



Town of Plaistow ♦ Budget Committee

145 Main Street ♦ Plaistow ♦ NH ♦ 03865

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING – RE-ORGANIZATION MEETING April 17, 2018

Call to Order: 6:31 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Bob Hamilton, *Chair Elect*
Lisa Lambert, *Vice Chair Elect*
Sam Cafiso
Laurie Milette
Dennis Heffernan
Jay DeRoche
Katie Ingalls
Francine Hart, *Selectmen Ex-Officio*

Absent: Trisha Holt

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Bob Hamilton.

D. Heffernan asks B. Hamilton if we can pause for a moment of silence as two employees recently lost a parent.

Review/Approval of Minutes from February 3, 2018

★ D. Heffernan moved, second by F. Hart to approve the minutes of the February 3, 2018 minutes. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 6-0-2 (Ingalls and Lambert abstaining).

Re-Organization

Introductions

K. Ingalls is introduced as a new member and is welcomed to the committee. It was noted that there were two re-elected members, S. Cafiso and L. Milette. This is helpful as these members bring continuity and experience to the committee. A special congratulation is given to F. Hart who was recently elected as Selectman. Due to her new position she has resigned from the budget committee. However, she is the Selectmen's Representative to the Budget Committee. Best wishes are sent to all.

Nominations for Officers:

B. Hamilton called for nominations for Budget Committee chair for the upcoming year.

D. Heffernan nominates S. Cafiso as Chair.

S. Cafiso thanks D. Heffernan but respectfully declines the nomination.
L. Milette nominates B. Hamilton as Chair.
There are no other nominations. B. Hamilton accepts the nomination.
The vote was 7-0-1 (Hart abstaining).

B. Hamilton called for nominations for Budget Committee (BudCom) Vice Chair for the upcoming year.

★ S. Cafiso moved, second by D. Heffernan to nominate L. Lambert for Budget Committee Vice Chair. L. Lambert accepts the nomination. There are no other nominations. The vote was 7-0-0 (Hart abstaining).

B. Hamilton requests the Vice Chair act as a second pair of eyes during meetings. This will help make sure anyone with a question is recognized. L. Lambert agrees.

Committee Assignments

Capital Improvements Program (CIP) – CIP is a Planning Board document that compiles information and sets out a replacement/purchase schedule for capital items. Meets 4-5 times, May through October

B. Hamilton asks the committee if he can take F. Hart's place on the CIP, Capital Improvements Program. The committee agrees. There are two representatives for the CIP. S. Cafiso would like the position. The committee agrees. J. DeRoche volunteers to be the alternate member. It was noted that L. Lambert is the alternate to the CIP as a Planning Board member.

Highway Garage Committee – The former Highway Garage Committee will be known as the Public Works Building Committee this year.

B. Hamilton asks D. Heffernan if he will take his place on the committee. D. Heffernan thanks B. Hamilton but respectfully declines. J. DeRoche volunteers to take B. Hamilton's place. S. Cafiso will continue as the other representative. D. Heffernan agrees to be the alternate member.

Public Safety Complex Building Committee – Advisory Committee for the construction of the new Police Station.

B. Hamilton asks D. Heffernan if this committee has been resolved.
D. Heffernan states the committee meetings have stopped however there are some things left to do.

Town Report Committee – Advisory Committee for overseeing the publication of the Annual Town Report. The schedule is decided by the Town Report Committee and meets as needed to perform the administrative functions to produce the Town's Annual Report.

L. Lambert would like to continue as the Town Report Committee Representative.

B. Hamilton mentions L. Lambert is also a member of the Planning Board. He asks her to be the eyes and ears for the Budget Committee. She agrees and will email B. Hamilton updates from Planning Board meetings.

Filling Vacancy

B. Hamilton states we must fill the vacancy left by F. Hart. He asks the committee to consider something unprecedented. He would like them to consider appointing D. Nifakos as F. Hart's replacement. D. Nifakos is known by the other members and he has experience.

L. Milette thinks the rules should be followed.

S. Cafiso states we do have a policy but are not obligated to follow it. The policy is advisory.

D. Heffernan agrees with L. Milette. If the committee chooses not to follow the policy he believes there should be a motion.

B. Hamilton states since we do have a policy we will use it. We do not have administrative staff to help with posting the vacancy.

D. Heffernan asks G. Colby if this can be done through the administrative office.

G. Colby replies, yes.

A brief timeline is discussed for the next meeting to interview potential members.

It is decided the next meeting will be held on June 6th, 2018 at 7:00pm.

T. Holt did not attend tonight's meeting. Previously she had been on a leave of absence. It is asked if her position should be filled. B. Hamilton states we should wait and give her a chance to contact the committee.

