

NEWINGTON BUDGET COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

August 28, 2002

Present: *Budget Committee Members (BUDCOM)*
Alfred Smith (Chairman), Dick Spinney, Leslie Brock, Laura Coleman, Kay Akerley, Wil Gilbert, Terri Spinney, Dennis Acton, Gail Pare.

Board of Selectmen (BOS)
Chairman, Cosmas Iocovozzi
Jan Stuart

Fire Chief, Roy Greenleaf, Board of Fire Engineer Rep., Bill White, Susan Newcomer

Budget Committee Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the following items:

- 1) To elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman for FY 2003.
- 2) To hear the mid-year report from the Board of Selectmen pertaining to expenditure of funds.
- 3) To hear the mid-year report from the Newington School District pertaining to expenditure of funds.
- 4) To set the Schedule for FY 2003 departmental budget reviews.

Elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman for FY 2003

Terri Spinney made a motion to nominate current Chair Al Smith as the Budget Committee Chairman for FY 2003; second by D. Spinney. Vote was taken with none opposed.

Terri Spinney made a motion to nominate Laura Coleman as the Budget Committee Vice-Chairman for FY 2003; second by D. Spinney. Vote was taken with none opposed.

Mid-year report from the Newington School District pertaining to expenditure of funds.

Chairman Smith noted that the balance on hand was \$104,875.45 and asked the School Board Chairman if there was anything big on the horizon. School Board Chairman T. Spinney noted that septic and air conditioning work were the most pressing issues. Discussion followed regarding the AC, mold problems, and health concerns within the building. Spinney noted that the air quality in the school is tested regularly.

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Wil Gilbert asked T. Spinney to explain the flow of money from the State, at which time Spinney explained the money that comes back to the Town from education funding.

Chairman Smith requested confirmation that the sewer should be the only large item coming from the school. T. Spinney said that the school would also be coming in with plans for a more consistent computer plan.

L. Coleman asked Spinney what had been done in the kitchen, to which Spinney replied that the range hood had been replaced.

Chairman Smith asked if there were any other questions on the end of the year budget report for the school district, noting that special education seemed to be the same as before. There were no other questions.

Chairman Smith thanked the School Board, SAU50 and Jim Katkin for their outstanding management and administration of the school funds.

Mid-year report from the Board of Selectmen pertaining to expenditure of funds

Chairman Smith asked the BOS what cut-off time the BUDCOM was looking at for the mid-year review. It was noted that the expenditures were current through the payables posting the previous week. It was also noted that payroll expenditures were not reflected to date, but that figures were available if needed.

Smith asked if the plumbing and electrical inspectors had submitted any payment vouchers to date. Newcomer replied that they had not.

Chairman Smith noted that equipment repairs had gone over budget. Newcomer explained that the Okidata printer and the donated piano needed extensive repairs.

Kay Akerley asked the BOS who sets the building inspector's hours. BOS Chairman Iocovozzi explained that the BI's schedule and the BOS determine the hours worked. BOS member J. Stuart added that she has been asked if the BI's hours are justified. Stuart explained that BI Smart's phone rings constantly and he is usually very busy. She also noted that Smart is very knowledgeable in his position.

Chairman Smith commented on the poll workers, noting that, due to the election year, it made sense that the line was at 67%.

Smith asked the BOS why much of the anticipated building maintenance hasn't been done, and if it will be done. BOS member Stuart explained that the furnace needs \$14,000 in repairs so the Selectmen are holding off on other work for now.

Other building maintenance items discussed, and noted as open, were the Old Town Hall fire escape, sink work at the Old Stone School, and some paving

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work, particularly paving of the parking lots. BOS Chairman locovozzi explained the paving work that has been completed, and he noted that the remainder of the work was to be scheduled as soon as the paving company was available.

Planning Board training and funds for the master plan were discussed. Chairman Smith noted that, year after year, money is appropriated, but no money is expended. Smith added that, if money is not spent this year, the budget committee will get rid of the line.

Chairman locovozzi noted that he had been at the most recent planning Board meeting where it was mentioned that \$100,000 would be needed to put together a well-rounded plan, which included putting a questionnaire together. There was further discussion regarding the Town Planner vs. a consultant putting the plan together.

