



Town of Plaistow ♦ Budget Committee

145 Main Street ♦ Plaistow ♦ NH ♦ 03865

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING October 18, 2016

Call to Order: 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Dennis Heffernan, *Chair*
Francine Hart, *Vice Chair*
Sam Cafiso
Laurie Milette
Tricia Holt
Scott Sullivan
Lisa Lambert
Dean Nifakos
Martha Sumner, *Excused*
John Sherman, *Selectmen Ex-Officio*

Also Present: Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by John McArdle, Fire Chief

D. Heffernan offered a couple of housekeeping items before beginning the meeting. He asked that committee members talk one at a time and show respect to the speaker. D. Heffernan added that members assist in the process of taking these budgets under consideration by making or seconding a motion. He reminded that making or seconding any motion does not imply approval of that budget, just to move it forward in the process.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

★T. Holt moved, second by F. Hart, to approve the minutes of the October 04, 2016 meeting. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-0 U/A.

★T. Holt moved, second by L. Milette, to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2016 meeting. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 8-0-1 (Cafiso abstaining).

BUDGET PRESENTATION

Cable Studio – Dean Zanello, Cable Coordinator

D. Zanello presented the Cable Studio's 2017 budget request noting the following:

Level Funded Budget Lines:

-	Permanent Position	\$ 18,000.00
-	Telephone	\$ 0.00

-	Equipment Repairs	\$	500.00
-	Training	\$	400.00
-	Cable Dues & Subscriptions	\$	1,180.00
-	General Supplies	\$	500.00
-	Mileage	\$	500.00

Decreased Budget Lines:

-	Operators (-\$133.00)	\$	3,500.00
-	Consultants/Contracted Services (-\$2,000)	\$	2,500.00
-	New Equipment (-\$5,000)	\$	1,000.00

D. Zanello noted that the bottom line Cable Studio's 2017 budget request was \$28,080.00 (decrease of \$7,133.00).

It was noted that this was the same amount approved by the Board of Selectmen.

Discussion:

D. Zanello noted that mileage and dues would be 4th quarter expenses. He also noted that there are some training events that will occur before the end of the year. D. Zanello noted that lines that were adjusted were mostly based on historical usage. The telephone line was at a zero request and was a holdover from the prior off-site location. It was also noted that the new equipment line was being reduced due to additional capital provided by cable company subscribers. D. Zanello explained the subscription-based Abode software, noting that it will not be acted on until deemed necessary.

There was discussion regarding upgrades to the system. There was also discussion regarding the lag between the recording and getting it to Vimeo. D. Zanello explained the process. It was noted that there is personal attention needed for the process, so the lag time was a manpower related issue. D. Zanello offered that their next step would be higher quality recordings.

★T. Holt moved, second by D. Nifakos, to take the 2017 Cable Studio's Budget in the amount of \$28,080.00 under consideration. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-0 U/A.

Welfare Administration – Lori Sadewicz, Human Services Coordinator

J. Sherman noted that the Welfare-related budgets were broken out based on the four-digit accounting designations.

L. Sadewicz presented the Welfare Administration Department's 2017 budget request noting the following:

Level Funded Budget Lines:

-	Training	\$	240.00
-	Dues	\$	50.00

-	Office Supplies	\$	250.00
-	Mileage/Travel	\$	200.00

L. Sadewicz noted that the bottom line Welfare Administration Department's 2017 budget request was \$740.00 (level funded).

It was noted that this was the same amount approved by the Board of Selectmen.

Discussion:

There was no discussion regarding this budget.

★D. Nifakos moved, second by T. Holt, to take the 2017 Welfare Administration Department Budget in the amount of \$740.00 under consideration. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-0 U/A.

