

Municipal Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes

December 18, 2007, 6:30 P.M.

Corner Meeting House

Chairman Ron Mitchell called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. Also present were committee members Albert Akerstrom, Ken Knowlton, Linda Frawley, Mark Roberts, David Morse, Ken Ellis and Selectmen's Representative Ronald Cormier. Others in attendance were Town Administrator K. Jeanne Beaudin, Receptionist Sharill Conley, Town Planner Candace Daigle, Fire Chief James Davis, Deputy Fire Chief Sean McCarty, Building Inspector Steve Dalton, Eric with the Winnisquam Echo and Public Works Director Jim Fortin (8:20).

Minutes

Chairman Ron Mitchell moved to accept the minutes of November 27, 2007 meeting as written. Ken Knowlton made the motion, David Morse seconded and the motion passed.

Town Administrator Jeanne Beaudin introduced Glenda Hill, a resident of Belmont, who is interested in joining the Budget Committee. Chairman Ron Mitchell addressed her and Ken Knowlton moved to accept Glenda Hill as a member of the Budget Committee. Albert Akerstrom seconded. Glenda Hill was then sworn in by Chairman Ron Mitchell.

Chairman Mitchell read letter of resignation from Rich Fournier. Linda Frawley moved to accept letter with a note of thanks to Rich Fournier. Ken Knowlton seconded.

Building Inspection

Town Administrator introduced newly hired Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer/Health Officer, Steve Dalton.

David Morse moved budget line items 01-4240-101 to 01-4240-999. Albert Akerstrom seconded.

Steve asked for an increase to line 01-4240-715 for new tires. Chairman Mitchell asked Town Administrator regarding old cruisers and using tires from them. He asked if there was a surplus of tires anywhere and Town Administrator stated there was not. Building Inspector's car is going through 3rd winter with the same tires.

David Morse moved to adjust budget line item 01-4240-715 from \$250 to \$500. Ken Knowlton seconded.

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

Building Inspector explained the need for a new budget line for clothing asking for \$1,000. Steve explained that he would like to wear safety clothing (i.e. a hard hat, steel toe shoes, & weather clothing during rain & snow). He explained that \$1,000 was being asked for but wasn't sure what amount should be granted. He explained he would like for himself and the Code Enforcement Field Inspector to be able to present themselves in a more professional way.

Town Administrator mentioned that hard hat items could come from safety budget. The Town no longer purchases safety clothing items as a whole but that each item is budgeted through their respective departments. Selectman Ron Cormier mentioned the Board of Selectmen has not addressed this issue of a clothing line item for the Building Inspector's budget.

Ken Ellis moved for new line item to begin at \$500. Mark Roberts seconded. Chairman Mitchell called for a vote; the vote was unanimous in favor, the motion passed.

Glenda Hill asked what Professional services are. Town Administrator explained that there was a vacancy in the Building Inspector's office this past year and the Town contracted with a professional Inspector and paid from the Professional services budget line.

Linda Frawley asked about dues and fees. Steve explained that as a change is made for different codes that he and the Code Inspector will need to be certified in order to inspect the new codes and would have to obtain certifications in order to make those inspections. Steve further explained that he doesn't go through the fire department's membership. Chairman Mitchell asked if the Town was up to date with State compliances. Steve explained Town is still working with 2003 compliances on most everything. Candace stated that we are in the process of adopting codes and plan to bring them up to date for 2008.

David Morse asked why the office expense line increased to \$1700. Town Administrator explained that additional items were needed to help get that office more organized and not knowing what a new Building Inspector would need thought it best to up the budget line for any unforeseen needs. David asked if the office supplies were shared throughout the office. Town Administrator explained that each department has their own budget line for supplies and that only the copy paper was shared but still charged off a percentage through Accountant for each department.

Town Administrator explained line item 01-4240-710 had increased due to the cost of fuel. Linda Frawley asked if Code Enforcement Officer is still part time and Town Administrator explained he works 15 hours per week and has done a great job.

Ken Knowlton asked when the last time was a fee schedule was updated. Town Planner Candace answered that one was done in 2006. Town Administrator explained rates were established in 2006 and that Steve would continue to check into the fee changes as the Town grows. Then they may be brought to Board of Selectmen to be approved and adopted.

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

Solid Waste Disposal

Town Administrator explained that we have a 3 year contract with Bestway Disposal for curbside pick-up. There was a 5% increase in 2007. Town Administrator stated that the Town has reduced its annual tonnage by 6,200 tons and it could have been reduced more if November & December were considered in that amount. She believes that next year we'll be able to reduce tonnage even further. The cost per ton for 2008 is \$42.55 as set by the Concord Regional Solid Waste Cooperative.

