

Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 19, 2012
Town Hall 7:00pm

At 7:04pm, Chr. John Lamson called the meeting to order.

Present: Chairman John Lamson, Vice Chair Gail Klanchesser, Selectmen's Rep Jack O'Reilly, School Board Rep Dave Mueller, Gail Pare, Sandra Sweeney, SAU 50 Business Mgr Jim Katkin, School Board members Deidre Link and Christa Bellmare, Newington Elementary Principal Peter Latshaw. (*Absent: Budget Committee member Mary Crossley*). Also present Janis and Michael Marconi and AA Beatrice Marconi.

Minute Approval of February 11, 2012 Public Hearing: ***G. Pare moved accept the minutes of the Public Hearing held Feb 11; V.C. Klanchesser seconded.*** G. Pare noted the length of time from the mailing of the minutes in the spring and their acceptance now. The Budget Committee agreed to hold a quick meeting prior to the Town Meeting in March to consider adoption of the Public Hearing minutes. ***Motion passed 6-0.***

Election of Officers: ***G Pare moved to nominate John Lamson as chairman of the budget committee for the next year. S. Sweeney seconded. Motion passed 5-0-1 with J. Lamson abstaining. J. O'Reilly moved to nominate Gail Klanchesser as the vice chair of the budget committee for the next year. G. Pare seconded. Motion passed 5-0-1 with G. Klanchesser abstaining.***

New Members: Chr. Lamson expressed the important roll the budget committee has on the town's operation and how the committee votes in its own members. Mike Marconi asked if there was a conflict with a husband and wife serving on this board at the same time. Neither Chr. Lamson nor Jack. O'Reilly recalled anything in the law that prohibited this. ***G. Pare nominated Mike Marconi to be on the budget committee. S. Sweeney seconded. Motion passed 6-0. S. Sweeney nominated Janis Marconi to be on the budget committee. Seconded by G. Klanchesser. Motion passed 6-0.***

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner: J. O'Reilly informed the committee of the Town's plans to hold our volunteer appreciation dinner on Thurs, October 25 here at town hall.

School Budget Review – Year ending June 30, 2012: New Principal Peter Latshaw was introduced and welcomed. Jim Katkin went over the End of Year Financial Report filed with the DRA and was happy to report it was all in balance. He briefly touched on the highlights.

Unassigned Fund Balance: \$ 43,542.78 (unused funds from the budget year ending June 30, 2012). This will go towards funds needed for this upcoming year.

After School program – \$ 5,217.23 left in fund

Capital projects Fund – carrying about \$ 23,000 currently – was established for large bldg. need costs.

Tuition Received \$ 10,150

Raised through District Assessment \$ 485,518

After School Enrichment Program – all revenue for the year – contributions, donations, \$11,053

Gifts and Donations - \$ 13,409 ie OM travel contributions received, general public and School Supporters

Raised via local taxes - \$ 1,182,540

Federal Funds Received - \$ 40,000ish – creation of jobs program offered by feds.

Food Service program - \$ 26,548 loss. Law requires school to provide lunches. 36 students this year. Jim tells us that jobs were combined and the wage was prorated between chef teaching and chef cooking duties.

NewCastle has waiver to not provide lunches however parents and volunteers prepare lunch. Jim tells the committee that both Rye and Greenland had losses too, which is not unusual. Reduced lunch program costs have gone up. Free lunch programs costs have not gone up. Jim would like to see the area seniors come and dine to experience our food service program and to help them understand school costs.

OM Trip Offset - \$ 1,072 was transferred internally to cover trip

Expenses – Page 7 – 60.5% of the money raised for the school is spent locally for the Elementary School. 39.5 is dispersed between the Jr. High and High Schools.

Personnel Costs: 75% of budget is salary and benefits.

Retirement: Due to go up 22 to 25% this year. He went on to say that the average teacher, 68 years old after working 25 years averages about \$18,000. No COLA in NH Retirement. J. O'Reilly added that pensions are reduced by 10% after the recipient reaches age 65. Jim added that this was built that way as SS kicks in generally about then.

Health Insurance: projected at a 10 to 12% increase. Chr. Lamson added that teachers pay part of the costs.

Paid to Jr. High: \$254,435 Page 8

Paid to High School: \$419,081 Page 9

Operating District 50 Costs: \$ 58,000

Federal, Local and OM grants: \$59,330

Food Service Program costs: \$44,147 of that, \$ 19,287 was spent on supplies

Trust Funds Page 16: earned \$75.28 int

Project Costs spent out of Trust Accounts \$ 13,506

Special Education Page 21 spent \$153,000. Average state cost is 15%, Newington is at 8%

Information on transportation and language translators and gifted and special students – see page 22

Per pupil costs in Newington: \$29,000 however our current staff and bldg. could support another 13 to 15 students with no additional costs; per pupil costs would then decrease. Newcastle has no bus program, no gym, no official food service program. Their personnel costs are greater.

Schedules in back of book.