Welfare Direct Assistance – Lori Sadewicz, Human Services Coordinator

L. Sadewicz presented the Welfare = Direct Assistance 2017 budget request noting the following:

Level Funded Budget Lines:

-	Shelter/Rent	\$	15,000.00
-	Food/Markets	\$	250.00
-	Telephone Service	\$	100.00
-	Unitil Electric	\$	4,000.00
-	Heat	\$	3,000.00
-	Unforeseen Assistance	\$	500.00
-	Funeral Assistance	\$	1,000.00

Decreased Budget Lines:

-	Medical (-\$500.00)	\$	500.00
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L. Sadewicz noted that the bottom line Welfare – Direct Assistance 2017 budget request was \$24,350.00 (decrease of \$500.00).

It was noted that this was the same amount approved by the Board of Selectmen.

Discussion:

There was discussion regarding what other resources, such as the food pantry at Holy Angels (St. Matthew's) Church. It was noted that despite the rise in the economy, request for services were rising. It was noted that one of the greatest needs was for personal hygiene products that are not covered by food stamps. It was noted that requests for heat assistance, is more of 4th quarter expenditure. L. Sadewicz reported that many of her clients are dealing with electric heat.

★T. Holt moved, second by F. Hart, to take the 2017 Welfare – Direct Assistance Budget in the amount of \$24,350.00 under consideration. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-0 U/A.

Human Services – Lori Sadewicz, Human Services Coordinator

L. Sadewicz presented the Human Services Department's 2017 budget request noting the following:

Level Funded Budget Lines:

- Family Mediation	\$ 10,408.00
- Rockingham Community Action Program	\$ 10,612.00
- Crisis Pregnancy Center	\$ 2,200.00
- HAVEN	\$ 4,500.00
- Child Advocacy Center	\$ 1,250.00
- Center for Life Management	\$ 8,000.00
- Retired Senior Volunteer Program (Friends Program)	\$ 850.00
- Greater Salem Caregivers	\$ 0.00
- Vic Geary Center	\$ 6,500.00
- Lamprey Health	\$ 3,090.00
- Rockingham Nutrition & Meals on Wheels	\$ 3,672.00
- Community Health Services	\$ 2,000.00
- Child and Family Services	\$ 1,000.00

L. Sadewicz noted that the bottom line Human Services Department's 2017 budget request was \$54,082.00 (level funded).

It was noted that this was the same amount approved by the Board of Selectmen.

Discussion:

L. Sadewicz explained that process for organizations to apply to continue to receive funding from the Town. She noted that funding is based on the anticipated number of Plaistow residents that will receive services. She explained that some funding is also based on population figures, but there is no way to determine and absolute finite need.

There was discussion regarding whether not there was a need to increase funding for organizations that provide services for substance abuse. L. Sadewicz offered that the amount of the request is what the organization asked for.

★D. Nifakos moved, second by T. Holt, to take the 2017 Human Services Department Budget in the amount of \$54,082.00 under consideration. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-0 U/A.

Assessing/Human Resources – Lori Sadewicz, Assessing Clerk, Human Resources Director

L. Sadewicz presented the Assessing/Human Resources Department's 2017 budget request noting the following:

Level Funded Budget Lines:

-	Training	\$	400.00
-	Dues	\$	75.00
-	Postage	\$	2,200.00
-	Mileage Reimbursement	\$	300.00

Decreased Budget Lines:

-	Assessor's Contract (-\$28,290)	\$	86,700.00
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Increased Budget Lines:

-	Human Resources Coordinator/Assessing Clerk (+\$1,020.00)	\$	52,272.00
-	Mapping (+\$3,000)	\$	9,000.00
-	Data Processing (+\$300)	\$	6,500.00
-	Supplies for Assessing and Human Resources (+\$75)	\$	900.00
-	Books & Periodicals (+\$50)	\$	675.00

L. Sadewicz noted that the bottom line Assessing/Human Resources Department's 2017 budget request was \$159,022.00 (decrease of \$23,845.00).

It was noted that this was the same amount approved by the Board of Selectmen.

