

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**April 14, 2015**

**Call to Order:** 6:48 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Martha Sumner, Chair  
Kristin Lewis Savage, Vice Chair  
Tricia Holt  
David Gerns  
Dennis Heffernan  
Jack Paone  
Charles Fowler  
Dean Nifakos, *excused*  
Sam Cafiso  
Laurie Milette  
John Sherman, *Selectmen Ex-Officio*

Also Present: Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Dennis Heffernan

M. Sumner welcomed newly elected members Sam Cafiso and Laurie Milette.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**

*T. Holt nominated M. Sumner as chair for the 2016 budget year. The nomination was second by J. Paone. M. Sumner respectfully declined the nomination.*

*M. Sumner nominated K. Lewis Savage as chair for the 2016 budget year. The nomination was second by D. Gerns. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-1 (Lewis Savage abstaining).*

*K. Lewis Savage nominated M. Sumner as vice-chair for the 2016 budget year. The nomination was second by T. Holt. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-1 (Sumner abstaining).*

**COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**

The Committee discussed different committees that the members were assigned to represent the Budget Committee.

Public Safety Complex: Dennis Heffernan, Jack Paone, Alternate  
Capital Improvement Program (CIP): David Gerns, Martha Sumner, Charles Fowler, Alternate

Highway Garage Committee: Sam Cafiso, David Gerns

It was noted that there was a Recycling Committee that anyone was welcome to join.

D. Heffernan asked about a Renewable Energy Committee.

J. Sherman noted that the charter had been recently received, but the membership had not yet been decided.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

#### **January 06, 2015 Minutes**

***D. Heffernan moved, second by C. Fowler, to approve the minutes of the January 6, 2015 minutes. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 7-0-3 (Lewis Savage, Cafiso and Milette abstaining).***

#### **January 13, 2015 Minutes**

***T. Holt moved, second by M. Sumner, to approve the minutes of the January 13, 2015 minutes. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 8-0-2 (Cafiso and Milette abstaining).***

### **DISCUSSION OF VOTING RESULTS**

The Committee reviewed the results of the recent Town Meeting voting noting the following:

- The Municipal Budget passed by a vote count of 992-260
- Deliberative Session went smoothly with the Board of Selectmen (BOS) and Budget Committee working together to be in agreement on the budget that was proposed.
- The proposed Safety Complex (new Police Station, access to cemetery, upgrades to Fire Station and other site work) was defeated by a small margin. It was noted that it passed by majority vote, but did not gain the necessary super-majority (2/3) vote. It was suggested that the public didn't understand the full scope of the proposed plan. There was discussion of ideas to reach out to the community to try and pass the plan at next Town Meeting. It was also suggested that the information should have gotten out to the voters earlier as it was a complex project.
- It was noted that many of the larger cost items, such as Highway Department trucks and Fire Department equipment, were passed. This was credited to monies being previously collected in reserve accounts and a well-developed CIP. There was discussion as to whether or not the individual items passed may have played into the defeat of the proposed Public Safety Complex improvements.
- It was noted that the Department of Building Safety replacement truck was defeated. It was thought that the mileage of the truck and/or the need for a truck versus a car may have defeated this item.
- It was noted that engineering funds for the replacement of the Westville Road Bridge were approved. The importance of having a "shovel ready" project to increase the opportunity to obtain grants was discussed.
- It was noted that the monies for the Cable Playback equipment was defeated. It was noted that this was a disappointing result and available options were being explored that would not be contrary to the "no mean no" of a defeated warrant article.
- It was noted that the vote to hire a consultant to work with the Trustees of the Trust Fund was nearly defeated. It was suggested that the vote reflected a lack of desire to give up control of these accounts.

- The rail study was defeated
- A new position of Office Manager for the Fire Department was defeated. There was discussion about the process of creating new positions was discussed. It was noted that while legally the Town Manager can create new positions, the voters have historically been given an opportunity to vote on any new positions. It was also noted that this was not a written policy, but a past practice.
- It was noted that alternative staffing, including temp hires, was discussed at Deliberative Session. It was suggested that whatever hiring practices were used the most important point to the voters was that the process be transparent

There was a discussion about the 2015-2016 meeting schedule. It was suggested that the Committee start earlier in the year to avoid meeting backlogs and year-end requests for information. It was also suggested that starting too early would not allow for accurate year-to-date expenditure figures when considering new request. It was noted that there are some smaller budgets that rarely change year-to-year and could be considered earlier on in the review process.

There was also discussion regarding having the Finance Office, currently staffed by Greg Colby, to be available at meetings. It was noted that there would be a cost, either additional monies paid, or in-house time lost (to offset the time spent at meetings) associated with G. Colby being at meetings.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

K. Lewis Savage requested that all 2014 actual expenditures and revenue final numbers be sent out to the Committee via email.

There was discussion regarding scheduling training for new members. S. Fitzgerald will ask staff to look into an earlier date for the upcoming year. It was noted that free training is no longer available and the Town was again looking into hosting a regional Budget Committee training. If the Town is not able to host other avenues of training will be explored.

There was a discussion of the snow removal budget. It was noted that it ran over due to the harsh winter. It was noted that some of costs are covered by a highway block grant. FEMA reimbursement monies are being sought for additional offsetting of the costs.

The Committee requested a list of the 2014 encumbrances.

There was discussion as to how part time positions that are converted to full time positions translate in the budget process. It was noted that generally the costs for the first year are outlined and voted on and then that full time position costs become part of the operating budget in future years. It was noted that the Town Manager does have authority for personnel decisions, including making part time positions, full time.

There was a discussion regarding the creation of new positions, particularly a Town Planner position. It was noted that in 1987 the Town defeated a vote to create such a position. Since that time there has not been another vote of the Town to create that position, yet the Town now has a position called Town Planner. The Planning Coordinator position had been modified to a Town Planner position by a prior Town Manager. It was noted that the current position required more education and had additional duties and responsibilities. It was noted that it is within the duties and responsibilities of a Town Manager, per RSA, to either create a new position or modify the

duties of an existing position and changing the title. It was added that it has been an internal policy of the Town to put creation of new positions to Town vote.

D. Heffernan congratulated K Lewis Savage on a success “Run for the Savages” event. The annual event raises money for cancer research and treatment. It was noted that this year there were 648 registered participants with 579 crossing the finish line. K Lewis Savage added that the best part of the event was the community and organizations coming together for the cause; there are no vendors, no competition and no awards. All funds are donated to the Jimmy Fund.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Dee Voss  
Recording Secretary