Chairman Smith noted that nothing has been done in the last five years and he wanted to know what had happened to the money in the past. Chairman locovozzi said that the plan has continually been updated, but the funds needed are for a full-blown plan. Smith said it would be difficult for the Planning Board to convince him that so much money would be needed since they have never used what was appropriated in the past. L. Coleman was of the opinion that, since there was already a plan in place, a new one was not necessary. locovozzi explained that the plan is necessary if the Town becomes involved in a lawsuit, and it is necessary for the charging of impact fees.

Chairman Smith said that the BUDCOM recognizes the need for a plan, but he questioned the track record of the Planning Board.

There was more discussion regarding the paving that has been done and the paving that still needs to be scheduled. The roadway and paving concerns involved Little Bay Extension, McIntyre Road, and Fox Point Road. Gail Pare, noting the continual paving problems, asked if it would make sense to establish a capital improvement fund to deal with the issues. Chairman Smith said that, in the past, the BUDCOM has recommended capital reserve funds as a possible solution, and he explained how the funds would work. L. Coleman added that the BUDCOM is looking for a plan.

Chairman Smith discussed retirement allocations and he explained how the allocation and expenditure of the retirement funds work.

In regards to his new position as Fire Chief, Chairman Smith congratulated Roy Greenleaf. Smith noted that it was excellent that the selection of a Fire Chief had been made.

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Chairman Smith asked T. Spinney if there was good participation in the recreation program this summer. Spinney said that approximately 40 children attended the program.

Kay Akerley initiated a discussion regarding traffic concerns in the area of the Old Stone School while the recreation program was in session. Akerley recommended that signs be erected to divert traffic to McIntyre Road.

L. Coleman noted that the Harvest Fair has not taken place, yet funds were expended. Selectman Stuart said that, since no youth activities had been budgeted, the line was used for the Easter Egg Hunt.

Coleman also asked for an explanation regarding the recreational fields and the Town Forest line. G. Pare commented on the need to show that money has been appropriated for the Town Forest, at which time Chairman Smith recognized its historical significance. Smith asked if any congressional figures had been contacted and made note of the agencies to contact.

Coleman asked for a breakdown of ball-field expenditures, noting that bleachers are needed. BOS Chairman Iocovozzi explained the past problems with the recreation committee and their budget, and what needs to happen going forward. The discussion regarding the ball-field included the condition of the area, the need for drainage, the uncertainty of future construction plans in the area, and how expenditures for improvements should be handled.

D. Spinney brought forward a discussion regarding Old Home Day and the Harvest Fair. He recommended the possibility of combining the two events, since fewer people were attending Old Home Day. Spinney noted that combining the two events would also cost less.

BUDCOM Chairman Smith recommended that the idea be brought to the attention of the recreation committee. Smith also noted that, if bleachers are to be purchased, someone should look into the possible liabilities. He said there were some very good ideas presented, but the pros and cons should be looked at carefully.

Wil Gilbert continued the discussion and asked where the remaining \$4,200 balance was going to go. Gilbert expressed his concern that the issue would go to the budget committee again and get carved apart. Gilbert felt that volunteerism is not encouraged and gave his analogy of how money is budgeted and what happens to needed programs.

Chairman Smith stated that the line items were unclear and that the ball-field money must be spent for the ball-field; the Town expects it. Smith also noted that any line item with a zero expenditure would be cut during the next budget

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session. Smith noted that there was a legal and moral obligation to spend the money.

Smith continued to say that there has been a severe lack of planning. He noted, for example, that \$5,000 was requested for the ball-field, but no plan had been presented for the expenditure of the funds.

The need to increase the cemetery budget for FY2003, in order to care for abandoned cemeteries, was discussed. BOS Chairman Iocovozzi explained the Town's responsibility of care and the explanation given to the HDC. Smith noted that an increase in money would be seen in order to cover the RSA's.

Gail Pare and BUDCOM Chairman Smith discussed possible plans for Conservation Land Acquisition, and how it works.

Chairman Smith noted that the budget balance looked like it had enough money to get through the balance of the year, and at Kay Akerley's request, the unanticipated legal line was explained.

Smith asked the Budget Committee to remember, when coming in to FY2003, the non-expended items and issues that come up all of the time. He also noted that the Town currently has a full Budget Committee of eleven. Smith inadvertently left R. Sullivan off the new mailing list, which is why Sullivan was not in attendance at the meeting.

Chairman Smith asked if there was any other business.

It was noted that the next Budget Committee meeting would be held January 8, 2003.

Selectman Stuart made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Wil Gilbert. Motion passed with none opposed.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M Newcomer