

**MINUTES
TOWN OF PEMBROKE
BUDGET COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2008**

Members Present: David Freeman-Woolpert, Chair; Mark LePage, Vice Chair; Gerry Fleury; Ray Foss; Charles Connor; Michael Connor; Stacey Sheldon; Bruce Kurinkas; Tom Serafin, School Board Rep.; Fred Kline, Selectmen Rep.

Others: Carol Murray, Interim Town Administrator; David Sheldon, Selectman; Tina Courtemanche, Selectman; David Jodoin

Documents Distributed: Town of Pembroke 2009 Proposed Budget; Department of Revenue Administration, Municipal Services Division, 2008 Tax Rate Calculation

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

David Freeman-Woolpert began by introducing two new members to the Committee; Stacey Sheldon, and Bruce Kurinkas. He reminded all members that budget meetings are public and can be attended by anyone however, other than committee members, speaking is by invitation only and there will be time for citizen's comments at the end of the meeting.

Fred Kline announced that the new Town Administrator, David Jodoin, will start on December 1, 2008. His transition will be supported by Carol Murray on December 1st and Geoff Ruggles on December 2nd. Fred gave a brief overview on some challenges the Selectmen have had in 2008 and what they may face in 2009 including Tri-Town Ambulance services. The tax rate was briefly discussed. Fred opened his presentation of the town budget with a summary and explanation of several increases/decreases that appear in the town's proposed budget. He anticipates that there will be adjustments to the estimated revenue. Fred then began a departmental review. It was indicated that in most cases, the 2008 actual is through 10/31/08. The following items were discussed in more detail:

General Government

Town Administration: Banking services will decrease due to the change from Citizens Bank to TD Banknorth. Health insurance shows a 70.3% decrease from last year's budget.

Town Clerk: The computer software upgrade is a necessary one time upgrade and will revert back to approximately \$3,500 per year for licensing and maintenance service. Ms. Murray gave a brief explanation of the software.

Auditing: Auditing services have increased significantly due to new audit standards. Ms. Murray gave a detailed overview on the contract issues with the auditors. The Committee discussed this item at length as well as the likelihood of the Town needing to meet the GASB standards.

Tax Collecting: Health insurance will increase over last year due to employee status.

Assessing: Utility assessment services show a substantial increase. Ms. Murray will provide a current utility assessment for further review by the committee.

Government Buildings: Heating fuel was discussed at length as well as repair and maintenance for the Perry Eaton building.

Cemeteries: The contracted mowing services have decreased significantly due to a change in vendor.

Liability Insurance: There was a brief discussion regarding liability insurance and the proposed increase for 2009.

Public Safety

Police Department

Dispatch Fees: Fred gave an explanation for the significant increase in dispatch fees. He indicated that this item may decrease due to the possibility of other options for dispatch services that may be available in 2009.

Ambulance – Contracted: The increase in contracted ambulance services was addressed. It was indicated that the 2008 Actual for ambulance service reflects the contracted amount through 12/31/08.

Fire Department

Salaries: There is a reduction in salaries based on the history over the past year. This item is an estimate and could depend on the amount of calls/fires. There was some discussion as to when the members of the fire department are present at the safety center and how the daytime calls are answered. The Fire Department shows an overall decrease for 2009.

Emergency Management

Ms. Murray gave a brief overview on “Equipment” which includes telephones, a telephone upgrade card, and an equipment shed.

Health and Welfare

Direct Assistance: This item is a projected amount and shows a substantial increase due to the rising number of lower income people who will be needing help with the increasing prices of fuel, gasoline, food, prescriptions and rent. Ms. Murray gave a brief explanation.

The next meeting is scheduled for December 4, 2008.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.