

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**October 20, 2015**

**Call to Order:** 6:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Martha Sumner, *Chair*  
Dennis Heffernan, *Vice Chair*  
Tricia Holt  
David Gerns  
Dean Nifakos  
Sam Cafiso  
Laurie Milette  
Darrell Britton  
John Sherman, *Selectmen Ex-Officio*

Also Present: Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Darrell Britton

M. Sumner noted that it was with regret she accepted the resignation of Jack Paone.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*D. Heffernan moved, second by T. Holt, to approve the minutes of the October 6, 2015 minutes. There was no discussion on the motion. 7-0-2 (Cafiso, Britton abstaining).*

**BUDGET REVIEWS**

**Human Resources/Assessing – Rosemarie Bayek, Deputy Tax Collector**

R. Bayek presented the proposed 2016 Tax Collector's Budget, noting the following:

**Level Funded Budget Items**

- Tax Collector Salary	\$ 28,216.00
- Mortgage Research	\$ 2,500.00
- Data Processing	\$ 2,200.00
- Training	\$ 540.00
- Dues	\$ 40.00
- Office Supplies	\$ 400.00
- Postage	\$ 1,500.00
- Equipment Repairs	\$ 400.00
- Mileage Reimbursement	\$ 300.00

**Increased Budget Items**

- Part Time Position (+\$50)	\$ 7,200.00
- Telephone (+\$40)	\$ 540.00
- Mailing Service (+\$50)	\$ 4,900.00

**Decreased Budget Items**

- Record Registry of Deeds (-\$100)	\$ 500.00
- Research Unknown Deeds (-\$1)	\$ 0.00

R. Bayek noted that the bottom line Tax Collector 2016 budget request was \$49,236.00 (increase of \$39).

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

It was noted that the Department Request column was off by \$1. The line known as “Research Unknown Deeds” is being zeroed out. It was noted that it used to be believed that there needed to be place holders in lines to preserve the ability to spend from those items. It was noted that it had been researched and found not to be true, so many of those lines are being brought to \$0.00 request.

#### Discussion:

It was noted that the changes in the telephone line was due to the switch to VOIP service. It was noted that there would most likely be decreases in all telephone lines in the future once all redundancies and E-911 issues are resolved. Long distance services will be negotiated and a more predictable telephone budget will be achieved.

There was discussion regarding the mailing costs. It was noted that the Town needed to be compliant with NH RSAs with regard to mailing tax bills. While emailing of car registration renewals is allowed, emailing of tax bills is not at this time.

***D. Heffernan moved, second by D. Britton, to take under consideration the Tax Collector Budget in the amount of \$49,236.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-0 U/A.***

#### **Health Department – Dennise Horrocks, Health Officer**

D. Horrocks presented the proposed 2016 Health Department Budget, noting the following:

#### Level Funded Budget Items

- Part Time Position	\$ 500.00
- Training	\$ 400.00
- Dues	\$ 225.00
- General Supplies	\$ 250.00
- Office Supplies	\$ 75.00
- Postage	\$ 150.00
- Mileage	\$ 1,665.00
- Medical Services	\$ 500.00
- Mosquito Control	\$ 40,000.00

#### Increased Budget Items

- Permanent Position (+\$7286)	\$ 42,038.00
- Telephone (+\$166)	\$ 1,416.00
- Water Testing (+\$125)	\$ 525.00

D. Horrocks noted that the bottom line Health Department 2016 budget request was \$87,744.00 (increase of \$7,577).

*It was noted that this was a different amount than was reviewed/approved by the Board of Selectmen.*

Discussion:

There was discussion regarding the increase in hours for the Health Officer to full time. It was noted that Plaistow is a self-inspecting town, which includes all restaurants, daycares and the schools. It was further noted that Plaistow's Health Officer is an active participant in the New Hampshire Health Officers Association (NHHOA) and there are increased activities with mosquito control, investigation of nuisance complaints, water testing and other health-related functions. It was also noted that the extra time would be used for the development of emergency action and recovery plans. It was noted that over the past five (5) years the Health Department had become very busy. It was also noted that D. Horrocks was also more involved with school health programing in helping to develop their emergency plans.