Town Administrator told Committee that the Town is recycling 80 tons of co-mingled goods through the Bestway facility with no cost to the community. The Town is no longer providing any staff or service there to direct residents. The Library and Town Hall are recycling and Jim Vargus picks up recycle bins every week to bring to Bestway.

Town Administrator is a member of the Concord Cooperative Joint Board and there is much discussion of the possibility of a single stream recycling. Dave Morse asked if it would cost more for single stream recycling. Town Administrator explained trash pick-up and recycle pick up could be done at the same time using trucks with dual compartments. The difference would be that the Town would cut down on the trash going to the wheelabrator facility. Linda Frawley then asked how many years has it been since we've been charged; and Town Administrator stated 3 years.

Ken Knowlton moved budget line items 01-4323-470 to 01-4325-450. Ken Ellis seconded.

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

Personnel Administration

Ken Knowlton moved budget line items 01-4155-100 seconded by Ken Ellis.

Linda Frawley asked selectmen to explain if the Town had requested other proposals for health insurance for budget committee. Town Administrator explained that bids went out to Primex for Harvard program AFSCME council 93. After comparing information received, the Town has decided to renew with LGC and signed a contract. Primex proposed January to June with a possible increase in July of 9.24%. LGC rates are 8.9% which includes both dental & life insurance.

David Morse asked about the 25% increase on police retirement. Town Administrator is aware of the increase and explained it is reflective of the rate of the retirements in 2007 and based on prior year's rate from July to December. Rates are good until July 2009, at full percentage of the retirement portion. Rates did not increase 29%. Town Administrator stated that rates are stable until July 1, 2009. There is a working group at LGC looking at retirement rates and the whole makeup of the NH system.

Linda Frawley inquired what the increase was in the health insurance premiums. Town Administrator stated that they are currently at an in-pass with the Union. Any change in co-pay cannot be done at this point until a new contract can be determined. Linda Frawley stated Laconia and Gilford are utilizing their full compensation considering health care. Community of Meredith considered increasing of health care costs because cost of living was reduced to 1% or maybe 2%. Selectman Ron Cormier commented that without a contract we can only make a proposal and then they can argue it. We'll see where this year's turns out. Linda Frawley then inquired if the Town was paying 100% for benefits provided. Town Administrator stated we do not provide 100% to all employees depending upon their package. 100% was paid out for a single plan through Blue choice in 2007. 90% was paid out for a family and two person policy.

A question was asked to whom line 01-4155-100 is paid to. Town Administrator explained that individuals who do not take the health insurance plan are benefited from this line.

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

Ken Knowlton moved budget line items 01-4155-310 to 01-4155-324 and seconded by Ken Ellis.

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

Emergency Management

Ken Ellis moved budget line items 01-4290-999 and Mark Roberts seconded.

David Morse inquired about what was spent from this account. Fire Chief James Davis explained that a special laptop computer equipped with hazmat material, GPS and many other programs and kept in truck. Laptop is also hooked up to VPN. Selectman Ron Cormier mentioned that the Fire Chief did bring this item request to Board of Selectmen for approval. Fire Chief explained the laptop can use topographical maps of Belmont to let us know if any dangerous substances are flowing into the wrong areas and if we need to stop it.

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

Fire Department Changes

Town Administrator requested that 01-4220-210 be increased by \$500 and 01-4220-710 be increased by \$1,500.

Ken Knowlton moved budget line item 01-4220-210 seconded by David Morse. Fire Chief explained the reason for increase was due to all the taxes and surcharges that came up using the new laptop with wireless on the truck.

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

Ken Knowlton moved budget item 01-4220-710 seconded by David Morse. Town Administrator explained they were not able to get a yearly contract for unleaded fuel. The Town is to pay a delivery charge on top of the actual fuel itself. Until such time we can have the tanks retrofitted so that a tanker can get in there. At this time application has been made to the State to register our existing tanks; additional costs will be incurred in 2008 to retrofit the fill apparatus on the tanks.

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

Town Administrator also mentioned a copy of a memo from the Fire Chief regarding a new Field Inspector's position was in accordance with LGC study. There is also a request to increase Detail Rate to \$30 per hour.

Cemeteries

Ken Knowlton moved budget line item 01-4195-999 and seconded by Ken Ellis.