Meeting Schedule

B. Hamilton met with M. Pearson recently to talk about changes in the budget presentation. G. Colby is here tonight to discuss it with the committee.

G. Colby refers to the 2019 Tentative Budget Timeline in everyone's folders. Department Heads will be submitting preliminary budgets to the Town Manager and Finance Director by August 31st. The Town Manager and Finance Director will meet with Department Heads to review and finalize budgets prior to presenting them to the Board of Selectmen. On October 1st the Town Manager and Finance Director will present the total operating budget along with all warrant articles and the estimated tax impact to the Board of Selectmen. This will allow five October meetings for budget discussions. Department Heads will be included if necessary. The budget should be finalized on October 29th. On November 6th the Town Manager and Finance Director will present the budget to the Budget Committee. The Budget Committee will have seven nights available in November and December to discuss the budget and meet with Department Heads if necessary. The goal is to have the budget finalized on December 18th, 2018.

It is noted it would be a good idea to have a description of line items for new budget committee members. Another good idea is to have the budget to actual document available for members to review. B. Hamilton states this could be used as an optional training session. Last year training topics covered capital reserve funds, revenue and capital improvements program. He would like to continue training this September. Two workshops might be enough. The budget to actual should be posted on the website and emailed to the Budget Committee members.

★ D. Heffernan moved, second by L. Lambert to adopt the 2019 Tentative Budget Schedule presented by the Assistant Town Manager tonight. Discussion: S. Cafiso asks if it is necessary to make a motion to adopt the timeline or just go with a consensus. D. Heffernan withdraws his motion. L. Lambert withdraws her second. There is consensus to move forward with the schedule presented tonight.

F. Hart will bring the schedule to the Board of Selectmen. She will ask the Board to invite the Budget Committee to the first Budget Presentation in October.

It is asked if there is any sense of where the budget will come out next year.

G. Colby states it is too hard to predict now. We are only three months into the year and there are many unknowns. We do not know what health insurance rates will be nor do we know the costs of heat and electricity for the new Public Safety Building. We have also used the snow removal budget and it is only April.

It is asked if potential changes could be made to the budget after the presentation.

G. Colby responds yes.

It is noted the water department budget will leave the operating budget. It will be voted on as a separate warrant article. It will be a standalone budget. The Budget Committee will have the same responsibility for the water budget.

It is asked if the committee will need to appropriate money in the 2019 budget for potable water.

G. Colby replies no.

New Business

Election results are discussed.

D. Heffernan noted all the hard work done on the budget and warrant articles paid off.

F. Hart states she attended an area Selectmen's meeting recently. A discussion was held about changing voting to the second Tuesday in April. The Selectmen will bring the issue back to their respective towns to discuss it on a local level. Warrant articles may be presented on each Town's ballot next year.

Old Business

None.

Committee Reports

Public Safety Complex Building Committee

D. Heffernan states the Safety Complex Open House was successful. There were speeches and dignitaries. Unitil used the Fire Department training room as a place for a meal and rest for all the workers due to the storm. They cleaned up after themselves on Friday. At the Open House on Saturday you would never have known Unitil crews had been there. The Town's maintenance department also did a great job preparing for the event. Many people attended, tours were given and positive feedback was received. It was a great project that came in under budget. There is still some more work to be done and it will get done. He is proud of the job the Public Safety Building Committee did.

It is mentioned that someone heard of a problem with a floor at the complex and wanted to know who paid to have it fixed. It was paid for by the contractor. The Town did not pay for it. We also had outside engineers check to make sure all systems work correctly. Much of the furniture in the building was donated. Police Chief Briggs of Kingston was instrumental in this. Methuen Construction stored the furniture until we were ready to move it. The equipment in the exercise room was also donated.

Town Report Committee

L. Lambert states they recently held an after-action meeting to tie up loose ends. They discussed some improvements going forward. Overall the Town Report is a good publication and she is proud of it. The cost of the Town Report came in about \$1,000 under budget.

Highway Garage Committee

No meetings have been held yet.

It is noted it is amazing how this was voted favorably just one year after the Public Safety Complex was voted in.

Other Business

B. Hamilton states he will be in contact with the committee to let them know about training. The next meeting will be held on June 5th, 2018 at 7:00pm. It will be an informal meeting to meet the candidates and vote. Voting will be done by paper ballot. Each candidate will answer the same two or three questions. If you have a question please email it to B. Hamilton.

B. Hamilton adjourned the meeting at 7:45pm

Respectfully Submitted:

Beth Hossack,
Recording Secretary