

Municipal Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes

January 2, 2007, 6:30 P.M.

Corner Meeting House

Chairman Ron Mitchell called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. Also present were committee members Norma Patten, Albert Akerstrom, David Morse, Ken Ellis, Ken Knowlton, Rich Fournier, Linda Frawley, Mark Roberts, and Selectmen's Representative Ronald Cormier. Others in attendance were Town Administrator K. Jeanne Beaudin, Receptionist Sharill Conley, and Building Inspector Gary Boisvert came in at 7:00.

Minutes

Chairman Mitchell moved to accept the minutes of 12/19/06 meeting as written. Ken Knowlton seconded, the motion passed.

Library

David Morse presented budget with an overall increase of 21%. The Library Trustees are requesting a salary increase of 6% for the Librarian. She works full-time and has a college degree. Part-time librarian's salaries are increasing about \$700.

David expressed the excitement over the increase of people from 2005 to 2006, stating there was a 31% increase of people coming into the library. The programs being provided are story times and literacy activities both in-house and at three Belmont Daycare Centers. The library holds a monthly book discussion group. In the summer, they provide special programs featuring performers, which draw an average attendance of 60 people.

Ken Knowlton moved budget items 01-4550-101 to 01-4550-999. Albert Akerstrom seconded.

Linda Frawley inquired about the programs offered and David explained that the programs themselves are mostly child oriented. He stated that the story times range from 1-5 years old. David explained also of the very popular summer programs and that Parks & Recreation have also been invited to participate in or sponsor some of the programs.

With no further discussion, Chairman Mitchell called for a vote; the vote was unanimous in favor, the motion passed.

Cemeteries

David Morse presented budget and stated there was a decrease and mentioned there were some issues regarding a retaining wall and a wall that is shared with another property that has branches and vines growing up over it. He also mentioned about having signs made up personalizing the cemeteries as he has seen other cemetery signs around the state and explained how nice they looked.

Ken Knowlton moved budget items 01-4195-999. Mark Roberts seconded.

With no further discussion, Chairman Mitchell called for a vote; the vote was in favor, the motion passed. Norma Patten abstained.

Town Clerk

Town Administrator Jeanne Beaudin explained the Town Clerks office was very busy this past year. By years end they estimate nearly \$1,200,000 being collected for Motor Vehicle Registrations. Many people are registering new cars. Dog revenues are up. Cynthia Pike, Deputy Tax Collector, has completed year one of the annual certification for Town Clerk and Tax Collector. Administrator Beaudin stated that Cynthia plans to attend program again next year.

Norma Patten moved budget items 01-4140-101 to 01-4140-505. Ken Ellis seconded.

Ken Ellis mentioned that the Town of Laconia sends out lists to individuals who have registered their cars for prior years and inquired about Belmont doing the same. Town Administrator Beaudin explained that other communities do offer that service but Belmont does not. She could not say why Belmont does not offer this service and that it has been asked of the Town Clerk in the past to offer it. Town Administrator Beaudin explained that the Town is on the list for implementation of the State's motor vehicle registration program; she did note that other towns are running the program currently. Town Administrator Beaudin stated she would ask the Town Clerk regarding the BMSI program and could it produce letters to be sent out annually. Administrator Beaudin also mentioned the increase of postage and paper.

Ken Knowlton inquired about being able to receive Moose plates in Belmont as opposed to traveling to Concord for them. Town Administrator Beaudin explained with the new State program it would enable Town Clerk to do everything a substation can do.

With no further discussion, Chairman Mitchell called for a vote; the vote was unanimous in favor, the motion passed.

Tax Collection/Financial Administration

Town Administrator Beaudin explained there were no changes in Town Accountant's Office. She stated that direct deposit had been an added bonus this past

year which has made employee's extremely happy and Northway Bank has charged a very minimal fee for this service.

Town Administrator Beaudin explained that tax collection is at approximately 92% leaving approximately 8% outstanding.

David Morse inquired about collection of previous years. Town Administrator Beaudin explained that any outstanding collections that are over 3 years, the Board of Selectmen have taken by Tax Deed, leaving the owner to buy back their property and paying the outstanding monies. One said property went to auction and the Town took back several pieces of vacant land.