It was noted that the mosquito control budget had not been spent out over the years. It was noted that was because the town fortunately had not had to do any adult larvaciding, but the money needed to be available should that need arise.

There was a brief discussion regarding Plaistow representation on the Timberlane Regional School Board. It was noted that Plaistow has a greater burden with the middle and high schools being located in the town and therefore were given an extra member representative on the School Board. J. Sherman noted that he had responded to a Facebook thread on the topic and would be providing the Board of Selectmen a copy of that thread. He noted that he would be happy to forward the same on to any BudCom member that would like a copy.

***D. Gerns moved, second by T. Holt, to take under consideration the Health Department Budget in the amount of \$87,744.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-0 U/A.***

**Recreation Department – Christina Cruz, Recreation Director and Bill Coye, Recreation Commission Chair**

C. Cruz presented the proposed 2016 Recreation Department Budget, noting the following:

Level Funded Budget Items

- Overtime	\$ 2,500.00
- Uniforms	\$ 3,200.00
- Telephone	\$ 3,960.00
- Director Training	\$ 700.00
- Supplies and Equipment	\$ 3,900.00
- Postage	\$ 200.00
- Grounds keeping	\$ 5,280.00
- Mileage & Expense Reimbursement	\$ 1,000.00
- Summer Recreation Program	\$ 31,595.00
- Summer Transportation	\$ 5,500.00
- Community Trips	\$ 500.00
- Community Transportation	\$ 2,000.00
- Concerts	\$ 8,480.00

- Senior Programs	\$ 4,000.00
- Senior Trips	\$ 6,000.00
- Senior Transportation	\$ 6,000.00
- Community Events	\$ 7,500.00
- Baseball/Softball Leagues	\$ 14,680.00
- Youth Disbursements	\$ 1,000.00
- Ump Baseball/Softball/Basketball	\$ 4,000.00

#### Increased Budget Lines

- Director Salary (+\$1980)	\$ 37,340.00
- Part Time Positions (+\$1,042)	\$ 46,250.00
- Electric @ Fields (+\$355)	\$ 5,290.00
- Youth Basketball (+\$350)	\$ 4,000.00

#### Decreased Budget Lines

- Equipment Maintenance (-\$11,950)	\$ 2,100.00
- Plaistow Pride (-\$1)	\$ 0.00

C. Cruz noted that the bottom line Recreation Department 2016 budget request was \$206,975.00 (decrease \$8,224).

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

#### Discussion:

C. Cruz noted that the school district has scheduled a longer summer vacation for 2016 and she was adding two (2) weeks to the Summer Recreation Program to assist families with daycare expenses.

There was discussion regarding a gate at PARC (Plaistow Area Recreation Complex). It was noted that the gate was to prevent traffic on the playing fields, but still provide maintenance access.

It was noted that Plaistow Pride Day will now be an expense of the Executive Budget.

It was noted that the mileage line had not been spent out. C. Cruz noted that she wasn't good at tracking her mileage, but was trying to develop a better system to do so.

There was discussion regarding the youth basketball league. It was noted that there is limited practice space and that the school teams were given preference. J. Sherman added that the Plaistow First Committee had noted additional recreational facilities as a priority need of the Town.

There was discussion regarding arts and crafts supplies. C. Cruz noted that she was able to get very reasonable pricing by purchasing after season supplies and because of a good relationship with Wal-Mart.

There was a discussion regarding telephone service. It was noted that there are landlines for PARC use and security alarms as well as town hall offices and summer recreation cell phones.

There was discussion regarding supplies. C. Cruz reported that she had department-specific needs like flyers that are sent to Pollard School and printer ink for her office printer.

It was noted that there were some PARC-specific grounds keeping supplies, including pest control, included in this budget.

