



Town of Plaistow ♦ Budget Committee

145 Main Street ♦ Plaistow ♦ NH ♦ 03865

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING

June 5, 2018

Call to Order: 7:02 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, *Selectman Ex-Officio*

Also in attendance: Mark Pearson, Town Manager and Greg Colby, Finance Director

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by B. Hamilton.

Review/Approval of Minutes from April 17, 2018

★D. Heffernan moved, second by S. Cafiso, to approve the minutes of the April 17, 2018 minutes. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 8-0-0 U/A.

Fill Budget Committee Vacancies:

- Review of all submitted letters of interest, resumes, and endorsements

Candidate: Greg Taillon - In Attendance

Candidate: Dean Nifakos - Not In Attendance

- Conduct candidate interviews

B. Hamilton introduced candidate, Greg Taillon

Greg Taillon gave the Committee an introduction of his background of being a resident of Plaistow for 40 years, his community involvement for 30 years, education (both technical and business), communication skills, and Budget Committee qualifications.

- Vote to fill vacancies

D. Heffernan asked if there are only 2 vacancies and 2 candidates, is there a requirement to vote?

B. Hamilton offered that there must be a consensus.

B. Hamilton invited Greg Taillon to stay for tonight's meeting. However, he's not able to participate until he is formally sworn in.

★S. Cafiso moved, second by L. Lambert, to approve Greg Taillon to fill a Budget Committee vacancy. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 7-0-1 (F. Hart abstained).

There was discussion regarding candidate, Dean Nifakos in the context that Dean has been on the Budget Committee for 3 years. Voting him in would bring him on the Committee for another year.

★ D. Heffernan moved, second by J. DeRoche, to approve Dean Nifakos to fill a Budget Committee vacancy and be on the Committee for a 4th year. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 7-0-1 (F. Hart abstained).

Finalize “Budget Committee Training Workshop and Meeting Schedule”:

- Review and discussion of proposed schedule

There was discussion that the Training and Workshop Meeting Schedule would be the same as it was last year, with the understanding that if any laws have changed, there may need to be modifications and adjustments needed.

- Adjust as needed

There was discussion that M. Pearson met with Sandown. Sandown workshop dates are to be determined. The schedule is expected to be between August and September, and the cost will be \$15 per workshop.

There was a review of the Training Workshop Schedule.

There was discussion that the workshops would be in informal format, with no recording secretary and they will not be televised.

L. Milette offered that there will be a NH Municipal Association meeting September 12, 2018 from 9:00am - 4:00pm in Manchester, NH. The Committee will look into the possibility of car pooling.

- Final Approval of Budget Committee schedule

There was a review of the Budget Committee Meeting Schedule.

There was discussion that there will be seven (7) meetings, starting November 6, 2018. It was noted that November 6, 2018 is also Election Day.

There was discussion about the Board of Selectman Meeting scheduled for October 1, 2018. The Budget Committee is encouraged to attend as it will give them information needed to get a head start on the review of the budget.

D. Heffernan offered that he had concern as to whether seven (7) Budget Committee meetings would be enough.

L.Milette offered that she would like to schedule a couple of meetings in October.

There was discussion as to what the Committee is looking to get out of the meetings, and if there is a chance that the budget review won't happen October 1, 2018.

M. Pearson responded by offering assurance that the budget review will happen October 1st, 2018 and that there will be a 3 step process in reviewing the budget, going from the Finance Manager and Town Manager to the Board of Selectman and ultimately to the Budget Committee to eliminate any confusion.

M. Pearson suggested that if there are any meetings held in October to have them as workshops instead of formal meetings.

There was discussion that the workshop format will be okay as long as it is understood that there will be no decision making or voting at the meetings. The workshops would allow for the process to be expedited by allowing the Committee to determine which department(s) they have questions for. It is believed that the list of articles might go down to half of what they were before.

D. Hefferman offered the dates of October 23 and October 31, 2018 as the dates for the addition Budget Committee "workshop" meetings.

