

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
October 6, 2015

Call to Order: 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Martha Sumner, *Chair*
Dennis Heffernan, *Vice Chair*
Tricia Holt
W. David Gerns
Sam Cafiso, *Excused*
Jack Paone, *Excused*
Laurie Milette
Dean Nifakos
John Sherman, *Selectman Ex-Officio*

Also Present: Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Dean Zanello, *Cable Coordinator*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

D. Gerns moved, second by D. Heffernan to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2015 meeting. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 6-0-1(Nifakos abstaining).

BUDGET PRESENTATIONS:

Cable Studio – Presented by Dean Zanello, Cable Coordinator

D. Zanello explained the Cable Budget proposed line items for the 2016 budget:

Level Funded Budget Line Items:

• Permanent Position	\$ 18,000.00
• Operators	\$ 3,633.00
• Consultants/Contracted Services	\$ 4,500.00
• Equipment Repairs	\$ 500.00
Training	\$ 400.00
General Supplies	\$ 500.00
• Mileage	\$ 500.00

Increased Budget Line Items

• Dues & Subscriptions (+\$480)	\$ 1,180.00
• New Equipment (+\$1,500)	\$ 6,000.00

D. Zanello offered that the bottom line budget request for the Cable 2016 budget is \$35,215.00 (increase of \$1,980).

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

Discussion:

D. Zanello explained the issues with the existing equipment as well as the need and features of the new equipment he was seeking. There was discussion about the failed Warrant Article for replacement equipment. It was noted that other possible funding options were explored, but because of the “no means no” aspect of a failed Warrant Article they were all abandoned. It was suggested that a new Warrant Article be proposed with the funding to come from the Unexpended Fund Balance (UFB) account. Since cable franchise fees that are collected are deposited into the General Fund it makes sense that the funding for the equipment should come from the UFB. Action Item: When reviewing Warrant Articles make sure that the cable equipment is noted to be funded from the UFB. It was noted that replacement and new cable equipment was now included in the CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) so that now a capital reserve account could be established if the Town wanted to.

There was discussion regarding Comcast negotiations and services. It was noted that the biggest issue is the lack of other providers of cable services.

D. Heffernan stated that the Town was lucky to have someone like D. Zanello supporting cable programming.

S. Fitzgerald added that D. Zanello has received national recognition for his forwarding thinking technological expertise.

D. Gerns asked what kind of travel was done for cable.

D. Zanello noted that there was the New Hampshire Coordinator’s Conference for Media and other small events. It was noted that all mileage was processed at year end and that is why there is no year-to-date figure for that item.

D. Nifakos moved, second by T. Holt to accept for consideration the Cable Studio proposed 2016 budget in the amount of \$35,213. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 U/A.

Elections & Registration – Robert Harb, Town Moderator and Nancy Jackman, Supervisor of the Checklist

R. Harb and N. Jackman explained the Elections and Registration proposed line items for the 2016 budget:

Level Funded Budget Line Items:

• Election Recount	\$ 500.00
• Repairs & Supplies	\$ 500.00
• Postage	\$ 100.00
• Training/Moderator	\$ 100.00

- Mileage Reimbursement \$ 50.00

Increased Budget Line Items

- Supervisors of the Checklist (+\$3,700) \$ 4,700.00
- Salary/Administration (+\$3,066) \$ 3,696.00

Moderator Salary (+\$1,400) \$ 2,000.00
 Ballot Printing & Checklist (+\$2,000) \$ 9,000.00
 Polling Booths, Set Up (+\$750) \$ 1,000.00

- Meals (+\$770) \$ 1,000.00

Decreased Budget Line Items

- Software Support (-\$1,400) \$ 600.00
- Equipment/Voting Booths (-\$2,800) \$ 100.00

R. Harb offered that the bottom line budget request for the Elections and Registration 2016 budget is \$23,346.00 (increase of \$7,286).

