

**Newington Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
December 7, 2011 Town Hall 7:00pm**

Chr. Lamson called the meeting to order at 7:04pm.

Present: Chairman John Lamson, Vice Chair Gail Klanchesser, Representing the Selectmen Jack O'Reilly, Representing the School Board Dave Mueller, Members Mary Crossley and Sandra Sweeney.

Absent: *Darin Sabine and Liz Taccetta and Gail Pare.* Also in attendance were Planning Board Chairman Denis Hebert and Planner Tom Morgan. Representing the Conservation Commission was Jane Hislop with Chris Bellmare and Tom Rossi speaking for the Recreation Committee. AA Beatrice Marconi also attended the meeting.

In honor of the lives lost 70 years ago today at Pearl Harbor, Chairman Lamson called for a moment of silence.

Approval of February 6th, 2011 Public Hearing Minutes: *VC G. K. moved to accept. J.O. seconded. Motion passed 6-0.*

Approval of September 21st, 2011 Mid Year Review: *VC G. K. moved to accept. D.M. seconded. Motion passed 6-0.* Before the vote took place, VC G.K. asked if the water bill issue at the Fire Station had been resolved. J.O. replied by stating that the City of Portsmouth has notified the town that a check for over \$2,000 will be forthcoming due to refundable costs placed on the town of needed transmitter per Portsmouth records.

Planning Board Budget Request for 2012: *Requested \$ 161,892-Amended to \$ 161,247 - VC G.K. moved to recommend the amended amount of \$ 161,247. Seconded (with Amendment) by S.S. Motion passed 6-0.* Before the vote took place, Chr. of the Planning Board Denis Hebert (with Planner Tom Morgan present) explained to the Budget Committee that there were personnel lines in their budget that fall under the jurisdiction of the Board of Selectmen and although the bottom line reflected one amount, it did not represent the true budget under the control of the Planning Board. J.O. explained that the Planner's salary line included the 3.25% C.O.L.A. for all FT employees plus the Planner's Step schedule was adjusted upward one step. C.O.A.S.T. reduced their request for next year by 3%, therefore Planning's bottom line will adjust downward to \$161,247. The legal line along with the engineering line were discussed with Mr. Hebert informing BudCom that these lines are generally billed out to the petitioner and their check deposited in the General Fund.

Recreation Committee Budget Request for 2012: *Requested \$ 47,850 – VC G. Klanchesser moved to recommend \$ 47,850. Seconded by J.O. Motion passed 6-0.* Before the vote took place, Chris Bellmare and Tom Rossi of the Rec Committee and presented the budget. The Summer Program was increased due to the budget cut for 2011 which resulted in an overall budget deficit. In anticipation of higher participation and the probable need for a YMCA staff increase, the request for 2012 for this line increased. Mr. Bellmare stated that approx. \$10,000 is returned to the general fund from the family contribution along with movie ticket income. They ask that they get the support of requesting \$10,000 be added to the existing cap res. They have plans to resurface the tennis court and both basketball courts. Playground inspection is due on the school equipment this year. Swings will be installed in S Newington in 2012. The Budcom congratulated Rec on the success of Sept Fest this year with special kudos on the rock wall, fireworks and music of the Piscataqua River Brass. Due to the 2011 budget shortfall, the holiday light party will not be held.

Conservation Commission Budget Request for 2012: *Requested \$ 15,251 – VC G. Klanchesser moved to recommend \$15,251. Seconded by D.M. Motion passed 6-0.* Before the vote took place, Jane Hislop representing the Conservation Commission presented their budget. She informed the committee that the Town Forest line had been increased in case the dumping area discovered needs financing for cleaning as it may be a hazardous waste site. They are going to the PDA to discuss the issue. The legal line covered a portion of the Wetlands case with the PDA and other legal needs. Beautification was for the plantings around town and the placed pots. They require someone to weed and water the plantings and it was suggested that Great Bay School's Landscaping program be contacted.

Historic District Commission Budget Request for 2012: *Requested \$ 22,350-Amended to \$ 22,150. VC G. Klanchesser moved to recommend the amended amount of \$ 22,150. Seconded (with Amendment) by S. S. Motion passed 6-0.* Before the vote took place, HDC member John Lamson spoke of the self funding surveying and digging project taking place on Goat Island – which is a reimbursable grant in 3 phases. We are in phase I. The special projects line is for the cannon area veteran's memorial which is being expanded to include around 26 more names. Two large granite rocks will hold the plaques. VC G. Klanchesser, in analyzing the usage history of the operations expense line suggested that with the bottom line increasing so much that \$200 be cut from operations bringing the new total to \$ 22,150.

Stipends: Selectman's Rep Jack O'Reilly explained to the budget committee that regarding stipend positions, the Selectmen postponed voting to approve this increase until consulting with the Budget Committee. Chr. Lamson added that personally he felt it was warranted. VC G. Klanchesser stated that the Warrant Article's intent a few years ago was to increase stipends when a C.O.L.A. was approved. Jack will report back to Selectmen.

Health Plan Proposal for 2012: S. R. J. O'Reilly explained that a committee was formed to look into rising Health Plan costs and that by converting to a comp 2500 plan from the current comp100 and BC3T plans, based on today's numbers, the town could be looking at a \$112,000 savings on premiums. VC G. Klanchesser asked if the employees were losing benefits with this conversion and if employees were part of the savings discussions. J.O. stated that employees overall were satisfied with the change and made up the committee – the town would need to vote to establish a fund to supplement the deductible with employee contribution for single person plans contributing the first \$250 and 2per/families contributing the first \$500 annually. Any use of the fund would have to be replenished the following year by vote of the town. Plus, in order for this savings to be recognized, the vote to establish and expendable trust fund must pass. New hires hired after May 1 2012 (if passed) will be contributing 10% of the premium cost. The budget committee did not voice any opposition to this change.

VC G. Klanchesser moved to adjourn at 8:14pm. Seconded by J. O'Reilly and after hearing no objections, Chairman Lamson closed the meeting with a 6-0 vote.

Respectfully Submitted

Beatrice Marconi
Administrative Assistant