It was noted that the Recreation Department brings in approximately \$60,000 in revenues. C. Cruz offered to provide the Committee with her accounting of the revenues. (ACTION ITEM)

It was noted that there are increases in the payroll line from the recent Town Hall Employees Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). C. Cruz explained how the line was calculated.

There was a brief discussion of improvements that had been made to PARC, including batting cages, light poles in the parking area and scoreboard. It was noted that many goods and services had been donated for the improvements.

***D. Nifakos moved, second by D. Heffernan, to take under consideration the Recreation Department Budget in the amount of \$206,975.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-0 U/A.***

#### **Library– Cab Vinton, Library Director and Jim Peck, Library Trustees Treasurer**

J. Peck presented the proposed 2016 Library Budget, noting the following:

##### Level Funded Budget Items

- Materials	\$ 35,000.00
- Repairs/Maintenance	\$ 17,000.00
- Online Resources	\$ 8,000.00
- Technical Services	\$ 6,000.00
- Continuing Education	\$ 2,500.00
- Building Insurance	\$ 2,233.00
- Liability	\$ 2,000.00
- Telephone	\$ 1,500.00
- Workers Comp/Unemployment	\$ 1,000.00
- Professional Dues	\$ 750.00
- Postage	\$ 400.00

##### Increased Budget Lines

- Salaries (+\$1,607)	\$ 251,418.00
- Social Security/Medicare (+\$142)	\$ 19,253.00
- Janitor (+\$493)	\$ 21,919.00
- Gas (+\$375)	\$ 13,500.00
- Bookkeeping (+\$206)	\$ 4,326.00
- Retirement (+\$742)	\$ 12,641.00
- Supplies (+\$1,000)	\$ 11,500.00
- Health/Life/Disability (+\$7,000)	\$ 75,000.00
- Landscaping (+\$1,230)	\$ 7,500.00
- Public Activities/Programs (+\$4,000)	\$ 10,000.00

##### Decreased Budget Lines

- |                          |              |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| - Legal Fees (-\$15,000) | \$ 500.00    |
| - Electricity (-\$6,500) | \$ 34,000.00 |

J. Peck noted that the bottom line Library 2016 budget request was \$537,940.00 (decrease \$4,704).

*It was noted that there was a change in the bottom line number that the Board of Selectmen had approved. The difference is because more accurate insurance numbers were received and incorporated into the presentation.*

Discussion:

There was discussion regarding the improvements to services at the Library. It was noted that there had been a marked increase in use and programming attendance with those improved services.

It was noted that Catherine Willis, long time member of the Library Board of Trustees had been nominated and won Trustee of the Year from the New Hampshire Library Trustees Association.

It was noted that there was a large decrease in the legal line. That line had been increased for potential litigation, which fortunately didn't happen. The line has been reduced.

It was noted that the Library was now third-party contracting for electricity savings.

J. Peck explained that much of the increase in the Library's budget is due to personnel/salary increases. If salaries are taken out of the budget the increase is very small. It was noted that the Town is reimbursed for providing a custodian to the Library.

It was noted that much of the other increases were directly related to personnel or programming increases. There was a brief discussion about insurance costs and how it relates to CBAs and changes in employee census groups.

There was discussion regarding landscaping at the Library. It was noted that there was discussion as to whether or not it made sense to have the Highway Department take on the landscaping at the library or to continue with a private contractor. Factors such as additional equipment, staff and/or overtime monies were being analyzed, but no decisions have been made as yet. It was noted that the Town does plow the snow at the Library.

There was discussion regarding the funds that the Library contributes from their own trustee account towards their operational budget. It was noted that under NH RSAs funds must be declared before they can be spent.

J. Sherman noted that the Selectmen enthusiastically supported the Library budget, but because the bottom line they reviewed was different than what was presented to the Committee at this meeting, he would reluctantly be voting no on this budget. He added that he was confident that when the Selectmen reviewed this budget again that they would agree with the changes due to more accurate insurance numbers.