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

Discussion:

N. Jackman explained that most of the requested increases are due to the fact that there are four (4) elections and Deliberative Session in 2016

N. Jackman outlined the staffing required for each election as well as the work sessions required by law. It was noted that there is also a lot of work that has to be done post-election as well such as processing new registrations and research involved in updating voter registrations for those who have passed or moved. It was noted that increases of the budget request reflected the additional elections in 2016.

R. Harb presented an analysis of how he came to the numbers for personnel costs associated with the number of elections for the coming year.

There was discussion about the date for the Presidential Primary, which has not yet been set.

There was discussion regarding the set up and logistics of the polls. For the Presidential elections there will be four (4) check-in lines, not the usual two (2). The lines will be equally broken down alphabetically by number of voters.

There was discussion about the need for a picture identification to be able to vote. It was noted that there is no evidence that there has been any voter fraud in Plaistow.

D. Nifakos noted a discrepancy in the admin line where the hours are described. It noted that 6:30 to 9:30 for five (5) staff members was reported as sixteen (16) hours, which should only be fifteen (15) hours.

D. Gerns moved, second by D. Heffernan to accept for consideration the Elections and Registration proposed 2016 budget in the amount of \$23,346. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 U/A.

Highway Administration – Dan Garlington, Highway Supervisor

D. Garlington explained the Highway Administration Department Budget proposed line items for the 2016 budget:

Level Funded Budget Line Items:

• Cemetery Sexton Stipend	\$ 5,000.00
• Temporary Labor	\$ 19,500.00
• Uniforms	\$ 4,000.00
• Engineering	\$ 12,000.00
• Telephone	\$ 3,600.00
• Data Processing	\$ 1,100.00
• Electric	\$ 5,000.00
• Heating (Propane & Diesel)	\$ 3,000.00
• Building Repairs	\$ 1,500.00
• Training/Conferences	\$ 600.00
• Dues	\$ 100.00
• Office Supplies	\$ 250.00
• Equipment Maintenance	\$ 500.00
• Gas & Oil (Equipment & Vehicles)	\$ 25,000.00

Increased Budget Line Items

• Salaries (+\$5,943)	\$ 171,979.00
• Overtime (+\$9,000)	\$ 45,000.00
• General Supplies (+\$400)	\$ 3,700.00

D. Garlington offered that the bottom line budget request for the Highway Administration Department 2016 budget is \$301,829.00 (increase of \$15,343).

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

Discussion:

D. Garlington noted that the salary increases were due to increased provided for in the Town Employees Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). He noted that for the increase in the overtime line he took a three (3) year average of costs. The small increase in the general supplies line was based on actual costs and known increases.

There was a brief discussion about the fuel-related lines. It was reminded that all fuel lines would be re-evaluated closer to the end of the year when there was more information about predicted 2016 costs.

M. Sumner asked how the new truck was doing.

D. Garlington replied that it was still being fit out for their use.

D. Gerns moved, second by D. Heffernan to accept for consideration the proposed Highway Administration 2016 budget in the amount of \$301,829.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 U/A.

Highways & Streets – Dan Garlington, Highway Supervisor

D. Garlington explained the Highway and Streets Budget proposed line items for the 2016 budget:

Level Funded Budget Line Items:

• General Supplies	\$ 200.00
• Equipment Purchases	\$ 4,500.00
• Crushed Stone	\$ 4,000.00
• Drainage Improvements	\$ 50,000.00
• Pavement Management	\$ 185,000.00
• Rental and Leases	\$ 19,500.00
• Salt and Sand	\$ 70,000.00
• Snow Removal	\$ 150,000.00
• Tree Removal	\$ 6,000.00

Increased Budget Line Items

• Vehicle Maintenance Supplies (+\$500)	\$ 9,000.00
• Vehicle Repairs (+\$100)	\$ 7,000.00
• Street Sweeping (+\$1,000)	\$ 8,000.00
• Culverts and Catch Basins (+\$1,000)	\$ 9,000.00
• Grounds Maintenance (+\$2,000)	\$ 17,000.00

Decreased Budget Line Items

• Traffic Supplies (-\$4,000)	\$ 20,000.00
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D. Garlington offered that the bottom line budget request for the Highways and Streets 2016 budget is \$559,200.00 (increase of \$600).