Discussion:

There was discussion about the Assessor's contract. It was noted that it decreased in 2017 because 2016 was a "values anew" year, which required more staffing for the contract assessing company. Next year 20% of the town will be re-assessed. There was question as to why the 2017 Assessing contract wasn't 20% of the 2016 contract, because they are only assessing 20% of the town. It was noted that the years when 20% of the town was assessed it costs about \$86,000.00 and that should be considered the baseline for each year. During those years the structures on the 20% properties assessed in that year are actually entered and measured. During a values anew year while all town properties are visited, but all are not measured. There is also an increase in the amount of data entry in the values anew years. Combined with the extra field work more personnel is needed, therefore there is an increase in the Assessor's contract for a values anew year over the baseline 20% assessment years.

There was a question as to whether doing a full town-wide assessment every five (5) years would result in more savings to the Town. It was noted that it would be physically more difficult to get into and completely measure every property, every five (5) years as opposed to doing 20% of the properties each of five (5) years. The assessing company would have to bring in far more manpower for the field work. It was also noted that doing full evaluations every five (5) years might not capture swings in the real estate market. Homeowners trying to sell properties might not be able to benefit from upswings in the real estate markets, or increase in valuation due to

improvements they might have made. Residents staying in their homes might not be able to benefit from a drop in a market value that may offer tax relief. It was suggested that the current system offered a more equitable and manageable approach.

★F. Hart moved, second by T. Holt, to take the 2017 Assessing/Human Resources Department Budget in the amount of \$158,022.00 under consideration. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-0 U/A.

Building Inspection – Mike Dorman, Chief Building Official

Mike Dorman, Building Inspector presented the Building Inspection Department's 2017 Budget request noting the following:

Level Funded Budget Lines:

-	Permanent Positions	\$100,301.00
-	Data Processing	\$ 1,025.00
-	Training & Conferences	\$ 2,500.00
-	Supplies	\$ 900.00
-	Postage	\$ 300.00
-	Gasoline	\$ 1,500.00

Decreased Budget Lines:

-	Telephone (-\$750)	\$ 1,748.00
-	Vehicle Maintenance (-\$290)	\$ 175.00
-	Books & Periodicals (-\$13)	\$ 632.00
-	Equipment Purchases (-\$50)	\$ 100.00

Increased Budget Lines:

-	Back Up Inspector (+\$100)	\$ 400.00
-	Dues & Subscriptions (+\$35)	\$ 285.00
-	Vehicle (+\$172)	\$ 6,172.00
-	Consultant/Plumbing (+\$5,000)	\$ 12,000.00
-	Consultant/Electrical (+\$5,000)	\$ 12,000.00

M. Dorman noted that the bottom line Building Inspection Department's 2017 budget request was \$140,038.00 (increase of \$9,204.00).

It was noted that this was the same amount approved by the Board of Selectmen.

Discussion:

There were questions regarding expenditures from the training line. M. Dorman explained training is necessary for him to maintain his certifications. He noted that he had received a scholarship for one of the conferences that had been reimbursed to the budget line. He added that whether or not he is able to attend specific training is dependent on the office workload as

well as the training topics available. M. Dorman added that more training opportunities have become available for staff as well.

There was a question about PACE. PACE is the Plaistow Area Commerce Exchange, which is similar to a Chamber of Commerce. It was noted that the Town is the member of the organization and M. Dorman is the contact for the Town. M. Dorman noted the importance of staying connected to the business community.

M. Dorman explained that the contract inspectors for plumbing/gas, electrical and back up building inspection currently received \$30 per inspection. He added that the plumbing/gas and electrical inspectors are all master-licensed in their discipline. M. Dorman offered that they had not received an increase in pay in about fifteen (15) years and he was seeking a \$10 per inspection increase. He noted that this was a budget “wash item” as the entire inspection fee is collected at the time of permitting. There was discussion over the differences in municipal budgeting versus general business budgeting.