*D. Gerns moved, second by D. Britton, to take under consideration the Library Budget in the amount of \$537,940.00.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 8-1-0 (Sherman dissenting).*

**Police & ACO Departments – Kathleen Jones, Police Chief**

K. Jones presented the proposed 2016 Police Department Budget, noting the following:

**Level Funded Budget Items**

-	Pre-Employment Screening	\$	2,150.00
-	Training	\$	2,500.00
-	K-9 Supplies	\$	2,000.00
-	Office Supplies	\$	8,000.00
-	Jail Maintenance	\$	1,500.00
-	Community Service Supplies (Unanticipated)	\$	750.00
-	Gasoline	\$	42,000.00
-	Vehicle Maintenance/Repair	\$	19,000.00
-	ACO Medical Services	\$	500.00
-	ACO wildlife Control	\$	150.00
-	Kennel Repair & Maintenance	\$	500.00

**Increased Budget Items**

-	Administrative Salaries (+\$85,256)	\$	439,862.00
-	Prosecutor (+\$1,802)	\$	51,802.00
-	Management Information Systems (+\$1,647)	\$	34,385.00
-	Dues & Subscriptions (+\$500)	\$	1,000.00
-	Rentals & Leases (+\$1,080)	\$	3,936.00
-	General Supplies (+\$2,000)	\$	12,000.00
-	Postage (+\$125)	\$	925.00
-	Equipment Maintenance/Repair (+\$2,724)	\$	25,743.00
-	Equipment Purchases (+\$ 500)	\$	19,400.00
-	Part Time Officers (+\$234)	\$	16,934.00
-	Officer Overtime (+\$2,882)	\$	146,986.00
-	Telephone & Communications (+\$4,774)	\$	21,373.00
-	School Crossing Guard (+\$534)	\$	16,786.00
-	Dispatch Salaries (+\$13,787)	\$	236,741.00
-	Part Time Dispatch (+\$3,328)	\$	11,760.00
-	Dispatch Overtime (+\$306)	\$	15,606.00
-	Dispatch Uniforms (+\$1,350)	\$	4,550.00

**Decreased Budget Items**

-	Collective Bargaining Agreement/Education (-\$1,000)	\$	1,500.00
-	Communications Tower (-\$960)	\$	15,240.00
-	Books & Periodicals (-\$250)	\$	500.00
-	Expense Reimbursement (-\$400)	\$	1,100.00
-	Officer Salaries (-\$40,699)	\$	757,363.00
-	Officer Uniforms (-\$1,900)	\$	27,750.00
-	Capital Equipment (-\$198)	\$	76,174.00

K. Jones noted that the bottom line Police Department 2016 budget request was \$2,018,466.00 (increase of \$77,412).

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

Discussion:

It was noted that many of the increases were due to census and CBA terms with the Police Union. Those changes affected salary, insurance, uniform and other personnel related items.

This department, like all other departments, had adjustments to the telephone line due to the new VOIP telephone system installation. They are still sorting out redundancies and trying to determine which remaining land lines can be migrated over.

There was discussion about increase to the prosecutor's line. It was noted that this function is shared by a number of towns. The prosecutor has their office in Plaistow, which offers a great advantage to the Police Department as they are able to get advice and input more easily. Chief Jones noted it to be a good return on the Town's investment.

K. Jones offered an explanation of the way the department's vehicles are rotate in and out of service. She noted which cars are rolled down to other service, such as K-9 use. There was a discussion regarding vehicles that are acquired through asset forfeiture.

There was discussion on the opioid crisis in New Hampshire and how Plaistow is training their officers to cope with the high incidence of overdose. It was noted that there has been as much as triple incidents over the last three (3) years.

