

Town of Newington, NH
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 7th, 2020 Town Hall

Present: Chair Ted Connors, Selectman Mike Marconi, Selectman Ken Latchaw, Police Commission Chair, Brenda Blonigen, Police Commissioner, Jack Hoyt, Police Commissioner, Bill Wright, Board of Fire Engineers Chair John Klanchesser, Fire Engineer, Jim Fabrizio, Fire Engineer, Ann Hyland Hebert, Police Chief Mike Bilodeau, Fire Chief EJ Hoyt, Budget Committee Member, Emily Savinelli, Budget Committee Member, Brandon Arsenault and Martha Roy, Town Administrator.

T. Connors called the meeting to order at 5:00pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

T. Connors gave an overview of the budget concerns. The Board of Selectmen are concerned about decreased revenues, including tax revenues, for the town. The Board is looking at all the State and Federal revenues. In March 2020, the Board asked all departments to be cautious about their budget spending. In May 2020, the Board asked all departments to reduce their budgets by 15% through delays of projects or cuts. T. Connors explained that he felt that the Town has not seen "the other shoe drop yet".

Police Commission-Budget Discussion-Delays/Cuts:

B. Blonigen asked what the role of the Budget Committee had in the process of reducing the budget by 15%.

K. Latchaw explained that the Board of Selectmen wants to include the Budget Committee in the process, however NH RSA 32:10 explains that once the budget is passed by the town, then the Board of Selectmen is responsible for the spending of the budget including adjusting the budget when the Town faces possible financial uncertainty.

Police Chief Mike Bilodeau referred to his chart that he had previously given to the Selectmen. M. Bilodeau pointed out that the May 2020 memo sent to the departments by the Board of Selectmen asked for a 15% reduction in the department's budgets. \$267,056 represents a 15% of the Police Department budget. The memo had three options listed. Red, yellow and green options for the budget depending on how bad the lack of revenue for the town ended up.

The green option would be a \$35,814 cut of the budget. This cut would include cutting insurance, fuel costs, tires and testing.

The yellow option would be a \$51,264 cut of the budget. This option would include all the green option cuts plus reducing the prosecutor budget and physical fitness.

The red option would be a \$74,714 cut of the budget. This option would include the green option cuts, the yellow option cuts, plus cutting the cruiser, insurance.

M. Bilodeau does not recommend this option because it would put the department behind in the future and it would cause additional wear and tear on the old cruisers.

M. Bilodeau requested that his "life/safety" items in his budget be allowed to be ordered including the evidence lockers and the Livescan connection. K. Latchaw thought that the Livescan would fall under life/safety items.

T. Connors thanked the Police and Fire departments for all their extra work during this difficult time.

J. Hoyt asked if the Board of Selectmen had met with the Planning Board about changing the zone at the mall. T. Connors said that there was a meeting on Thursday about the Mixed-Use study report.

J. Hoyt explained that the Sewer Department is being affected by the businesses closing.

B. Arsenualt explained that the federal funding tax revenue that is earmarked for December is paying for June taxes and thinks that the "big hit" will come in December. B. Arsenault thought that 15% was a good start.

Fire Engineers-Budget Discussion-Delays/Cuts:

Ann Hebert explained that the Fire Engineers had asked for a copy of the town wide budget yesterday and had not received it yet. When would the budget be ready? Can the Fire Engineers get it tomorrow? K. Latchaw explained that M. Roy had been very busy and could get it done the day after tomorrow.

Fire Chief Hoyt passed out a sheet with possible areas to cut. \$287,514 represents 15% of the Fire Department budget. \$79,192 in salaries has been saved due to vacancies in the department. The fire department budget for the red, yellow and green options were discussed.

The green option would be a \$95,329 cut of the budget. This cut would include the \$79,192 from the salary line plus cutting details, office equipment, Vehicle fuel, public education, sick pay buyout, longevity and ambulance billing fees.

The yellow option would be a \$98,329 cut of the budget. This option would include the salary line cut, all the green option cuts plus reducing uniforms, plan review and the engineers operating fund.

The red option would be a \$109,829 cut of the budget. This option would include the salary line cut, the green option cuts, the yellow option cuts, plus cutting the training, professional training, vehicle maintenance and equipment purchases.

T. Connors thanked the Fire Department for their budget cuts. M. Marconi explained that the Board of Selectmen are asking all departments to cut 15% from their budgets. A. Hebert asked if it was all departments. T. Connors said yes, all departments.

Adjournment: M. Marconi moved to adjourn at 6:14pm. K. Latchaw seconded the motion with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Martha S. Roy
Town Administrator