Ken Knowlton inquired why there had to be a Town Meeting regarding gift of land being offered to the Town. Town Administrator Beaudin explained that the Board of Selectmen are not allowed to accept real estate as a gift like the Conservation Commission can and that a Town Meeting was necessary to give the Board of Selectmen the authority to accept the parcel of land. She also explained that the particular parcel of land is a gift to the Town and is to be used for municipal purposes only and cannot be sold in the future. Rich Fournier inquired what would happen to the land if the new police station was shot down, and Selectman Cormier explained that it could still be used for other municipal buildings or a baseball field or something of the sort.

Ken Ellis moved budget items 01-4150-101 to 01-4150-999. Norma Patten seconded.

David Morse inquired how much time the Treasurer's position requires on a weekly basis. Town Administrator stated approximately 10 to 15 hours a week. This would entail monitoring reports and balancing records. David Morse inquired if Town Administrator knew what other town's pay their Treasurers and Town Administrator Beaudin did not know.

With no further discussion, Chairman Mitchell called for a vote; the vote was unanimous in favor. The motion passed.

Solid Waste

Town Administrator Beaudin explained that a bid went out for curbside pick-up. They received a minimum of three bids with Bestway Disposal being the successful bidder offering the following proposal: Year one = \$179,000; Year two = \$188,000; and Year three = \$197,000.

Selectman Ron Cormier explained that the Curbside recycling bid was in excess and the Board of Selectmen decided not to go with Curbside recycling but chose the right to go back out to bid in the future. Town Administrator stated that Bestway Disposal now offers the Town recycling on Wednesday evenings from 5-7 p.m. and Saturday mornings from 8 a.m.-12 noon and it is going very well.

Town Administrator Beaudin stated the Household Hazardous Waste request is \$4,316. She also explained line item 01-4325-448 for \$10,000 was to purchase recycling bins with the Town of Belmont printed on them. The Town received a quote for 2,000 bins @ \$5 per bin. She explained the desire would be to distribute them one per household without any charge to encourage recycling. If a household requested more than one bin to separate items there would be a minimal charge for extra bins.

Rich Fournier inquired how the people were bringing their items to Bestway now. Ken Ellis stated people have been bringing in their recycling by bags full because Bestway does not require them to be separated. Selectman Cormier stated that in the future they would like to see curbside recycling and by offering the bins thought it would encourage folks to want it as well. Town Administrator Beaudin also discussed getting grants to help with future bins. Chairman Mitchell stated how other Towns receive a percentage of revenue back from cost of recycling which helps offset cost of recycling.

Ken Ellis moved budget items 01-4323-470 to 01-4323-450. Albert Akerstrom seconded.

With no further discussion, Chairman Mitchell called for a vote; the vote was unanimous in favor. The motion passed.

Building Inspection

Building Inspector Gary Boisvert presented the budget stating a new line item was added for a Part-time Code Enforcement Field Inspector. Code Enforcement Field Inspector, Rick Strocsher, is following up on permits and checking in on complaints. Gary also explained the increase in office expenses doubled due to a new printer that needed to be purchased. He explained that total building permit fees were just over \$42,000.

Chairman Mitchell commented that the office obviously has been very busy this past year. Gary stated that he anticipates it to continue as the Route 3 project grows with more house inspections.

Ken Ellis moved budget items 01-4240-101 to 01-4240-999. Norma Patten seconded.

With no further discussion, Chairman Mitchell called for a vote; the vote was unanimous in favor. The motion passed.

Health Agencies

Town Administrator Beaudin explained that each request were in order as received. Town Administrator also stated that the Board of Selectmen moved to reduce line item 01-4415-339 to zero.

Norma Patten moved budget items 01-4415-330 to 01-4415-342. Ken Ellis seconded.

Rich Fournier inquired why line item 01-4415-339 was reduced to zero. Selectman Ron Cormier explained how the Youth Services Bureau is not used by the Belmont Police Department and that the Town utilizes mostly the Belmont County Juvenile Services. He also stated that there were approximately 8 youths in the past that were assisted by the Youth Services Bureau and none of them were referred by the Belmont Police Department. He further explained that out of a budget of \$90,000, one-third of it was this one agency and the Board of Selectman believed it best not to support them if the Town was not using them. Town Administrator Beaudin further stated that the Board of Selectmen requested a representative from each agency attend a yearly budget forum and all but the Youth Services Bureau attended. She also stated that Police Chief Baiocchetti contacted the Youth Services Bureau and asked them for statistics and received nothing.