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

Discussion:

There was discussion about catch basin marking and repairs.

It was noted that some money for traffic supplies was encumbered from last year.

There was discussion about the lease-to-own Kubota. Some attachments were purchased for it.

D. Gerns asked if culverts in certain subdivisions were problematic or if it were town-wide. It was noted that the issues are not particular to a subdivision.

There was discussion about sand and salt, particularly in light of the harsh winter last year. It was noted that the price was up slightly. It was also noted that the issue wasn't usually the price of salt, but since there is no place to store volume of salt, availability can become the issue.

D. Garlington noted that he based many of his calculations on a three-year average of actual costs.

There was discussion regarding the 2001 front end loader that is being replaced. The old one will be kept as a back-up. There was discussion regarding additional vehicles as well. It was noted that the capital reserve account for vehicle replacement has been a valuable function.

D. Garlington talked about four (4) roads that are scheduled to be paved in the next few days in order to maintain RSMS (Road Service Maintenance System) goals.

There was discussion about the use of crack sealer on roads. D. Garlington offered that he was well satisfied with the product that has been used, noting it to be very transitional.

It was also noted that new guard rails had been installed on Westville Road. It was noted that half of Westville Road is one of the streets being repaved. There was a brief discussion regarding the turn lanes at the intersection of Westville Road and Route 125. There was also discussion about coordinating with other towns when connector roads are being paved. D. Garlington noted that he works with the other towns as much as possible to reduce traffic interruptions while still keeping with the Town's plan.

S. Fitzgerald reminded that Committee that Tony Garrow will be coming in for a presentation on significant changes to the RSMS. It was initially proposed that he come for the meeting on October 20, but a number of the members would like to be able to attend the Sandown School withdrawal public hearing on that night. S. Fitzgerald will schedule the RSMS presentation for October 27 (Action Item).

D. Gerns moved, second by D. Nifakos to accept for consideration the proposed Highways and Streets 2016 budget in the amount of \$559,200.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 U/A.

Legal – Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager

S. Fitzgerald explained the Legal Budget proposed line items for the 2016 budget:

Level Funded Budget Line Items:

- Cable Consultant Attorney \$ 10,000.00

Decreased Budget Line Items:

- Legal Expenses (-\$15,000) \$ 25,000.00

S. Fitzgerald offered that the bottom line budget request for the Legal 2016 budget is \$35,000.00 (increase of \$15,000).

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

Discussion:

S. Fitzgerald noted that there had been legal issues in past years, such as different Collective Bargaining Agreements and issues related to the Beede Superfund Site as well as EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) Administrative Orders that were addressed. He added that there are not as many challenges to be faced in the coming year so he was reducing the legal expenses line.

There was discussion regarding cable licensing negotiations. It was noted that since Comcast is the only game in town there wasn't a lot of leverage available. It was noted that the last contract negotiations enabled the Town to relocate the cable studio to Town Hall. Frustration was expressed over the difficulties in dealing with cable negotiations. It was noted that there were efforts being made to get increased bandwidth for the Library, but were turned down.

S. Fitzgerald noted that all towns have to bargain with cable providers. He added that 5% is returned to the Town which offsets some of the local origination programming. It was also suggested that many things are being moved to a web-base and it's difficult to say what will be the status of cable in the next 2, 5, or 10 years.

J. Sherman noted that when negotiating the duration of a contract it's a balance of wanting to lock in the contract to not lose features, but not to extend it so long as to be stuck when technology changes.

The Committee asked S. Fitzgerald to look into what other towns are spending to negotiate cable contracts. (Action Item).