***D. Gerns moved, second by D. Heffernan, to take under consideration the Police Department Budget in the amount of \$2,018,466.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-0 U/A.***

**Zoning – Dee Voss, ZBA Administrative Assistant**

D. Voss presented the proposed 2016 Zoning Department Budget, noting the following:

Level Funded Budget Items

- Minute Taker	\$ 1,800.00
- Training	\$ 300.00
- Supplies	\$ 100.00
- Postage	\$ 1,000.00
- Equipment Reimbursement	\$ 0.00

Decreased Budget Items

- Legal (-\$1,000)	\$ 1,000.00
- Notices & Publications (-\$246)	\$ 1,500.00
- Equipment (-\$1)	\$ 0.00
- Books & Periodicals (\$147)	\$ 16.00

D. Voss noted that the bottom line Zoning Department 2016 budget request was \$5,716.00 (Decrease of \$1,394).

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

Discussion:



D. Voss noted that this budget was constructed on a minimum one-case per month basis. It was thought that those months where there are no cases would compensate for months when there is more than one case.

There was no discussion regarding this budget.

***D. Britton moved, second by D. D. Nifakos, to take under consideration the Zoning Department Budget in the amount of \$5,716.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-0 U/A.***

**Executive Department – Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager**

S. Fitzgerald presented the proposed 2016 Executive Department Budget, noting the following:

**Level Funded Budget Items**

- Town Office Salary of Selectmen	\$ 15,000.00
- Training/Conferences	\$ 600.00
- Dues	\$ 1,000.00
- Office Supplies	\$ 5,000.00
- Postage	\$ 4,000.00
- Office Equipment/Maintenance	\$ 5,500.00
- Technical Supplies/Equipment	\$ 6,000.00
- Unanticipated	\$ 2,500.00
- Overtime	\$ 4,000.00
- Employment Expenses	\$ 400.00
- Recycling Committee	\$ 200.00

**Increased Budget Items**

- Telephone (+\$1,490)	\$ 6,000.00
- Data Processing (+\$7,500)	\$ 34,000.00
- Events & Activities (+\$1,000)	\$ 4,000.00
- TM Salary (+\$18,240)	\$ 108,000.00
- TM Mileage & Expense Reimbursement (+\$2,400)	\$ 4,800.00
- Perm-Position-BOS/TM (+\$8,486)	\$ 82,264.00

**Decreased Budget Items**

- Contracted Consulting Services (-\$10,000)	\$ 10,000.00
- Professional Mapping Services (-\$1,000)	\$ 3,500.00
- Labor Relations Consultant (-\$9,500)	\$ 5,000.00
- Rental & Leases (-\$1,000)	\$ 6,500.00
- General Supplies (-\$300)	\$ 1,200.00
- RSA Supplies (-\$250)	\$ 750.00

S. Fitzgerald noted that the bottom line Executive Department 2016 budget request was \$310,214.00 (Increase of \$17,066).

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

### Discussion:

There was discussion on the telephone line. It was noted that some of the changes were due to the new VOIP system. It was also noted that two members of the Board of Selectmen had town-provided cell phones.

It was noted that there was an increase in the Town Manager's salary line as well as the reimbursement of expenses (telephone and mileage) lines. It was noted that these items were negotiated as part of the re-hiring of S. Fitzgerald as Town Manager. It was noted that the candidate's pool was limited and hiring of a good candidate required appropriate compensation. It was also noted that the Town Manager's contract is typically written for a three-year period, with annual reviews and clauses that allow either party to terminate the contract. J. Sherman offered that research had been done regarding salaries for similar-sized towns and Plaistow was found to be competitive. The Committee asked for a copy of that research (ACTION ITEM).

It was noted that New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) has a place where salaries can be voluntarily posted.

It was noted that the reimbursement (telephone and mileage) stipend had been doubled. It was offered that this was also done as part of the new contract negotiations. It was noted that the mileage was done as a flat fee as opposed to making the Town Manager report each and every mileage detail. Some members expressed that these expenses should be borne by the Town Manager as part of the job.