Chairman Mitchell stated that he too spoke with Jennifer, a Board member of Youth Services Bureau and she commented she would try to come to the meeting, but he heard nothing back from her.

With no further discussion, Chairman Mitchell called for a vote; the vote was unanimous in favor. The motion passed.

Sewer

Rich Fournier presented budget mentioning the increase on line item 01-4321-220. Rich mentioned that the biggest change is in the Winnepesaukee River Basin Project. Rich explained how their rates are calculated from July 1 to July 1, which doesn't calculate appropriately with our budget year. So Rich explained that he called and calculated an average to fit our budget year. He also discussed line item 01-4321-275 being over expended due to a legal issue with the Jayne's. He stated the Judge sided with the Jayne's and that the Sewer Commission did not wish to appeal.

Ken Ellis moved budget items 01-4321-101 to 01-4321-888. Mark Roberts seconded.

Town Administrator Beaudin stated that the Board of Selectmen had not addressed the changes Rich made to line items 01-4321-401 to 01-4321-404.

Ken Ellis moved budget items 01-4321-101 to 01-4321-888 as requested by the Sewer Commission. Norma Patten seconded.

With no further discussion, Chairman Mitchell called for a vote on line items requested; the vote was unanimous in favor. The motion passed.

Highway Block Grant

Town Administrator Beaudin stated she received a letter indicating that the Town's 2007 payment is \$156,175, which was a slight decrease from 2006 amount.

Chairman Mitchell inquired if monies were threatened to be removed from the Town if the water/drainage project did not get done. Town Administrator Beaudin indicated yes, that was a possibility.

Ken Ellis moved budget item 01-4319-001. Albert Akerstrom seconded.

With no further discussion, Chairman Mitchell called for a vote; the vote was unanimous in favor. The motion passed.

Sunray Shores Water District

Town Administrator Beaudin stated a copy of the Sunray Shores budget form was received and in that document for 2007 request is up \$50. She explained that their request is totally subsidized from revenues. David Morse inquired if they have public hearings. Town Administrator Beaudin stated they follow a process and submit their minutes to the Department of Revenue and post their warrants just as we do.

Ken Knowlton moved to approve Sunray Shores' budget. Ken Ellis seconded.

With no further discussion, Chairman Mitchell called for a vote; the vote was unanimous in favor. The motion passed.

Capital

Ken Ellis moved budget items 01-4902-700 to 01-4902-701. Norma Patten seconded.

David Morse inquired about Town Safety Compliance and didn't understand why this line even exists. Town Administrator stated that in the late 1990's the Department of Labor required that each Town have a Safety Committee in order to inspect Town buildings and equipment. The budget is there to help with unexpected safety issues that need to be cared for immediately without waiting for next year's budget, which then can be fined from the Department of Labor if not completed. Chairman Mitchell explained that if the state department comes in for an inspection and something fails, the Town can be looking at very steep fines if the item or items cannot be fixed immediately. He stated that this line item was there to offset the budget for that particular use.

David Morse moved to amend budget item 01-4902-701 to \$5,000. Rich Fournier seconded.

Rich Fournier stated he thought both David and Chairman Mitchell were right in their assessment of the budget item, but thinks a safety issue can be addressed when needed and that the budget line does not need to be \$15,000 every year. If for some reason a safety issue arises, Rich believed the money could be taken from someplace else. David Morse stated that there isn't anything given to the Budget Committee to show what the money would be spent for until after the fact. Ken Knowlton mentioned when the plan was presented it was accepted with open arms due to the fact that there was a plan and an immediate need to fix safety issues, but not \$15,000 every year.

Norma Patten inquired what was expended. Town Administrator Beaudin stated \$13,500. Norma Patten inquired if the Safety Committee reported to the Town a report every year or just when something needs to be done. Town Administrator stated the Committee meets monthly to discuss expenditures.

