

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
October 28, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 6:50 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Martha Sumner, *Chair*,
Kristin Lewis-Savage, *Vice Chair*, arrived 6:54 p.m.
Tricia Holt
W. David Gerns
Darrell Britton
Dennis Heffernan
Jack Paone
Charles Fowler
Dean Nifakos, *Excused*
John Sherman, *Selectmen Ex-Officio*

Also present: Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Interim Police Chief, Kathleen Jones

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

C. Fowler moved, second by D. Britton, to approve the minutes of the October 07, 2014 meeting. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 8-0-0 U/A.

D. Gerns moved, second by D. Britton, to approve the minutes of the October 14, 2014 meeting. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 6-0-2 (Holt and Paone abstaining).

BUDGET REVIEWS

Building Inspection – P. Michael Dorman, Chief Building Official

M. Dorman explained the Building Inspection Budget proposed line items for the 2015 budget:

K. Lewis Savage arrived at 6:54 p.m.

Level Funded Budget Line Items:

• Permanent Positions	\$ 89,517.00
• Back-Up Inspector	\$ 300.00
• Telephone	\$ 2,040.00
• Data Processing	\$ 975.00
• Supplies	\$ 700.00
• Postage	\$ 500.00
• Gasoline	\$ 2,300.00
• Books & Periodicals	\$ 45.00
• Equipment Purchase	\$ 150.00

- Consultant – Plumbing \$ 7,000.00
- Consultant – Electrical \$ 7,000.00

Increased Budget Line Items

- Training & Conferences (+\$290) \$ 2,500.00
- Dues & Subscriptions (+\$140) \$ 370.00

Decreased Budget Line Items

- Vehicle Maintenance (-\$315) \$ 250.00
- Vehicle Repair (-\$50) \$ 1,000.00

M. Dorman offered that the bottom line budget request for the Building Inspection 2015 budget is \$114,647.00 (increase of \$65).

It was noted in the handout that this amount has been approved by the Board of Selectmen (BOS).

Discussion:

M. Dorman noted that following about his 2015 budget request:

- There will be monies spent out of the Back-Up Inspector line as M. Dorman will be going in for surgery in the near future
- There is an increase in training to provide more staff participation in the New Hampshire Building Officials Support Staff (NHBOSS) association
- There was discussion regarding a Warrant Article for a new Department vehicle
- If a new vehicle is approved the current vehicle could be used by either Building Maintenance or the Recreation Department

There was discussion of acquiring a new vehicle by Warrant Article versus making it a Budget item.

- It was noted that the equipment line ran over due to the purchase of a new computer (one time expense)
- There was an increase in the Dues and Subscriptions due to the need for the inspector to be re-certified

- Although the Plumbing and Electrical Consultant (Inspectors) line may run over this year it wasn't felt necessary to increase those lines for 2015. These lines were noted to be wash item

There was discussion regarding the Department revenue, which was noted to be over \$127,000.00 as of September 30, 2014. M. Dorman noted a number of residential projects which is anticipated to bring in significant revenue in 2015, but no large commercial development on the horizon.

There was a brief discussion regarding improvements to telecommunications shared with Atkinson as well as the repeater equipment that will be installed as part of the Hillcrest (Snow's Brook) development. W. Baldwin noted that good communications is the key to effective emergency management.

K. Lewis Savage moved, second by T. Holt to accept for consideration the Building Inspections Budget in the amount of \$114,647.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-0 U/A.

Recreation – Christina Cruz, Recreation Director and Bill Coye, Plaistow Recreation Commission Chair

C. Cruz explained the Recreation Management Budget proposed line items for the 2015 budget:

Level Funded Budget Line Items:

• Directory Salary	\$ 35,360.00
• Uniforms	\$ 3,200.00
• Telephone	\$ 3,960.00
• Electric @ Fields	\$ 4,935.00
• Director Training	\$ 700.00
• Supplies & Equipment	\$ 3,900.00
• Postage	\$ 200.00
• Grounds Keeping	\$ 5,280.00
• Mileage & Expense Reimbursement	\$ 1,000.00
• Summer Recreation Program	\$ 31,595.00
• Community Trips	\$ 500.00
• Plaistow Pride	\$ 1.00
• Concerts	\$ 8,480.00
• Senior Programs	\$ 4,000.00
• Baseball/Softball Leagues	\$ 14,680.00
• Youth Disbursement	\$ 1,000.00
• Ump Baseball/Softball/BBall	4,000.00

Increased Budget Line Items

• Part-Time (+\$2,000)	\$ 45,208.00
• Equipment Maintenance (+\$12,000)	\$ 14,050.00

- Community Events (+\$1,000) \$ 7,500.00
- Youth Basketball (+\$1,650) \$ 3,650.00

Decreased Budget Line Items

- Overtime (-\$1,153) \$ 2,500.00
- Summer Transportation (-\$2,500) \$ 5,500.00
- Community Transportation (-\$4,000) \$ 2,000.00
- Senior Trips (-\$2,680) \$ 6,000.00
- Senior Transportation (-\$2,500) \$ 6,000.00

C. Cruz offered that the bottom line budget request for the Recreation Inspection 2015 budget is \$215,199 (increase of \$3,817).