There was a discussion regarding the revenues that this department generates through permitting. It was noted that this department generally takes in enough revenues to fund its own budget. It was also noted that revenues would be discussed in more detail at a later meeting. The Committee suggested knowing which departments are revenue generating would be helpful in the review process. There was discussion about making the revenue discussion part of the first meeting next year. It was also noted that projected revenues figured into the DRA process for setting the town’s tax rate.

★D. Nifakos moved, second by T. Holt, to take the 2017 Building Inspection Department Budget under consideration in the amount of \$140,038.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 98-0-0 U/A.

Fire Department – John McArdle, Fire Chief

J. McArdle presented the Fire Department’s 2017 Budget request noting the following:

Level Funded Budget Lines:

- Dues	\$ 1,755.00
- Events & Activities	\$ 1,650.00
- Building Maintenance	\$ 200.00
- Equipment – Bunker Gear	\$ 6,975.00

Decreased Budget Lines:

- Uniforms (-\$525)	\$ 6,925.00
- Data Processing (-\$2,080)	\$ 5,265.00
- Medical Services (-\$450)	\$ 3,450.00
- Books & Periodicals Professional Publications (-\$100)	\$ 100.00
- Irregular & Varied (Miscellaneous) (-\$2,100)	\$ 940.00
- Mileage & Expenses (-\$250)	\$ 250.00
- Equipment Maintenance (-\$4,046)	\$ 11,365.00

- Fuel (Gasoline/Diesel/Propane) (-\$2,678)	\$ 8,975.00
- Vehicle Maintenance (-\$6,220)	\$ 20,350.00
- Books & Periodicals (Fire Prevention & Inspection) (-\$250)	\$ 3,565.00
- Part-Time Forest Fire (-\$75)	\$ 75.00

Increased Budget Lines:

- Permanent Position - Chief (+\$2,256)	\$ 77,855.00
- Telephones/Communications (+\$60)	\$ 7,011.00
- Supplies (+\$40)	\$ 740.00
- Permanent Positions – FF (+\$10,270)	\$ 152,794.00
- P-T Call Firefighters (+\$43,802)	\$ 217,400.00
- Overtime – Firefighters (+\$22)	\$ 36,640.00
- Training (+\$8,380)	\$ 45,852.00
- Dues – Hazmat (+\$700)	\$ 7,500.00
- Vehicle Repairs (+\$2,500)	\$ 7,500.00
- Equipment (+\$1,600)	\$ 10,125.00
- General Supplies – EMS (Medical) (+\$320)	\$ 7,070.00

J. McArdle noted that the bottom line Fire Department's 2017 budget request was \$642,327.00 (increase of \$51,176.00).

It was noted that this was the same amount approved by the Board of Selectmen.

Discussion:

J. McArdle explained each of the budget lines, what is included in that line and the reason for any variation in the line.

J. McArdle further explained the difficulties in maintaining qualified call firefighters. He noted the level of commitment that was needed, not just to stay in shape and continue with training, but to also make themselves available, particularly on weekends. J. McArdle added that he was seeking an increase in pay for call firefighters. He also noted that he was seeking to change how they are paid to a quarterly system.

There was discussion of what is required of the call firefighters including availability, level of training to include EMT training, and fitness for duty. The Chief noted all that he was trying to do to incentivize the call firefighter program to improve long-term commitments. There was also discussion regarding paying when on training so that they would be covered under worker's compensation insurance.

There was discussion regarding the increase in the number of calls, as well as the change in the types of calls. It was noted that there are far more calls that are medical in nature than fire related.

There was discussion regarding some of the vehicles, which have been maintained in the fleet even after being replaced. It was noted that the former command vehicle is now being used for

those needing to go to training, thus decreasing the mileage reimbursement. It was noted that fire vehicles/equipment cannot be taken to any repair shop for maintenance, but more specialized care is needed. There was discussion about the inspection and replacement process for other equipment, such as fire hoses, as well.

