

Budget Committee
Minutes of 7 December 2017
FINAL

Roll Call:

Ann Bond
Clint Hanson
David Doherty-School Board Representative
Mark LePage-Chairperson
Gerry Fleury-Vice Chairperson
Brian Seaworth
Marie Chouinard
Mike Connor
Dan Driscoll-School Board Alternative Representative
Peter Gagy
Tina Courtemanche-Selectman Representative
David Sheldon-Selectman Alternative Representative
Karen Yeaton

Call to Order: 630pm

Minutes:

Tabled until the next meeting

Budget Review:

Police

A basic overview of the budget shows that there was an increase in salary due to the salary study and the Board of Selectman approving a \$2/hour increase to level them with surrounding communities. In addition there was a decrease in health insurance making an impact in positive manor on the budget.

Chief Gilman explained there are two non-controllable items in the budget currently. One is the dispatch fees. Currently we go through Merrimack County which is one of a few services available to the town. Although the numbers aren't in yet Chief Gilman is budgeting for a 3-5% increase.

The second factor is the Prosecution Fees. We currently go through Merrimack County for this as well. In the future the town may want to look into hiring a prosecutor dedicated to only Pembroke however this would come with an increase cost.

Brian Seaworth requested to know what the Criminal Investigation line was made of as it wasn't in the budget before. Chief Gilman explained this was a new line created to be able to track better. These are portions of a few lines however includes evidence property, photos, bags and computer software (pawn shops and background)

Clint Hanson requested to know how the Gas/Fuel line estimate was generated. Chief Gilman stated that he based numbers off of last year however he will be having to add additional cruisers as they are fully staffed. In addition there is the unknown of full prices. This is a best guess/estimation.

Marie Chouinard-Why the increase in life insurance. David Jodoin stated it was an increase in rates.

General Government Buildings:

Adjustments were made in this budget closer to the average of the actual process over the past few years.

Mark LePage requested to know why the heating reduction. David Jodoin explained the rates stayed about the same, however the Perry Eaton building switched from Oil to Gas and DPW had a change in their system as well.

Cemeteries:

The budget was about the same however there was an increase in the mowing contract. Karen Yeaton requested to know if this went out to bid and Mr. Jodoin confirmed it did.

Public Works Department:

David Jodoin started this review by stating that the insurance costs may be reduced. The department recently extended an offer for a new mechanic and are waiting to finish paperwork to see what plan he may choose. In addition street signs are up as they have been replacing old signs however many have to be replaced due to vandalism and/or being stolen.

Mike Conner requested to know why the \$2000 increase in storm drainage. James Boisvert stated this is a new contract that includes additional streets (Kline Way).

Mr. Connor also requested to know why the Equipment Rentals were so high compared to what was spent. James Boisvert stated that this is due to manpower and ability to hire outside for additional help. This includes the equipment and the man power.

Mr. Connor had a similar question about Road Maintenance and Improvement Line. James Boisvert stated big things have not happened and the town has been lucky not to need this money.

Capital Outlay: DPW is requesting a sidewalk plow attachment and box plow

The discussion of road repairs was brought up as well. It was consensus of the committee that a plan needs to be generated before the board can review this.

School Update:

A School Board Meeting was held last Monday. At this meeting they agreed to the freezing of discretionary funds however not effecting extracurricular activities. The School Board is also moving forward with an

outside audit. The basis of this is to find out what happened and how to adjust things to ensure this doesn't happen again.

Mark LePage requested to know how long it would take for the audit. Dan Driscoll stated that they are unsure as they just started the process.

Gerry Fleury discussed his concerns with the accuracy of the numbers presented in the question/answer booklets compiled by the Superintendent's Office. The numbers being compared is those looking to be frozen and actual approved budget. In addition he expressed his concerns with receiving \$180,000 in unexpended appropriation to put in Capital Reserves.

Brian Seaworth requested to know if these funds were required to be put in. Gerry Fleury stated this was voted in at the March Meeting therefore if the appropriation were not spent therefore they can be deposited.

Discussion ensued about potentially removing some funding from the Capital Reserve accounts to level the budget. This however would have to be done by the School Board. In addition the discussion of the effect in the reduction of costs at PA versus K-8 ensued. Fears that the young kids will be the ones that suffer was expressed by Gerry Fleury.

Gerry Fleury went on to express he was concerned with the budget being run overly rich as the principals feel they can run the same programs even with the decrease in funds. David Doherty stated in some cases this may be accurate. Dan Driscoll went on to state this is why the audit is being done," maybe someone fell asleep at the switch"

Karen Yeaton requested to know where the additional \$400,000 in funds are coming from as the reductions only add up to a little more than \$200,000. Dan Driscoll stated the School is currently running approximately at \$400,000 surplus revenue.

Other:

Mark LePage requested the board consensus of trying to find a larger location for the school budget review. The Board agreed a bigger facility would be best and Dan Driscoll will look into the PA Auditorium.

Motion to adjourn made by Gerry Fleury, motion seconded by Tina Courtemanche. Motion passed 11-0.