cormier, Jr.