There was a question as to why it was necessary for training to be at night, which then required overtime pay for the fulltime firefighters. The Chief noted that they train as one department and the call firefighters were not available during the day, so training is scheduled at night.

There was additional discussion about the nature of calls received and how that has changed over time. There was also discussion about the contract with Trinity Ambulance service, which has increased availability of the ambulance service without any cost to the Town.

It was questioned if when the Fire Department assists other towns if Plaistow is reimbursed for that. There was discussion about Mutual Aid Pacts with other towns. It was noted that there were monthly meetings of the participating communities. It was also noted that Plaistow does not have the need to call on other communities as much as they are called upon to assist.

There was discussion about how staffing is handled to cover vacations.

There was discussion about seasonal burn permits. It was noted that they are appointed by the State as Fire Wardens to issue burn permits, and since the State does not charge for the permits, they do not charge for burn permits.

There was additional discussion regarding the increase in the number and the change in the type of calls that they receive, which have become more medical, including psychological, in nature. It was noted that is why it is mandated that firefighters become EMTs as well.

Information on the number of calls, particularly medical vs. fire, was requested (Parking Lot Item)

★T. Holt moved, second by L. Lambert, to take the 2017 Fire Department Budget under consideration in the amount of \$642,327.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-0 U/A.

Water Distribution – Water Superintendent (Vacant)

S. Fitzgerald presented the Water Distribution 2017 budget request noting the following:

Level Funded Budget Lines:

-	Engineering	\$ 6,000.00
-	Telephone	\$ 660.00
-	General Supplies	\$ 200.00
-	Waterline Repairs	\$ 4,500.00
-	Equipment Repairs	\$ 500.00
-	Equipment Maintenance	\$ 4,200.00

- Fuel	\$ 1,500.00
- Vehicle Maintenance	\$ 200.00
- Equipment Purchase	\$ 1,100.00

Decreased Budget Lines:

- Payroll - Temporary (-\$70.00)	\$ 13,000.00
- Uniforms (-\$925)	\$ 0.00
- Electric (-\$3,500)	\$ 6,000.00
- Mileage (-\$150)	\$ 100.00

S. Fitzgerald noted that the bottom line Water Distribution's 2017 budget request was \$37,960.00 (decrease of \$4,645.00).

It was noted that this was the same amount approved by the Board of Selectmen.

Discussion:

S. Fitzgerald noted that there are sixteen (16) miles of fire suppression pipeline in Plaistow which is about a \$15M-\$16M asset to the town. He added that there is a study underway to evaluate the viability of converting it to a potable water system, which is of particular importance considering the current drought conditions. He noted that there are two (2) on call laborers in the event of an activation of the fire suppression system. It was also noted that there is currently a vacancy in the Water Superintendent position.

S. Fitzgerald explained each of the budget lines for the Water Department. He noted that this department does have some revenues associated with it as there are commercial properties that are charged for being connected to the fire suppression system. The current rate is \$0.11/sf.

F. Hart questioned if any of the engineering fees associated with the potability study could be paid from impact fees. It was noted that Impact Fees were designated for the extension of the system.

There was discussion about the vacant superintendent position. It was noted that it was previously a volunteer position, without a stipend and was added as a payroll in 2015. The position was formerly held by Fire Chief, John McArdle.

There was discussion as to why the electric line for the pump house was so erratic. It was noted that the line will be reconciled at year any to see if there were any coding issues or if something else was causing the fluctuations in that line.

★D. Nifakos moved, second by L. Lambert, to take the 2017 Water Distribution Budget in the amount of \$37,960.00 under consideration. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-0 U/A.