David Morse gave an update on the cemeteries. David also mentioned there had been significant clean up through many of the cemeteries. This past year they were able to use High School students to help for community service in order to make up a snow day. The budget monies will be used for mowing, trimming trees, putting up signs and posts and helping restore headstones.

Glenda Hill inquired how many cemeteries are owned by the Town. David Morse stated that the Town owns about 10-12 but would like to see the Town formally adopt the rest. There are a total of 32 cemeteries in Belmont. South Road Cemetery is the only one with available lots.

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

Capital

Ken Knowlton moved budget line item 01-4902-700 to 01-4902-701; Dave Morse seconded.

Town Administrator explained that budget line item 01-4902-701 was lowered at the request of the Budget Committee in 2007. This year the committee has rewritten the Joint Loss Manual and will be ready for Board of Selectmen's approval the end of January. A town wide safety management is overseen by the committee. As it is very difficult to find something common that would fit the whole Town as a group. Town Administrator stated that it has been a relatively quiet year and the Inspections report is not available at this time. Town Administrator stated she is not aware of any significant purchases but, as always, something can come up.

Glenda Hill asked if budget line included fire department. training. Fire Chief answered no.

Ken Ellis moved to reduce budget line 01-4902-701 to \$3,000 seconded by Albert Akerstrom.

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

With no further discussion Chairman Mitchell called for a vote on budget line item 01-4920-700; the vote was unanimous in favor, the motion passed.

Selectman Ron Cormier explained budget line 01-4903-301 was there to upgrade furniture for Corner Meeting House upstairs and downstairs. Pricing provided through W.B. Mason and it would make the meetings more professional. Linda Frawley questioned whether it was really necessary. Selectman stated he really believed that we should start promoting a more professional image for growing boards and businesses.

With no further discussion Chairman Mitchell called for a vote; the vote was opposed, the motion did not pass.

Ken Knowlton moved budget line item 01-4909-022 seconded by David Morse. An additional \$3,800 was used from this line item to purchase 55 gal. waste oil drums containment units for the Public Works in case of a spill.

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

Ken Knowlton moved budget line item 01-4909-502 seconded by David Morse.

Town Administrator explained the Town will be filing for a \$500,000 grant through CBGC and bonding \$1,000,000 for road and drainage project for Pleasant Valley. David Morse asked about the fees being taken from the users. Town Administrator discussed that the Town did not anticipate anything would come from user's fees but through taxes. Selectman Ron Cormier stated again that Pleasant Valley is not a mobile home park but is actually a community where individuals own their own property and land and the Town is responsible for the roads.

David Morse questioned the amounts given by Underwood Engineers. And questioned what Mobilization percentage costs were. Mark Roberts explained that a percentage for mobilization depends on the companies and that most of the time the companies will make a little higher so that they can pay the people that travel and need hotel, use of trucks, equipment and materials up front. David Morse asked if \$600,000 had to do with drainage costs and Selectman Ron Cormier and Town Administrator said yes it did.

Town Administrator stated that Underwood Engineers wrote a preliminary opinion in order for us to have information to apply for the feasibility grant. David asked why not wait another year and Town Administrator and Selectman Ron Cormier explained that we've waited several years and that this past year there were at least 15 breaks in the waterlines and that it was time to move forward. He also inquired what the tax increase would be. Town Administrator explained that taxes would go up \$1 if the project were not bonded. The increase annually as a result of the bond; the first year about 30 cents as the bond would be for 20 years or even less if bond goes for 30 years. Linda Frawley asked if we needed to be committed with Underwood Engineers or could we go out to bid with anyone. Town Administrator stated that we did not have to be committed to one firm and that we would go out to bid for the project.

After further discussion Chairman Mitchell called for a vote; the vote was in favor 7-2. Ken Knowlton and David Morse opposed. The motion passed.

Ken Ellis moved budget item 01-4915-001 seconded by Mark Roberts.

David Morse inquired if this was the 2nd year of funding for the retirement account and Town Administrator explained that it was and that there are a fair number of employees who are eligible for retirement at this point.

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

Ken Ellis moved budget line item 01-4915-004 seconded by Mark Roberts. Candace Daigle explained that a bid would go out in the spring for Concord Street sidewalk and drainage. This would be considered one project. Next project will be Church Street and then depending on the State of NH's scheduling to link Rt. 106 to Rt. 140 intersection in 2009. This would be a repavement project for the Town of Belmont.

