

Town of Newington, NH
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 30, 2015 Town Hall

Chair John Lamson called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

Present: Budget Committee members: John Lamson; Gail Klanchesser; Leila Richardson; Sandra Sweeney; Gail Pare; Katherine Latchaw; Alan Wilson; and David Mueller, School Board Rep; Guests included Jon Tretter, Police Chief; Andy Head, Fire Chief; Salvatore Petralia, School Superintendent; Jim Katkin, Business Administrator; Deidra Link, School Board Chair; Peter Latchaw, Newington School Principal and Martha Roy, Town Administrator.

J. Lamson welcomed everyone to the Budget Committee School year end review and Town mid-year budget review.

Election of Officers: **G. Pare nominated J. Lamson to the position of Chair of the Budget Committee. S. Sweeney seconded the nomination.** J. Lamson called for any further nominations. Hearing none he closed nominations and called for a vote. **All were in favor.**

S. Sweeney nominated G. Klanchesser to the position of Vice Chair of the Budget Committee. L. Richardson seconded the nomination. J. Lamson called for any further nominations. Hearing none he closed nominations and called for a vote. **All were in favor.**

School Fiscal Year 2014/2015 Budget Review: J. Katkin reviewed the school year end budget. He reminded the Budget Committee that this was the first year he remembered with a deficit appropriation. He explained that expenses for the Newington School are 61% of the budget. The middle school and high school costs are 39%. The 39% includes tuition, transportation and special education services.

The food service program had a \$13,000 loss this last year.

J. Katkin reviewed the capital projects completed in the last five years. He stated that the boiler, roof and septic have all been replaced. He explained that the After School Program is offered at no expense to the town. Participants pay for the cost of the program. Upon inquiries by the Budget Committee he explained that the Teachers Union is still in negotiations but he expects to have a warrant article to the Committee regarding a new contract during the budget hearing process.

P. Latchaw announced that the Newington School had 40 students this year. This was an increase from 38.

J. Lamson asked that the school give the Budget Committee personnel costs per position of School employees. He requested total compensation with a breakdown for benefits separate.

P. Latchaw explained that children of faculty may tuition in at a cost of \$3,300 per year. He reviewed the new science program that has been initiated at the school.

The Committee requested information about the computers each school child had access to. P Latchaw responded that all students K-6, have an iPad. Students in grades 3-6 have a laptop as well.

The school had an open house recently and also a private event with 3 Rivers Fishing Association which was an Auction Fundraiser. All residents are free to inquire about use of the school for private functions.

The Committee inquired about the relationship between the Town library and school library. P. Latchaw noted that the two entities work collaboratively in a number of areas.

J. Lamson and the other Committee members thanked the school for their informative presentation.

Town Budget through 8/31/15 Review:

J. Lamson asked the Police Chief as to why the natural gas costs were higher than budgeted. It was noted that the Fire Station costs were also higher than anticipated. The Chiefs explained that these lines were not developed by their departments but rather through Town Hall. M. Roy will review the costs of these utilities and inform the Budget Committee of the analysis results.

J. Lamson asked Chief Tretter about the performance of the Ford Explorers. The Chief responded that they were very pleased with the vehicles. He reported that the Police Department will not be asking for a replacement cruiser in 2016.

Gail Pare asked about the over expenditure of the Outside Detail line. Chief Tretter said that the Spaulding project was demanding a good deal of time from the department officers. He stated that the vendors were charged \$48 an hour for

a police officer and a \$10 per hour expense for use of cruiser as well. Therefore a total expense of \$58 is charged. The officer receives \$40. in detail pay per hour. J. Lamson asked why there isn't a part time line for the Fire Department. Chief Head explained that they used a global line for full time, part time and the secretary, instead of separating this out. This practice had made the administrative function much more streamlined.

Gail Pare asked about alarm maintenance. Chief Head explained that the Keltron Station had a critical failure this year. The Fire Department could not receive incoming alarms. The department will be developing a warrant article for a new system in 2016.

Chief Head reported that mileage is higher this year on the Fire vehicles. The Fire Chief explained that their calls are up because of the snowy winter and a dry summer.

G. Pare discussed the current reporting method for the Town's encumbrances. The Committee requested that these be reflected as an expended amount rather than a negative figure that is not posted to the budget. M. Roy will discuss this with the Finance Director and respond to the Budget Committee about this.

G. Pare inquired about shredding for town residents. G. Klanchesser notified the Committee that all residents can have any paperwork shredded at the Library at no charge.

G. Pare requested the reason as to why advertising was so much higher in 2015 than the previous year.

The legal lines were discussed and a breakdown for each general expenditure item was requested.

G. Pare asked why the phone lines for the Old Town Hall, Parsonage and Meeting House were at zero. Since there are phones in these buildings, the cost should be listed. M. Roy will research and report back to the Committee.

G. Pare inquired as to the status of work on the Stone School- M. Roy replied that the Building Inspector is acquiring quotes on asbestos and lead testing and the Road Agent will be installing a new fence in front of the steps.

G. Pare asked if the title tombstone could be revised to reflect the work that was being done on the tombstones such as Tombstone cleaning. M. Roy concurred that this could be revised.

G. Klanchesser expressed concern over the Highway trucks idling in the spring, summer and fall. She understood the importance of this happening in the winter. She also noted environmental concerns and fuel excess.

The Committee noted that the Highway Department had various lines for mowing, culvert work etc. rather than a combined line. They requested that all of these lines be combined. They further asked that the title of Roadside mowing be changed to Contract mowing as it was a private contractual service.

A brief discussion was held regarding hazardous waste day and future plans regarding this matter.

G. Pare asked for a status report on the Town Forest project. She noted that no funds had been expended from this line in the Conservation Commission budget as of yet. M. Roy will ask for a report on this line.

Reelection: John Lamson asked the Committee to let residents know about the current vacancy left by Michael Marconi on the Committee. He asked that the Town office be notified if anyone was interested.

2015/2016 Budget Committee Schedule: The Committee agreed on a schedule of meetings for the 2015 and 2016 season. They are as follows: December 2 and 9, January 6, 13, 20 and 27 with a public hearing on February 6th. This will be printed out and forwarded to the Budget Committee for review.

Respectfully submitted,

**Martha S. Roy
Town Administrator**