B. Hamilton offered that the time for the workshops be 7:00pm, and stated that he will update the schedule to include the two (2) workshops.

It was agreed that there is a consensus to have the workshop meetings held on October 23 and October 31, 2018.

L. Milette asked if there has been a snow date established for the public hearing.

B. Hamilton responded by stating that a snow date has not been determined.

D. Heffernan commented that if there is a snow day the rescheduled meeting would have to take place within the same week.

D. Hefferman asked if there will be an Election Day change?

B. Hamilton offered that the Election Day change would be established by the DRA.

F. Hart responded that four (4) towns have to agree before a date change can take place for the upcoming year. If there is a date change the voting day would move to April.

Committee Reports:

Safety Building Committee:

D. Heffernan headed the discussion by stating that even though the Safety Building Committee is no longer meeting as a committee, he has been staying in contact with the Town Manager and there are still a number of items that are finishing up:

- a. Landscaping
- b. New garage doors (6 out of 7 are completed)
- c. RFR going out for the road out back

- d. 2 new generators
- e. LED lighting

M. Pearson offered that there are a number of items that have contributed to savings on the bond project, which was cut from \$11million to \$8.5 million. These items will allow for additional funds to be focused on projects that will save energy and cut down additional utility expenses.

- a) labor costs saved by not having to pay project managers and architects
- b) heat and utility savings due to more efficient equipment
- c) \$300,000 generous donation and free delivery of furniture

Highway Garage Committee:

S. Cafiso stated that the Highway Garage Committee has not met.

M. Pearson offered an update on what is currently taking place:

- a) SEC is developing a site plan
- b) test pits are being completed
- c) specifications are ready for RFP
- d) building, septic, driveway, and salt shed locations are being determined

M. Pearson stated that even though exempt, the site plan will be going before the Planning Board on July 25, 2018. There will be no relief needed from the Conservation Commission as all setbacks including wetlands have been met. The plan can be recorded at the Registry of Deeds. Once presented to the Planning Board a meeting will be held and the results of the RFP will be shared with the Building Committee to start the 1st Phase. Once Building Committee recommendation is given it will then go to the BOS. The foundation will be completed during the 6-8 weeks that the building is on order. Phase I is expected to be completed by September or October 2018, at which time Phase II will be started to complete the interior of the building and construct the salt shed. It is expected to be a working garage by November or December 2018. Garage will allow for machinery to be housed inside which will cut maintenance costs for having to repair equipment left outside to the elements.

B. Hamilton addressed G. Taillon to give him a bit of background on the Highway Garage project. The concerns with the conditions of the current garage and the extreme cost to bring it up to standards was stated. The new project was able to avoid a bond which offers considerable savings.

There was a discussion about the appropriation of funds for a project spanning more than one (1) year. By doing a design/build it can be completed in house without project managers and architects which offer considerable cost savings over the course of the project. By doing the project this way it offers the ability to come up with a firm number going into the subsequent year(s).

G. Taillon and L. Lambert asked what happens if the appropriation is not approved for the 2nd year?

M. Pearson responded by stating that there would be a stand alone building and the project would go as far as it can. It would just mean that the salt shed would remain on the current site and the highway garage would be in the new location. This would still allow workers to be on the new site and away from the current methane hazard and liability which is present at the current site. He also stated that he wanted to remind everybody that the project is not coming from taxpayer funds.

Recreation Committee:

B. Hamilton stated that he attended the Recreation Committee meeting on May 9, 2018. The meeting was a presentation on MyRec.com which is a computer program that is being looked at to replace the manual system and will streamline the process for running and managing the programs. The MyRec.com program highlights and costs are:

- a) allows for scheduling online
- b) program sign up online
- c) allows for online payment for programs
- d) the program is expandable
- e) the cost to utilize the program is \$3,500 per year or \$9.57 per day
- f) training for coaches and volunteers is part of the total annual cost

B. Hamilton expressed that the belief is that by utilizing this program it will save a lot of time for volunteer coaches and individuals who organize the programs. He stated that the town of Atkinson has already signed up for the program.