Chairman Mitchell called for a vote to amend budget item 01-4902-701 to \$5,000. The vote was in favor, Albert Akerstrom opposed. The motion passed.

Ken Knowlton asked Albert Akerstrom if he was still in charge of surplus purchases. Albert Akerstrom replied yes and stated he would like to see that line item increased.

Albert Akerstrom made a motion to amend budget item 01-4902-700 to \$5,000. There was no second. The motion died.

With no further discussion, Chairman Mitchell called for a vote on the line item as proposed \$1,000; the vote was in favor, Albert Akerstrom opposed. The motion passed.

Town Administrator Beaudin discussed line item 01-4903-302 as to whether or not it would be safe to place a metal roof as opposed to a shingled roof on the Corner Meeting House due to the pitch of it. Ken Knowlton inquired if a metal roof can be laid over shingles already there and Chairman Mitchell explained that it depends on how many layers of shingles are already on a roof. He explained that it is not recommended if more than 3 layers are already on a roof and that they would have to be removed first before applying a new roof of any kind.

Ken Knowlton moved budget items 01-4903-001, 01-4903-302, and 01-4903-910. Ken Ellis seconded.

Chairman Mitchell explained that the dormers at The Mill needed to be replaced. Norma Patten inquired whether or not it had gone out to bid. Town Administrator Beaudin stated it had not but it will. She also mentioned that an estimate did come in which helped in determining the requested amount.

With no further discussion, Chairman Mitchell called for a vote; the vote was unanimous in favor. The motion passed.

Ken moved budget items 01-4909-022 and 01-4909-501. Norma Patten seconded.

Rich Fournier inquired what environmental contingency was used for. Town Administrator Beaudin stated it was for testing the ground water and monitoring wells as required by the State of New Hampshire. Selectman Ron Cormier stated that the Board of Selectman reduced budget item 01-4909-022 from \$30,000 to \$20,000 stating that the annual testing cost is \$7,500, but also needed emergency funds in case there was ever a chemical spill, etc.

With no further discussion, Chairman Mitchell called for a vote; the favor was unanimous on Selectmen's request. The motion passed.

Linda Frawley inquired why there were no impact fees for 2007. Selectman Ron Cormier explained that the Planning Board must propose the ordinance at Town Meeting and set the rate and if they choose not to act then there are no impact fees.

Ken Ellis moved budget items 01-4915-001, 01-4915-008, 01-4915-009, 01-4915-011, 01-4915-040 and 01-4915-050. Norma Patten seconded.

Chairman Mitchell presented information regarding BRATT. He explained that Phase One will be put out to bid this coming spring, running from the Laconia town line to Route 3. He then explained that Phase 2 would take the trail from Route 3 to Jefferson Road. Chairman Mitchell stated a letter from the State indicated an approval for a grant in the amount of \$437,382 and the Town would be responsible for 20%, which is \$87,476, which is why \$20,000 annually is being requested so as to not have to pay the total amount all at once. Construction is planned for 2011.

David Morse inquired what the tax rate impact will be from the large capital items. Town Administrator Beaudin stated that based on the proposed budget an overall estimated impact of 2.2% including the Ladder/Pumper truck and bond for police station.

David Morse inquired if the \$50,000 accrued liability expense was being staggered over a couple of years and what happens to the money if someone retires before their 20 years or is fired. Town Administrator informed that in the past we had two individuals retire in one year and those monies were taken from the budget line and the line was over expended. Selectman Cormier stated that Town Administrator Beaudin used weekly wage, vacation eligibility, and actual expense to Town for FICA, W.C., Medicare, and put this information into this line. David Morse inquired that once this budget item reaches its \$115,000 plateau, will it be updated annually in order to maintain that amount. Selectman Cormier stated that the overall budget item was conservative and fiscally responsible and if there are loss benefits then the monies would stay there for future retirees.

Rich Fournier inquired why we have line item 01-4915-011. Selectman Ron Cormier stated that the Board of Selectmen would amend to remove this budget item if the Town vote passes for the bond. If it fails then the Board of Selectmen would like to continue with capital reserve to fund the building.

David Morse inquired which items would be separate warrant articles. Town Administrator Beaudin explained that all capital reserve are separate warrant articles.

