

BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES
TOWN OF PEMBROKE
Saturday February 6, 2016
Public Hearing
** Final **

Members Present: Mark LePage, Chair; Gerry Fleury, Vice Chair; Michael Connor; Brian Seaworth; Marie Chouinard; Clint Hanson; Tina Courtemanche, Selectmen Rep. Patricia Boucher, School Board Rep.; David Doherty, Alt. School Board Rep., Daniel Crean, Karen Yeaton

Members Absent: Sandy Goulet

Mark called the meeting to order at 10:00AM.

Public Hearing

Chairman LePage welcomed those in attendance and explained that the committee was here to discuss the 2016 budget requests. He also introduced the members of the Budget Committee and both the Town and School staff.

Mark explained that he would give a brief overview of the budgets and then ask the Town and School representatives to go over their budgets and warrant articles. He further indicated he would explain the tax impact sheet and then open the hearing for public comment.

Mark mentioned that there are separate packets for both the School and Town which are on the back table.

Mark thanked the Selectmen and School Board for working with the Budget Committee. The Budget Committee looks at both budgets collectively to see what the total impact will be.

Mark commented that as always there are difficult decisions that need to be made and the Board takes all of that into context. Health insurance, collective bargaining agreements and all the expenditures are carefully reviewed.

Mek give a brief overview of the State forms. The forms are broken down in general areas showing the expenditures compared to what was budgeted. For the Town there is a section that is titled special warrant articles. These are the articles that will be on the warrant and voted on. The next section shows the revenues that the Town anticipates receiving. The School budget form is handled the same way.

Mark turned the meeting over to the Town Administrator.

D. Jodoin explained that the 2016 budget that was being presented today represented an increase on the Town portion of the tax rate of three cents per thousand. The budget process was explained and how the budget creation begins in July with the Capital improvements program, all the way through November when the budgets are finalized for the Budget Committee. He explained that this year's budget included a 17.2 percent increase in health insurance. The plans were shopped in 2015 and the Healthtrust still had the best rates. Another item within the budget is the replacement of the North Pembroke road bridge. In order to fund this replacement, funds from the paving line will be used in combination with some cuts to the customary funding levels for Capital Reserve accounts. There are no new employees in this budget and no cuts to services.

D. Jodoin explained the warrant articles and then turned the meeting back over to the Chairman.

Next up was School Board member Pat Boucher to explain the 2016/2017 school budget.

Pat explained that the School budget was formulated with the taxpayer in mind and that overall, it's a three cent decrease on the budget two years ago. At the same time, the budget continues to maintain the core programs throughout the district. It does reflect a cut in personnel, specifically one teaching position. In the spring, it was recommended by one of our members that we have a facilities study done on our buildings and properties. That study showed that the School buildings and grounds needed some updates and in some cases immediate attention. We will join a partnership, if the voters agree, with Honeywell which has implemented two prior projects in the school district. Honeywell compiled an immediate response to the needs which will be addressed in the warrant articles. The budget is \$26,002,018 and within the budget, there are increases that are tied to fixed costs or obligations such as health and retirement costs. In this budget, there are approximately \$74,000 of non-discretionary increases.

Pat went on to discuss the School district warrant articles.

Mark explained that there was one item on the school side of the warrant that the Budget Committee did not recommend and that was the \$100,000 article to add to the Building Capital Reserve. During one of the Budget Committee sessions the committee was informed that the initial use of that money was for electrical repairs at Pembroke Academy. The committee remembered that there were some significant repairs at Pembroke Academy already, and it wasn't clear what these funds would be used for. It was brought to our attention today that this item has been rolled into the Honeywell project and the article is no longer needed.

Mark then discussed the Town side and explained that Selectmen had initially proposed a warrant article for the North Pembroke Road bridge replacement and they subsequently decided to use the paving line of the budget to reduce their overall proposed increase. There were also some reductions made by the Selectmen on the money to be deposited in the Capital Reserve funds.

Mark then reviewed the tax impact sheet with those in attendance.

Mark opened the Public hearing at 10:23 AM and asked the audience if there were any questions. There being none he closed the hearing at 10:26 AM

Mark thanked those in attendance and advised them that the Budget Committee would be meeting after the hearing to review the budgets.