

Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 2, 2014 Town Hall 7pm

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

Present: Chairman John Lamson, VC Gail Klanchesser, Sandra Sweeney, Leila Richardson, Brandon Arsenault, (Gail Pare and Michael Marconi absent); School Board Rep., Deirdre Link, and Selectmen's Rep., Cosmas Iocovozzi. Also present were the new SAU 50 Superintendent of Schools, Salvatore Petralia; SAU 50 Business Administrator, Jim Katkin; School Principal Peter Latchaw; Library Trustee Chair Melissa Prefontaine; Gup Know, Treasurer of Library Trustees; Police Chief, Jon Tretter; Fire Chief, Andy Head and Town Administrator, Martha Roy

Library Addition Project Update: G Knox updated the Committee about the Library Addition project. He explained that the construction is substantially complete. There are a few punch list items left. The furniture has not all arrived at this time. Currently the Library project has assets of \$107,185. liabilities of \$64,705. and \$42,880. of remaining funds for construction and furnishings. This is separate from the operating budget. The \$30,000 authorized by the Budget Committee for expenditure has not been necessary to spend as of this point. Other points of conversation revolved around a donation, increases in energy costs for 2015 and programming.

School Board FY 13/14 Review: J Katkin introduced the new Superintendent and reported that the end of the year report showed that there was an unassigned fund balance of just over \$23,000. He also discussed the after school program, costs for Newington Elementary School and Portsmouth Junior High/High School, food service program loss, Tony Rahn Climbing Wall completion and Elementary School reroofing. He stated that the per pupil cost is \$31,000.

J Lamson inquired about SAU cost and was notified that it is approximately 8% of total budget.

J. Katkin notified the Committee that there will be an expected deficit of up to \$120,000 due to an additional special education program increase. He explained that the School was in its third year of a collective bargaining agreement with the teachers who receive a 2% increase in pay this year. His concerns focused on an expected 6-8% increase in health insurance as well as the NHRS forecasts for employer contribution increases.

Town Third Quarter 2014 Budget Review: C. Iocovozzi explained that the Town has sent out a memo to all of the departments G. Klanchesser asked about Woodbury Ave. transfer of ownership and issues that would have to be addressed prior to and after transfer. Discussion ensued about upgrades to the road, lighting, plowing, catch basin upgrades etc. C. Iocovozzi discussed concern about health insurance costs in the future.

Police Chief Tretter stated that the department is in need of replacement cruisers for the last two Ford Crown Victorias. New vehicle video cameras and their hard drives are required.

J. Tretter discussed the buy out program for town employees. He stated that this concept of paying a specific amount to employees in exchange for them acquiring other health insurance could save the town funds.

Fire Chief Head told the Committee that the new ambulance approved at Town meeting will be arriving at the end of the year. Engine 3 is in need of an overhaul of its pump, which is expected to cost between 10-15 thousand dollars. Other items discussed were the department computer server, alarm system, window repair, new walk-in entry to building, concrete apron expansion in front of fire truck entry and minimal increased staffing. The Chief stated that they have hired more call firefighters to cover for absences and are researching costs of physicals for EMT/firefighters.

Chief Head updated the Committee on the new New Hampshire Retirement System employer costs for Fire and Police effective July 1, 2015. He also reviewed what the EMT/Firefighters are paying for health and dental insurance currently.

Minutes Review: May 20, 2014 minutes were reviewed. **G. Klanchesser moved to approve the minutes of May 20, 2014 minutes. Sandra Sweeney seconded this. The vote was 6-0-1 in favor (with D. Link abstaining as she was not present).**

Elections: C. Iocovozzi moved to nominate J. Lamson as Chair and G. Klanchesser as Vice-Chair of the Budget Committee. S. Sweeney seconded this with all in favor.

2014/2015 Budget Review Schedule: The Committee consensus regarding the review schedule was as follows:
December 3, 10, 17 and January 14, 21 and 28 , 2015 with a Public Hearing date of February 14, 2015.

M. Roy was requested to send out the meeting dates to all Budget Committee members.

Adjournment: G. Klanchesser moved to adjourn at 8:40pm, seconded by C. Iocovozzi with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha S. Roy
Town Administrator