F. Hart offered that the Board has already approved this year's expenditure under the Recreation Revolving Fund.

There was discussion on how it would be funded next year.

M. Pearson stated that there was no discussion about the funding for next year. However, that it could be paid for utilizing the Recreation Revolving Fund on an ongoing basis.

J. DeRoche asked if the software comes with it's own server or if there is hardware involved?

M. Pearson responded by stating that the program has an online platform and support.

New Business:

Election Budget Fluctuations:

B. Hamilton initiated a discussion regarding Election Budget fluctuations. He offered that on the odd numbered years that there is one (1) election and on the even numbered years there are three (3) elections which cause budget spikes on the even numbered years. He asked to address the purchase of tri-fold separators for voting booths that cost \$360 spread out over three (3) years. He asked the Board to allow for the full cost to be paid in full in 2019.

G. Colby responded by stating that there is only one third (1/3) left to be paid and therefore it is a moot point.

Public Comments:

L. Milette initiated a discussion about adding public comments to the Budget Committee meeting agenda.

D. Heffernan offered that he feels that is what the Public Hearings are for, or e-mail throughout the year.

B. Hamilton offered that e-mail would require department heads to respond and possibly have to refer to other departments for answers and that he feels that given the knowledge and experience of the Budget Committee members that public comments could be handled more efficiently as a Budget Committee agenda item.

S. Cafiso asked if there was anything in the RSAs that requires the Budget Committee to allow for public comment. He expressed concern of the possibility of a question being asked that is outside the jurisdiction of the Budget Committee.

B. Hamilton responded that it would be the Chairman's responsibility to make sure questions and answers stay within the jurisdiction of the Budget Committee.

M. Pearson stated that he will review RSAs in regard to public comment and get back to the Chairman with any details.

There was discussion on how e-mails that get sent in through the Plaistow.com website get forwarded to the Budget Committee. It was determined that e-mails come in to the Town Managers office and Beth Hossack typically receives them and if they are Budget Committee related they will be forwarded to the Budget Committee Chairman. There was a suggestion of possibly modifying the website with a drop down per department so that e-mails automatically get filtered to the Budget Committee.

★ L. Milette moved, second by S. Cafiso, to approve the addition of Public Comments to the Budget Committee agenda. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 3-2-3 (F. Hart, L. Lambert, and B. Hamilton abstained).

Cost of Business Increases:

M. Pearson offered input on the naturally occurring cost of business increases that happen each year. We are trying to build a budget with only 9 months worth of data. He suggests that we try to collect more data by the end of the year, so that we get a better sense of the cost of business increases that need to be taken into consideration.

B. Hamilton commented that in his experience a budget is typically determined by what anticipated revenue will be. Taking residents into consideration, we can't have a 5% increase in budget when wages only go up 2%.

Budget Committee Website:

B. Hamilton expressed his opinion that the 2018 Actual Operating Budget should be located under the Budget Committee on the Plaistow.com website.

G. Colby responded by stating that it is on his list of things to do.

LED Lighting at the Plaistow Library:

B. Hamilton expressed his thoughts that the Budget Committee should look into cost saving programs and improvements for future projects, such as the LED lighting at the library, that have shown hard data and ongoing savings to the annual budget. He asked to consider the savings if the Safety Complex was converted to LED lighting. He stated that he feels that these types of programs should be encouraged and that the Budget Committee should keep an eye on what neighboring towns are doing for cost saving programs. New programs may require an initial investment, however the long term savings to the budget will make it worth the investment.

Fall Seating Arrangement:

B. Hamilton expressed concern about the Budget Committee getting crowded and not enough chairs to accommodate.

It was decided that since there will be 10 Budget Committee members and 10 high back chairs, that M. Pearson, G. Colby, and the Recording Secretary will move to low back chairs to arrive at a solution with the least amount of discussion needed.

Old Business:

There was no old business presented.

The next Budget Committee Meeting will be November 6, 2018

There was no additional business presented and the meeting was adjourned at 8:39pm