There was additional discussion regarding the town-provided cell phones for two member of the Board of Selectmen (Steve Ranlett and Julian Kiszka). S. Fitzgerald added that they were looking into providing the Selectmen with laptop computers that would allow them to be able to move towards paperless meetings. The Committee requested a list of all town-provided cell phones and who was using them. (ACTION ITEM)

***D. Heffernan moved, second by T. Holt, to take under consideration the Executive Department Budget in the amount of \$310,214.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 7-2-0 (Nifakos and Britton dissenting).***

### **Financial Accounting – Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager**

S. Fitzgerald presented the proposed 2016 Financial Accounting Department Budget, noting the following:

#### Level Funded Budget Items

-	Treasurer's Salary		\$	7,244.00
-	Budget Committee Secretary		\$	1,500.00
-	Mileage	\$	500.00	
-	Budget Committee Expenses		\$	500.00

S. Fitzgerald noted that the bottom line Financial Accounting Department 2016 budget request was \$9,744.00 (Level Funded).

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

Discussion:

There was no discussion on this budget.

***D. Britton moved, second by D. Gerns, to take under consideration the Financial Accounting Department Budget in the amount of \$9,744.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 9-0-0 U/A.***

**Personnel Administration – Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager**

S. Fitzgerald presented the proposed 2016 Personnel Administration Budget, noting the following:

Level Funded Budget Items

- Performance Management	\$ 30,000.00
- Employee Tuition Reimbursement	\$ 10,000.00
- Municipal Worker's Compensation	\$ 82,674.00
- Medical Services	\$ 1,000.00
- Pre-Employment Screening	\$ 1,500.00
- Notices & Publications	\$ 1,000.00
- Employee Relations	\$ 500.00
- Sick Leave Buy Back	\$ 20,000.00

Increased Budget Items

- Work/Health Insurance (+\$45,272)	\$1,041,431.00
- FICA (+\$2,367)	\$ 108,777.00
- Medicare (+\$2,571)	\$ 46,026.00
- New Hampshire Retirement (+\$37,031)	\$ 528,245.00
- Unemployment Compensation (+\$2,112)	\$ 7,171.00
- 125 Caf Plan Pre-Tax (+\$100)	\$ 600.00

S. Fitzgerald noted that the bottom line Personnel Administration 2016 budget request was \$1,878,924.00 (Increase of \$89,453).

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

Discussion:

There was discussion regarding the retirement line. It was noted that a lot of the responsibility for retirement benefits had shifted over recent years from the State to the Town level.

It was noted that increases in insurance and federal tax costs are due to changes in employee census and salary increases. Possible alternatives to the current "Cadillac" insurance plan are being explored.

It was noted that there had not been any payouts from the tuition reimbursement line. S. Fitzgerald noted that there had recently been some younger personnel hires who he was hopeful would take advantage of this benefit.

M. Sumner noted that the Personnel Administration and Police Departments accounted for nearly half the Town's annual budget.

***D. Britton moved, second by D. Heffernan, to take under consideration the Personnel Administration Budget in the amount of \$1,878,924.00. There was no discussion on the motion. The vote was 8-1-0 (Nifakos dissenting).***

### **ACTION ITEMS**

Added to the Action Items List:

- Recreation Revenues Report (C. Cruz)
- Town Manager Salary Comparison for Similar Towns (J. Sherman)
- List of Town-Provided Cell Phones and User (S. Fitzgerald)

There were no updates for outstanding Action Items.

J. Sherman shared some of the Town Manager salaries for other similar-sized towns.

It was noted that Plaistow is consistent with those other towns.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

D. Heffernan noted that the Safety Complex Expansion Committee was focusing on getting the construction costs numbers as close as possible to be able to again put out a Warrant Article.

There was discussion about the OPM schedule, which was noted to be behind. Concern was expressed that the window of opportunity to be able to get more information to the voters had been lost. It was noted that the function of an OPM is to manage the scope of the project and best management practices.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

It was noted that the Water Department Budget had not yet been reviewed. It will be on the agenda for the next meeting. It was added that once that is done all budgets will have been reviewed at least once. All affected budgets will also be reviewed again once utility projections are known.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

M. Sumner noted that the Committee would begin review of Warrant Articles at the November 17, 2015 meeting.

The Committee will also schedule a date to review the Public Safety Expansion Project.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Dee Voss  
Recording Secretary