Ken Knowlton moved budget items 01-4915-320, 01-4915-501, and 01-4915-601. Ken Ellis seconded.

Ken Knowlton inquired from Selectman Cormier why line item 01-4915-320 was reduced to zero. Selectman Cormier stated that the Board of Selectman decided there were so many competing priorities that one more did not need to be considered.

Linda Frawley commented that going late into the CIP with the master plans on pages 58 and 66 suggested that a Heritage Resource Capital Reserve principally would be used as a matching fund grant that has been written and is being written by commission members that are unpaid staff. We would risk even losing the small grants with a zero on the budget line. The Budget Committee gave us only \$1,000 and we spent \$50 for NHPA fees. That was it's principal request. David Morse inquired what is Heritage Resource. Linda Frawley stated that because of Route 140 and Route 106 project, an Architectural Historian came in and showed us where we should focus our priorities. We had that handed to us and we are in a better understanding. Heritage Commission asked Linda to submit to prioritize the Belmont village. In terms of USDA as one of the funding partners and if you can get into this grant cycle you can also pick up 1% home improvement funds for the people. Chairman Mitchell stated that she would need some money to get into the grant program. Linda Frawley stated yes. She also stated that she understands there are some competing priorities and would consider amending the amount. The grants are not just for buildings but also for sites.

Norma Patten moved to amend budget item 01-4915-320 to \$5,000. David Morse seconded.

Chairman Mitchell called for a vote to amend; the vote was unanimous in favor. The motion passed as amended.

David Morse commented on the nice plan assessing was doing on their quarterly Measure and List project. Town Administrator Beaudin explained that the process was moving along until the contractor came to her in August and pointed out that the data condition factors and depreciation schedules needed significant changes. We would have continued with the study but we also contracted in 2006 a statistical update and the contractor was not comfortable with the inconsistencies. The initial project was \$24,080 each year for four years. The 2009 sales analysis proposal was \$48,000. With the 2005 and 2006 work completed was \$48,260. Because of the work that did not get finished we're actually budgeting \$83,850 to finish the project.

Rich Fournier inquired when the next state recertification is. Town Administrator stated that they still plan to finish this year's recertification in 2007. They will probably receive a letter stating that we did not meet 90-110% and require what our plan is. We will then explain our intent to complete the study by April 1, 2007. Worse case scenario will be tax appeals. Values from the study will be reflected in the fall bill of 2007. She explained that Certification is required every 5 years.

David Morse inquired why the fire department needed 8 workstations and commented on the fact that they received computers from police department just last year. Selectman Cormier explained that all Town departments are on a 5-year cycle for computer replacement. Town Administrator Beaudin explained the necessity of each workstation and where they were located indicating the labor cost for each was \$1,592.

Selectman Cormier also stated that the concern was not so much about the workstations as it was about the server level. He plans to have someone take a look at the server level to see if they are operating at a comparable technology level.

David Morse inquired drainage project for Pleasant Valley. Selectman Cormier stated that the Board of Selectmen has not yet made a final decision regarding project.

Chairman Mitchell called for a vote; the vote was unanimous in favor. The motion passed.

Selectman Cormier mentioned he received a draft report from the consultant working on the fire study. They are recommending purchase of the ladder/pumper truck. Selectman Cormier did not confirm, but guessed that the Board of Selectman will make recommendation of purchase as well.

Chairman Mitchell reminded those whose terms end this year and that they will need to fill out proper paper work if they desired to continue on the Budget Committee. Those whose terms end 2007 are as follows: Ronald Mitchell, Albert Akerstrom, Kenneth Knowlton, Kenneth Ellis, and two vacancies.

Next Meeting Date

The committee will meet on Tuesday, January 9, 2006 at 6:30 p.m. at Corner Meeting House.

Adjournment

Ken Ellis moved to adjourn; Norma Patten seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Approved:

Chairman Ronald Mitchell

Gary Flack

Ronald Cormier, Selectman

Richard Fournier

Kenneth Knowlton

Ken Ellis

Norma Patten

Albert Akerstrom

Cherie Willoughby

Linda Frawley

David Morse

Mark Roberts

Submitted by:
Sharill Conley

Date:_____