Emergency Management – William Baldwin, Emergency Management Director

S. Fitzgerald noted that Lt. Baldwin wasn't available this evening and he presented the Emergency Management Department's 2017 budget request noting the following:

Level Funded Budget Lines:

-	Part-Time Positions	\$ 10,000.00
-	Telephone	\$ 3,750.00
-	Equipment Maintenance	\$ 150.00
-	Emergency Supplies	\$ 500.00
-	Mileage/Travel	\$ 50.00

Decreased Budget Lines:

-	Training (-\$500.00)	\$ 500.00
-	Office Supplies (-\$200)	\$ 200.00
-	Postage (-\$200)	\$ 100.00
-	Equipment Purchase (-\$5,000)	\$ 5,000.00

S. Fitzgerald noted that the bottom line Emergency Management Department's 2017 budget request was \$20,250.00 (decrease of \$5,900.00).

It was noted that this was the same amount approved by the Board of Selectmen.

Discussion:

It was noted that adjustments were made to this budget based on historical usage and availability of Homeland Security grants. It was also noted that there is still the intention to develop a CERT (Citizen's Emergency Response Team) for the town.

★D. Nifakos moved, second by T. Holt, to take the 2017 Emergency Management Department's Budget in the amount of \$20,250.00 under consideration. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-0 U/A.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Public Safety Building Committee (PSBC)

D. Heffernan reported that the PSBC had met the previous week and things were progressing. He noted that the September reports were posted to the Town's website to keep the public informed.

S. Fitzgerald added that pictures will be posted as well.

There were no other committee reports

NEW BUSINESS

S. Sullivan offered his resignation. He noted that he had sold his house and would be moving out of town. He suggested that the Committee appoint Bob Hamilton to fill his seat for the remainder of the year.

There was discussion regarding the process for soliciting letters of interest for the now open seat. S. Fitzgerald was asked to consult the RSA and provide information on the appointment process, specifically if there is a required timeline for the vacancy to be posted before it can be filled. (Parking Lot Item). In the meanwhile, the vacancy will be posted on the website and cable.

OLD BUSINESS

Budget Committee Operating Procedures

J. Sherman noted that he had provided a draft Operating Procedures for the Budget Committee in response to F. Hart's questioning at the first meeting. He noted that this was a draft based on past practices and NHRSA Chapter 32. J. Sherman added that he was handing it over the BudCom to amend it as they see fit.

It was noted that there was nothing that spelled out the posting time for vacant positions on the Committee.

F. Hart suggested that there be more direct language taken from Chapter 32.

J. Sherman noted that he didn't want to re-state the RSA and that was why it was referenced.

D. Heffernan suggested attaching a copy of the RSA with the Operating Procedure document.

D. Nifakos offered that it was more effective to be included in the document than it would be as an attachment.

J. Sherman offered that he would make one more update to the draft based on this evening's discussion and then it would be up to the Committee to make any further changes.

F. Hart suggested that there be term limits for the Selectmen Ex-Officio.

J. Sherman noted that wasn't in the purview of the BudCom and it was up to the Board of Selectmen who served as the Ex-Officio.

There was discussion regarding the differences in review procedures between the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee. It was noted that the Budget Committee takes a budget under consideration for further review. There is no vote to approve a budget until the end of the review process. The Board of Selectmen vote to approve a budget at first review, but that approval includes the ability to revisit any previously approved budget at any time, for any reason. It was noted that if there is a difference between what the Budget Committee and Board of Selectmen it is the Budget Committee approved version that goes to the voters.

Parking Lot

Pending Items Resolved:

- Highway Uniform Line information was provided via email and hard copy
- Julie McNamara will be at the October 25, 2016 meeting
- The Memorandum of Understanding with JRM was provided via email and hard copy
- Old Home Day Vendor revenues to the Town was provided via email and hard copy
- Email from S. Fitzgerald with information about Election staff raises was provided via email and hard copy

New Items Added:

- Location on revenue information on Town Website – J. Sherman
- RSA governing member appointments, specifically posting requirements – S. Fitzgerald
- Information regarding Fire Department calls – Medical vs. Fire – S. Fitzgerald

There was no additional business before the Committee and the meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Dee Voss
Recording Secretary