It was noted in the handout that this amount has been approved by the Board of Selectmen (BOS).

C. Cruz offered the following in support of her budget request:

- The increase in part-time salaries was to hire an intern to support community events
- The increase in the Equipment Maintenance line was for a barrier at PARC
- The decrease in the Summer Transportation line was because they were spending more time at the PARC facility
- Decreases in other transportation and community (including senior trips) was due to more use of the revolving account which was established for this purpose
- The community events line was being decreased based upon historical spending
- The youth basketball line was being decreased based upon historical spending

Discussion:

There was discussion regarding a number of upgrades at PARC including new parking lot lights; squaring off of the pavement in the parking lot; batting cages; and the requested barrier to be installed to prevent children from running into the parking lot as well as cars driving off into the grass.

K. Lewis Savage noted that like the Building Inspections budget this was a budget that is offset by income.

It was noted that the parking lot lights, which were shopping plaza surplus, were donated by a Plaistow resident. The Town is paying for the installation of the new fixtures. The predicted operating costs for the new lights are reflected in this budget.

D. Heffernan questioned why the parking lot barrier wasn't being proposed as a Warrant Article.

J. Sherman noted that it was a safety issue with the kids running out into the parking lot. The nature of the issue was seen as a maintenance item.

K. Lewis Savage added that it was a well discussed topic of the Recreation Commission and was felt that the safety issue was the most important.

J. Sherman added that the barrier would also help to keep cars from driving on the fields and damaging them.

C. Cruz noted that there were issues with drop off/pick up with the Summer Recreation program and the barrier would be very beneficial there.

D. Britton noted that the Supplies and Equipment line was under spent and questioned if a reduction could be made there.

C. Cruz noted there was a \$1200.00 coding error on processing the payment for a handicap access ramp at Smith Field, which was being corrected and would show in this line.

K. Lewis Savage moved, second by D. Britton to accept for consideration the Recreation Department Budget in the amount of \$215,199.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-0 U/A.

There was a brief discussion on there appears of a discrepancy in the telephone lines in many of the budgets. It was noted that all the telephone lines seemed to jump in 2013. S. Fitzgerald noted that he has asked Greg Colby (finance office) to codify the bills as best as possible to see if it can be determined why there was such a spike in the 2013 costs. He also noted the Town will soon be migrating to a new telephone system, which should be able to offer more detailed reconciliations.

Police & ACO Department – Interim Police Chief, Kathleen Jones

New handouts were distributed to the Committee. It was noted there was a formatting error in the original handout. The individual line items were correct but the bottom line total was not and the new form showed the correct total budget request.

K. Jones explained the Police and ACO Budget proposed line items for the 2015 budget:

Level Funded Budget Line Items:

• Collective Bargaining Agreement Education	\$ 2,500.00
• Dues & Subscriptions	\$ 500.00
• General Supplies	\$ 10,000.00
• K-9 Supplies	\$ 2,000.00
• Jail Maintenance	\$ 1,500.00
• Expense Reimbursement	\$ 1,500.00
• Vehicle Maintenance/Repair	\$ 19,000.00
• ACO Medical Service	\$ 500.00
• ACO Wildlife Control	\$ 150.00
• ACO Kennel Repair & Maintenance	\$ 500.00

Increased Budget Line Items

• Administrative Salaries (+\$7,248)	\$ 354,606.00
• Prosecutor (+\$13,660)	\$ 50,000.00
• Management Information Systems (+\$1,320)	\$ 32,738.00
• Pre-Employment Screening (+\$150)	\$ 2,150.00
• Communications Tower (New Line)	\$ 16,200.00
• Equipment Maintenance/Repair (+\$775)	\$ 23,019.00
• Unanticipated Expenses (+\$250)	\$ 750.00
• Officer Salaries (+\$58,434)	\$ 798,062.00
• Officer Overtime (+\$2,826)	\$ 144,104.00
• Officer Uniforms (+\$4,400)	\$ 29,650.00
• Capital Equipment (+\$13,443)	\$ 76,372.00
• Dispatch Salaries (+\$6,505)	\$ 222,954.00
• Dispatch Overtime (+\$300)	\$ 15,300.00

