

Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 3, 2008
Town Hall 7:00pm

Chr. Wahl called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

Present: Chr. Larry Wahl, Vice Chr. John Lamson, Tom Benson, Gail Pare, Gail Klanchesser, Liz Taccetta, Selectmen's Rep Jack O'Reilly, Administrative Assistant Beatrice Marconi, Library Trustees Julie Biron and Dot Noseworthy, Chr. Justin Richardson of the Conservation Commission, Chr. Peter MacDonald of the Recreation Committee along with members Brian Haberstroh and Tom Rossi, Road Agent Len Thomas and Chr. Cosmas Iocovozzi of the Board of Selectmen arriving at 8:07pm. *Absent: Russ Cooke, Darin Sabine, and Helen Maldini*

J. O'Reilly moved to approve the September 17th, 2008 meeting minutes. Gail Pare seconded. With Liz Taccetta abstaining, the motion passed.

Chr. Wahl distributed handouts and focused on deep concerns with the NH Retirement law change. The law as written could cost the Town an additional \$104,000 of unplanned funds as it stands now for one officer to retire from the PD. He urged the members to bear possible effects on our Town and if the law is altered or not, we'll probably end up paying in some degree. Also included in the handouts was the 2010 Budget Committee Schedule ***to which Gail Pare moved to accept. G. Klanchesser seconded with the motion passing.***

J.O'Reilly informed the Committee that on Dec 15 at 6:00pm at Portsmouth City Hall our Legislative Delegation will be meeting with the Portsmouth City Council to not only discuss 2009 goals but also to gather their thoughts on addressing the NH Retirement law problem. Any member wishing to attend or watch is welcomed.

Conservation Commission 2009 Budget Request of \$ 16,300 (passed)

G. Klanchesser moved to tentatively accept the Conservation Commission budget in the amount of \$ 16,300. G. Pare seconded. Major changes were: the wage line – decreased from \$3,500 to \$2,500; Consultant line decreasing from \$6,000 to \$3,000. Regarding the Town Forest sign, it is still in the works and they may ask to encumber funds if the documents are in place. A forester will be coming before the Commission to make recommendations for a management plan. ***Motion passed when the Chr. called for the vote at \$ 16,300***

Recreation Committee 2009 Budget Request of \$53,625 (passed)

G. Klanchesser moved to tentatively accept the Recreation Committee budget in the amount of \$53,625. G. Pare seconded. G. Pare asked why the Senior Dinner line was not budgeted for and Chr. MacDonald stated that it has been a couple of years since having one. The liaison did not come forward. If it is requested to be reinstated, they will certainly support that action, but for now, this was an inactive line and a good place to trim. The drainage issue at the tennis court was completed. Regarding the summer program, everyone seemed to enjoy the benefit. Their day was extended by an hour this year. The Holiday lighting event is next week and they expect roughly the same costs. No money was expended from the equipment purchase line as they were involved in a multi use field configuration behind Old Town Hall. They would like the Selectmen to consider encumbering funds for the re-sealing of the BB courts. Their budget is down 4.8%. Regarding funding their Cap Res, they would like to have \$10,000 dedicated. ***Motion passed when the Chair called for the vote at \$53,625***

Library Trustees 2009 Budget Request of \$ 98,412 (passed)

G. Pare moved to tentatively accept the Library budget in the amount of \$ 98,412. T. Benson seconded. The Trustees adjusted their original request of \$101,218 down to \$98,412. Chr. Wahl asked about the Audit line and how the money was arrived at. AA B.Marconi explained that it was based on this year's charge and estimated forward. Regarding maint and repairs, the \$15,890 covered lights, painting, windows & sashes, lawn work. For 2009 the Trustees hoped to have bathroom work done bringing it into ADA compliance. The Voucher Program was briefly discussed. The Budget Committee asked that no money be reimbursed out of this voucher program until the funding passes at Town Meeting. ***Motion passed when the Chair called for the vote at \$ 98,412.***

Highway Department 2009 Budget Request of \$ 295,375 (passed with amendment)

G. Pare moved to tentatively accept the Highway budget in the amount of \$ 295,375. G. Klanchesser seconded. Chr. Wahl began by noting that the fica/medi line was not calculated on the % times the wage line. B. Marconi explained that quite often Len & John do work for other departments. In many cases, these other departments do not have a fica/medi line to cover the costs so the wages are charged over only. Resurfacing was budget at \$ 95,000 however, after reviewing the 5 year road work plan, it was suggested either \$50,000 or even \$100,000 be added back in. J. O'Reilly reviewed the 08' engineering costs for each road project with Capt. Landing thus far costing \$ 7,514; Gundalow at \$ 2,648; and Coleman Dr at \$5,896. \$60,000 was encumbered for paving the leg off Gundalow this year after passing moisture tests with approx \$10,000 left over. Chr. Iocovozzi stated that it was the Selectmen's hope to do road work right. Deal with the underground utilities without being in conduits. Deal with the encroachments lacking right of ways on Coleman and correctly plan out paving providing drainage has been addressed. Coleman is out to bid right now. With the right of way surveying complete and re-writing of the deed for recording in process, the Board hopes to have the work begin late spring '09. Capt. Landing and Gundalow will be going to bid next week. Prices should be here before year's end to encumber/plan for what we can. We can only hope to stay on schedule. Last year, oil prices surged June through Sept. We had a lot of rain. Discussion went on as to the Budget Committee's wishes for job completion. ***G.Pare moved to amend the Highway's budget from \$295,375 to \$345,375 and hopes that the extra funding could be dedicated towards paving. G. Klanchesser seconded. Amendment passed.*** Chr. Wahl added that he would like to see Gundalow's upper portion grinded and paved to help solidify the base at the lower end – ***then calling for the vote to tentatively accept \$345,375, the motion passed.***

In ending the budget session, Chr. Wahl spoke of the committee thinking long term. It's NH retirement this year, but then we have to bear in mind the Fox Point Pavillion, the Highway Garage construction, and on top of it all, the strong possibility of the State Wide Property Tax rearing its head in 2011. To bond or not to bond. Short term to save on long term interest or long term to have lower payments.

J. O'Reilly spoke of consideration of changing the purpose of our current 'severance' capital reserve to cover the NH Retirement 125% rule.

J. O'Reilly moved to adjourn at 9:10pm. G. Klanchesser seconded. Motion passed

Respectively Submitted

Beatrice Marconi
Administrative Assistant