M. Sumner asked if there were any encumbrances.

S. Fitzgerald noted that \$2,000.00 has been encumbered from the legal line to help reduce 2016 needs.

D. Heffernan moved, second by D. Gerns to accept for consideration the proposed Legal 2016 budget in the amount of \$35,000.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 6-0-1 (Nifakos abstaining).

Insurance – Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager

S. Fitzgerald explained the Insurance Budget proposed line items for the 2016 budget:

Level Funded Budget Line Items

- Deductible – Property Liability \$ 3,000.00

Increased Budget Line Items

- Property and Liability Insurance (+\$17,873) \$ 77,873.00

S. Fitzgerald offered that the bottom line budget request for the Insurance 2016 budget is \$80,873.00 (increase of \$17,873).

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

Discussion:

It was noted that expenditures for the 2011 were \$74,000; 2012 were \$79,000; 2013 were \$71,000, while 2014 was \$60,000. The low number was thought to be an anomaly.

S. Fitzgerald noted that additional property had been added to cause an increased value. Such items as the PARC pavilion, new trucks and vehicles were noted. It was noted that there were a few weather-related claims in the year as well. He noted that other carriers are being explored for cost savings.

D. Heffernan moved, second by D. Gerns to accept for consideration the proposed Insurance 2016 budget in the amount of \$80,873.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 U/A.

Conflict of Interest Committee – Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager

S. Fitzgerald explained the Conflict of Interest Committee Budget proposed line items for the 2016 budget:

Level Funded Budget Line Items:

- Training \$ 350.00
- Office Supplies \$ 140.00
- Postage \$ 110.00

S. Fitzgerald offered that the bottom line budget request for the Conflict of Interest Committee 2016 budget is \$600.00 (level-funded).

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

Discussion:

S. Fitzgerald noted that he speaks with a member of this committee often. He added that he has suggested that they bring an attorney in for training.

D. Heffernan moved, second by D. Nifakos to accept for consideration the proposed Conflict of Interest Committee 2016 budget in the amount of \$600. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 U/A.

Street Lights – Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager

S. Fitzgerald explained the Conflict of Street Light Budget proposed line items for the 2016 budget:

Level Funded Budget Line Items:

- Street Lights \$ 97,000.00

S. Fitzgerald offered that the bottom line budget request for the Street Light 2016 budget is \$97,000.00 (level-funded).

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

Discussion:

S. Fitzgerald noted that the Town was buying electricity from a third party provider which has locked in the rate. He added that they were evaluating whether or not to purchase all the street lights and convert them to LED fixtures. It was noted that LED was a lot less costly.

There was discussion about other cost saving measures, such as turning off every other street light, that were attempted in the past.

D. Gerns moved, second by T. Holt to accept for consideration the proposed Street Lights 2016 budget in the amount of \$97,000. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 U/A.

Solid Waste Collection – Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager

S. Fitzgerald explained the Solid Waste Collection Budget proposed line items for the 2016 budget:

Level Funded Budget Line Items:

- Sanitation/Solid Waste Collection \$ 500,000.00
- Hazardous Household Waste \$ 15,000.00

S. Fitzgerald offered that the bottom line budget request for the Solid Waste Collection 2016 budget is \$515,000.00 (level-funded).

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

Discussion:

S. Fitzgerald noted that the current contract expires in 2016, with an option for a two-year renewal. He added that the BOS has asked him to go out to RFP (Request for Proposals). He noted a number of changes, including the two-barrel limit on household trash that have reduced and kept costs down over the past six (6) years. It was noted that there are many factors involved, such as weather. A wet season adds weight to the trash, increasing costs.

There as discussion about how recycling efforts, which have leveled off over the past two (2) years, could be increased. It was noted that some communities fine residents when recyclables are found in the household trash.

D. Nifakos moved, second by D. Gerns to accept for consideration the proposed Solid Waste Collection 2016 budget in the amount of \$525,000. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 U/A.