Decreased Budget Line Items

• Training (-\$2,000)	\$ 2,500.00
• Rentals & Leases (-\$1,788)	\$ 2,856.00
• Office Supplies (-\$500)	\$ 8,000.00
• Postage (-\$400)	\$ 800.00
• Books & Periodicals (-\$250)	\$ 750.00
• Equipment Purchase (-\$215)	\$ 18,900.00
• Part-Time Officers (-\$7,896)	\$ 16,700.00
• Telephone & Communications (-\$1,896)	\$ 16,599.00
• Gasoline (-\$10,000)	\$ 50,000.00
• School Crossing Guard (-\$125)	\$ 16,262.00
• Part-Time Dispatch (-\$123)	\$ 8,432.00
• Dispatch Uniforms (-\$1,000)	\$ 3,200.00

K. Jones offered that the bottom line budget request for the Police & ACO Department 2015 budget is \$1,949,054.00 (increase of \$99,318).

It was noted in the handout that this amount has been approved by the Board of Selectmen (BOS).

K. Jones offered the following in support of her budget request:

- Many of the increases, particularly in personnel-related lines such as salary, educational reimbursement and uniforms, were driven by the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)
- The increase in the Prosecutor line was based on Newton dropping out of the five (5) town agreement and Plaistow's share of the case load

Discussion:

There was discussion about the new cruiser. It was noted that it was purchased outright and then converted to a lease agreement.

There was discussion regarding the Prosecutor. It was noted that one of the towns (Newton) had dropped out of the arrangement to share a prosecutor. The Prosecutor is housed in Plaistow, which gives the Plaistow Police Department greater access than other participating towns, which has been an advantage. J. Sherman suggested that the fact that Plaistow bears the costs of housing the prosecutor should be factored into Plaistow's share of the fee.

D. Britton noted that there was still approximately \$400,000.00 unspent in this budget for this year. He asked if the Department anticipated spending much more by year end.

K. Jones answered there were a number of projects, such as new workstations, which would be completed by year's end.

There was discussion of the impact of the CBA on the 2015 budget. It was noted to be a seven (7) year contract carrying through 2017.

There was discussion on the educational reimbursement and whether or not a commitment was required to qualify for the benefit. It was noted that there was no contractual commitment. It was also noted that there is no minimal grade requirement, only passing, to qualify for reimbursement.

There was discussion about the replacement of police cruisers. K. Lewis Savage requested a copy of the vehicle replacement schedule. M. Sumner requested a copy of the Police Salary Spreadsheet. Both will be emailed to members the next day.

There was additional discussion regarding the Prosecutor. It was noted that previous prosecuting duties were handled by a full time officer. It was noted that the participating towns are Atkinson, Danville, Hampstead and Kingston. There was discussion of the advantages of having the prosecutor located in Plaistow and the increased accessibility. It was reiterated that there was a cost involved with housing the person in Plaistow, which should be considered when calculating how that person is paid. J. Sherman suggested that while Plaistow pays a higher share based upon use other towns should consider what would happen if Plaistow decided to pull out of the arrangement.

K. Jones offered that having an in-house prosecutor is crucial to their mission, which is to have successful prosecutions. She noted that there are eleven (11) regional prosecutors servicing 49 cities and towns. Chief Jones added that having a prosecutor in Plaistow has been a big cost savings.

There was discussion regarding housing the prosecutor in the case of a new safety complex. It was noted that Plaistow may have to take it on the chin for a few year, much like what happened with the Courthouse.

K. Lewis Savage noted that if the Town had to hire a private attorney it would be far more expensive.

K. Lewis Savage moved, second by T. Holt to accept for consideration the Police Department Budget in the amount of \$1,949,054.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-0 U/A.

REVENUES

S. Fitzgerald explained the Revenue spreadsheet and how different lines linked together with the MS4. He noted that revenues were generally trending in a positive direction.

There was a brief discussion on whether or not Hampstead was going to start being dispatched out of Plaistow. It was noted that when the new communications tower was online they may re-visit that possibility, but for the time being they were dispatched from Derry.

S. Fitzgerald noted that looking at the big picture the Town was on track to meet most of the revenue estimates. He added that there was a healthy unexpended fund balance in excess of \$3M. He noted that the departments had gone through their budgets line-by-line and the tough questions were asked. S Fitzgerald noted that it was better to make more conservative estimations of revenues and update as needed. He noted that he would provide historical comparative information in chart and graph form in December.

Committee Reports

D. Heffernan noted that a date has not yet been set for the next Public Safety Complex Building Committee Meeting.

S. Fitzgerald noted an article in the paper about the CIP. He added that Doerr and Whittier would be making a presentation of the cost estimates for a new Police Station real soon.

New Business

Members were reminded of the Budget Committee Training on October 29, 2014, 6:30 at Town Hall.

M. Sumner reminded all of the time change, falling back, over the weekend.

Old Business

There was no old business brought forth at this meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Dee Voss
Recording Secretary