

Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
Saturday, February 2, 2008
1:00 Town Hall

Chr. Larry Wahl called the meeting to order at 1:20pm

Present: Chr. Wahl, Darin Sabine, Gail Klanchesser, Gail Pare, Tom Benson, Selectmen's Rep Jack O'Reilly, Russ Cooke and John Lamson; Chairman of the Selectmen Jan Stuart and Selectman Cosmas Iocovozzi, and Administrative Assistant Beatrice Marconi.

GK moved to tentatively accept the Town's General Government 2008 proposed budget of \$ 2,247,079. Gail Pare seconded.

JO (Selectmen's Rep) referred to his cover sheet that indicated an increase of \$ 400,364 over last year, but once you remove the grant and the building maintenance, it ends up being 4.8% up.

Major changes include E/O wages up \$12,200 due to the C.O.L.A., merit, extra pay day and increase in hours for the Deputy/Floater. Computer expense is up \$ 5,960 due to implementing computer security policies and offering valuations on line. Assessing will increase by \$32,000 for commercial and deep water industrial review. Elections increased by \$5,500 as we have 4 elections this year vs. a single one last year. \$12,000 is being requested for the Transfer Station for bin covers and small shed. Pest control will now include tick treatment for an added \$ 15,338. And finally, our worker's compensation decreased by \$34,840 due to the consolidation of services to the Local Government Center.

Chr. Wahl stated that over \$311,000 is dedicated to building maintenance over last year.

JL was concerned about the condition of our roads and asked if the Selectmen sufficiently budgeted enough to address that problem. Selectman Iocovozzi spoke of the seriousness of keeping the water away from them as previously they were cow paths. Stability is the issue. \$190,000 was budgeted last year and again requested this year. Gundalow and Brickyard were addressed in 2007 and the job halted for completion in 2008 and depending on the out come of the water tests, would determine just how much more money would be consumed with that project. Captain's Landing will be addressed in 2008. Chr Wahl said that once the buildings are well on their way, perhaps those monies could be dedicated to roadways as future budget come before us. Gail Klanchesser spoke of how helpful a 5 year road maintenance plan would be and how it could be beneficial in seeing what has been done as well as what will be planned – excepting, of coarse unanticipated situations.

A review of the legal budget brought questions about the Hydro Tidal Project being studied and proposed as well as the Town Forest. JO stated we had 4 on going issues involved in the courts.

GK asked about air conditioning at Old Town Hall. JO explained that a discussion about this very issue occurred at the Selectmen's level, however in the end, the Board felt they should prioritize and this ended up on the short list.

The Meeting House has \$300,000 set aside for work

The Fire Station has a generator scheduled, fixing asbestos tiling, and driveway sagging issues.

The Old Stone school has nothing new planned - only weather tightening the bldg.

JL asked about the Cemetery Lot buying process and asked if perpetual care was automatically included. Selectman Iocovozzi answered by stating Perpetual Care was not included, in the past it was an extra in the sale of a lot but the process has changed over the years as the Town is responsible for the care of the total cemetery and maintains it now equally. Perhaps a meeting with the Trustees, Selectmen and Cemetery Committee is necessary to talk about the process.

Chr. Wahl called for the vote of tentatively approving a general town government budget request of \$ 2,247,079. Motion passed.

He went on to say that based on an increase of \$ 505,805, he projected about a 63 cent increase on the tax rate on the basis of today's valuation amounts. JO added that he could see an increase of approx 11 cents once the surplus is applied but with the updates scheduled on the commercial and deep water industrial properties, he thought we might be just about at last year's level.

DS asked about impact fees. GK spoke of what the Planning Board requires as they analyze effect from each project proposed. Many aspects are considered whether it be noise, sidewalk requirements, air pollution potential, etc.

The Warrant Articles were again reviewed preparing for the recommendation vote at the Public Hearing.

JO moved to adjourn at 3:45. GP seconded. Motion passed.

Respectively Submitted

Beatrice Marconi
Administrative Assistant
Newington

PUBLIC HEARING IS THIS SATURDAY – FEBRUARY 9TH
THE SCHOOL STARTS AT 1:00PM
FOLLOWED BY THE TOWN BUDGET
TOWN HALL AUDITORIUM

(I WILL MAKE SURE YOU HAVE THE PADDED CHAIRS FOR THAT MEETING)