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

Ken Ellis moved budget line item 01-4915-008 seconded by Mark Roberts. David Morse spoke on behalf of the cemetery trustees explaining that $\frac{3}{4}$ of damage found was to fallen or missing headstones. He stated the cemeteries were a mess and it was despairing to see headstones being ignored. He explained that he hoped to get some of the cemeteries cleaned up with this year's budget and to help stop the vandalism. Chairman Mitchell mentioned that Brian Loanes has some kids who can help with community service through his program to help possibly clean up cemeteries.

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

Ken Ellis moved budget line items 01-4915-011 to 01-4915-201 seconded by Mark Roberts.

Chairman Mitchell explained phase 2 for BRATT stated that they set aside \$20,000 for a couple of years. Next year funds will be available for that part of the trail from Rte 3 to Jefferson. Phase 3 there wasn't any funding done this year through the State. On odd years we apply for grant and the State didn't have any money. He then updated on phase 1 explaining the easements are to be done this coming spring and going out to bid in February & March. Chairman Mitchell stated that phase 1 would cost approx. \$337,380 and phase 2 would be close to \$437,380. Grants are available for this and cost we have to come up with would be \$80,000 for phase 2. David Morse questioned the fencing issue and Chairman Mitchell stated that they would be able to place them at different heights where needed.

Town Administrator Beaudin mentioned a memo was given to the Board of Selectmen identifying next year's road and drainage projects. A recommendation

to set aside funds for Old State Road in the off chance it should be brought forward in the next couple of months. Ladd Hill is another road in need of drainage repair and needs to be done. Concord Street is another road to have drainage work done in concordance with the sidewalk project.

Town Administrator also mentioned State of NH has stated that Old State Road was draining silt into the water and we could be hit with fines if not fixed appropriately. However, we are hoping that with the Rte. 3 project complete that the problem will be eliminated.

David Morse stated his concerns of the sizeable amount because of the recent revaluation of assessments and the tax rate and the impact it would have on the community. Selectman Ron Cormier understands the concerns but stated that because everything has been put off for years it is now coming back at us. Linda Frawley commented about the Board of Selectmen prioritizing the projects and Town Administrator stated that they did.

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

Ken Ellis moved budget line items 01-4915-205 to 014915-320 seconded by Mark Roberts.

Linda Frawley offered information on the Heritage Commission stating resources for the Province Road Meeting House LCHIP grant is \$10,000 and with the support of the community that the Province Road Meeting House project is moving along. An architect heritage focused on section 6 of the Village allocating \$5,000 and that would be matched by the NH Preservation Alliance grant.

Chairman Mitchell addressed Public Works Director Jim Fortin regarding Union Road asking if it were to be reground and repaved and Jim explained that it would be from Fox Hill Road to Down's Farm in order to make grade changes. Ken Knowlton remarked that DOT seems to do well with shimming the roads and is this something Town of Belmont can do instead of regrounding and repaving. Jim Fortin mentioned that if you want the roads to last longer than a year than you have to do it right the first time, which many of the roads in Belmont were not.

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

Ken Ellis moved budget line item 01-4915-601 seconded by Ken Knowlton.

Town Administrator recommended a change to budget line 01-4915-601 from \$68,000 to \$65,000 as the Town is no longer interested in purchasing a new Okidata printer.

Ken Ellis moved to amend budget line item 01-4915-601 to \$65,000 seconded by David Morse.

David Morse recommended going to a 5 year plan instead of a 4 or 3 year plan for technology updates and Town Administrator stated they are at the 5 year plan.

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

Sewer

Ken Knowlton moved budget line items 01-4321-101 to 01-4321-888 seconded by Ken Ellis.

Town Administrator mentioned there was a possibility of acquiring a line extension but has not been definitive as to whether it would happen or not. She also mentioned that the budget was established by the Sewer Commission and we don't have any control over it without communication with them first.

Glenda Hill inquired why there were administration fees and Town Administrator explained they were used to pay for the facility located in Franklin where all our waste drains to through the Winnepesaukee River Basin project.

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

Next Meeting Date

The Budget Committee will meet Thursday, January 3, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. at the Corner Meeting House.

Town Administrator mentioned public hearing can be set for February 5, 2008 and a 2nd public hearing meeting for February 12, 2008 if needed.

Adjournment

Chairman Mitchell moved to adjourn seconded by Selectman Ron Cormier. The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Approved:

Chairman Ronald Mitchell

Ronald Cormier, Selectman

Kenneth Knowlton

Linda Frawley

David Morse

Glenda Hill

Gary Flack

Ken Ellis

Norma Patten

Albert Akerstrom

Mark Roberts

Submitted by: Sharill Conley

Date: _____