Solid Waste Clean-Up – Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager

S. Fitzgerald explained the Solid Waste Clean-Up Budget proposed line items for the 2016 budget:

Level Funded Budget Line Items:

- Landfill Overtime \$ 8,000.00
- Engineering \$ 29,000.00
- Grounds Keeping \$ 10,000.00

S. Fitzgerald offered that the bottom line budget request for the Solid Waste Clean-Up 2016 budget is \$47,000.00 (level-funded).

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

Discussion:

S. Fitzgerald noted that the maintenance of the landfill cap is regulated by NHDES (New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services). He noted that ATVs running over put ruts in the cap that collect water.

There was discussion about the possibility of putting solar arrays on the landfill cap to be able to generate and perhaps even sell electricity.

D. Heffernan moved, second by T. Holt to accept for consideration the proposed Solid Waste Clean-Up 2016 budget in the amount of \$47,000. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 U/A.

Patriotic – Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager

S. Fitzgerald explained the Conflict of Patriotic Budget proposed line items for the 2016 budget:

Level Funded Budget Line Items:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| • Annual Commemorations | \$ 800.00 |
| • Patriotic Purposes | \$ 200.00 |

S. Fitzgerald offered that the bottom line budget request for the Street Light 2016 budget is \$1,000.00 (level-funded).

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

Discussion:

It was noted that this budget covered Memorial Day, Veteran's Day and September 11 expenses as well an annual donation to the American Legion.

D. Gerns moved, second by T. Holt to accept for consideration the proposed Patriotic 2016 budget in the amount of \$1,000. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 7-0-0 U/A.

ACTION ITEMS

The Committee reviewed the list of completed action items provided by S. Fitzgerald.

It was noted that the following items were completed:

- The correction was made to the year-to-date column in the Government Building Budget
- A detailed explanation of the Town Clerk's Salary was provided
- Changes to overtime laws were provided
- An updated list of town-owned vehicles was provided
- Old Home Day expenditures were provided

Outstanding Items:

- Updated YTD expenses – will be provided once September has been finalized and reviewed by BOS

- Explanation of the VIOP system costs – still in process will be provided once presented to BOS at October 19 meeting
- BMSI year-to-date expenses report

New Items:

- Remind BOS that funding for the Cable Equipment Warrant Article needs to be noted to come from the UEFB
- The presentation of the RSMS plan to be rescheduled to October 27, 2015
- Survey of other towns regarding what they spend negotiating cable contracts

COMMITTEE REPORTS

D. Gerns reported on the new Renewables Committee which is chartered to explore various alternative energy resources for the community. Solar energy topics were discussed, such as the impact on property values of residential solar panels and whether or not the Town should offer a tax exemption for those who install solar. The new committee also discussed the possibility of the new Safety Complex being a solar building.

S. Fitzgerald explained the make-up of the committee, noting there was room for additional members if there were interested residents.

There was discussion about implementing solar in the schools as well as asking a local installer to come to a Renewables Committee meeting to make a presentation.

D. Heffernan reported that the Public Safety Complex Committee was still discussing their next meeting date.

J. Sherman offered that it was suggested that the PSC Committee should be more driven by public members and input rather than Town Staff.

OLD BUSINESS

J. Sherman updated the Committee on the Sandown School withdrawal situation. He noted that there would be a public hearing on October 13, 2015 at the PAC (Performing Arts Center).

There was a discussion about changing the Budget Committee meeting time to 6:00 on October 13, to allow interested members to attend the Public Hearing. An email survey would be done and members notified.

J. Sherman noted that the BOS would not be meeting on October 12, but will review budgets on October 19. Therefore the BudCom will not be getting those budgets until the meeting time on October 20.

There was a discussion about providing more information on Impact Fees. It was suggested that there be a cable show to educate on this atypical funding source. It was noted that Sandown and Danville were having similar issues with updating their School Impact Fee.

J. Sherman noted there was basic information on Impact Fees in the Town Report.

NEW BUSINESS

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Dee Voss
Recording Secretary