Teachers are currently in their 4th year of a 5 year contract

Newington Elementary currently has 36 students including 4 tuition students. Jim spoke of the quality of our programs. He encouraged people to visit surrounding schools to get a better understanding of just what we have to offer. Currently, tuition students are very limited as the process as yet to be established. It is currently for SAU 50 staff members and teachers. M. Marconi felt this would be a good savings on our tax rate to encourage this practice. Chr. Lamson felt it would introduce more diversity. Until this program is set up, it remains quite limited. Mr. Marconi and VC Klanchesser spoke of the benefit of the school supporters and their donations to unfunded programs and equipment for our school.

Town Portion – Mid Year Review:

Executive office: Computer expenses: Server prices coming – wireless upgrade this year.

Election wages: Supervisors of Check list converted to an hourly form of pay vs. flat stipend due to number of hours needed to work post election. Ballot clerks are paid \$75 for local elections and \$125 per day for state and federal. Supervisors are then paid \$15.00 per hour for work needed to be performed after the polls are closed.

Legal: 4 utility superior court valuation suits just came in however J. O'reilly felt the town was covered with legal cost funds. G. Pare suggested the Selectmen consider helping to pay for the Library's upcoming legal costs with the transition they are going through shortly. J. O'Reilly stated that the Board met with them this week and that they did not approach the Board for payment of funds as Jack was under the impression that costs were coming from the Trustees of the Trust fund. If they don't ask, how are we to know. If they ask, I am sure the Selectmen could work something out. G. Pare felt perhaps they didn't feel comfortable asking.

Planning Board: M. Marconi asked why COAST fell under Planning. J. O'Reilly stated that initially it was a warrant article and rather than putting it up for a vote annually at the risk of it failing to pass, it was placed in the PB budget.

Professional Training: G. Pare mentioned that it may not be utilized as much as it could be. J. O'Reilly noted training continues for all, in many instances classes are offered for free. G. Pare suggested if we get notifications of classes offered that we send notifications out for all to know. The AA will check into electronic notifications.

Town Garage – Electricity – over spent. J. O'Reilly explained that it is a new bldg. and hard to estimate our first full year's costs. They suggested the Road Agent take a look at the bldg. fuel and electricity to see if thermostat programming could be an issue or temperature of the floor.

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Fire Station: J. O'Reilly stated we have insulation projects planned for both Fire & Police stations.

Stone School: Slate roof being repaired currently.

Regional Associations: Still waiting for requests from various groups requesting funds.

Police Department: Part Time Salary Line is over. J. O'Reilly explained with an officer gone, PT officers are being utilized. The Budget committee wondered why the Full time salary line wasn't showing a savings. Jack thought it might be sporadic officers out on disability and the revenue would off set it but will look into it.

Holiday pay is paid at end of year. The AA will do a revenue report for the Budget Committee. OT is tapped out too. Details are fully reimbursable.

Fire Dept: Computer Expenses. Will be offset with grant income.

Fire Equipment Purchases: Also a reimbursable grant

Ambulance Billing Fees: Shows 0 – It was explained that this is an inactive line and now the costs are taken out by Comstar before we get revenue. M. Marconi asked why not a special Rev fund to replace ambulance. J. O'Reilly stated the town tried that but it failed. Mike suggested we revitalize this concept and place again before town. Regarding keeping the old ambulance once replaced, Jack explained the costs would be too great.

H/W Education and Training: Staff sent to chain saw, flagging and safety courses. Soon to go to salt application.

H/W Road Signs: Jack explained that some of the overage is attributable to Nimble Hill Gate signage.

H/W Resurfacing: Shattuck being done along with Patterson Lane and Gundalow Landing.

H/W Road Striping: Once roads are done, the striping will be done before year's end.

Transfer Station: Chr. Lamson feels Craig is doing a terrific job – very accommodating

Recreation: Invoices for Septfest are coming in. Final costs are not known at this point. YMCA participant contributions and Movie Ticket revenue offset the bottom line and is deposited into the general fund. Senior Dinner was eliminated a few years ago. Seniors should be encouraged to join in with the school.

Land Mgmt: Under drainage, the town has set \$50,000 for the Mott Pond Revitalization Project, however DES is dragging their heels and unless we have a vital contract by years end, we may not be able to encumber.

The committee then spoke about the pond being drained due to the thickness of the slime. Jack will speak with Altus. Chr. Lamson felt there would be no issues with the abutters signing off.

Fox Point Erosion: The AA will get more info on the status of this project as funds were encumbered.

Library: Chr. Lamson asked if the Selectmen over sees the budget. Selectmen's Rep J. O'Reilly explained that beginning in January we will be advancing quarterly operational expenses as they are transitioning over. If they go over budget, their trust funds generally make up the difference to the town. Chr. Lamson asks that the town be provided with revenue info as the HDC gives the town.

HDC: The town's monuments are being updated to include an expanded number of Newington Veterans' names. G. Pare will timely forward information to AA if funds are needed to be encumbered.

Conservation Commission: G. Pare asked about the status of the Town Forest Management Plan and if there was any movement. The AA will look into this.

Debt Service and Warrant Articles: There was a brief discussion about the Town Garage 5 year bond. Approx rate is 3.25%. Chr. Lamson stated that in most cases bonding is better than lease purchase plans. Regarding left over money shown for the Patterson Lane Boat Ramp, that will be absorbed in the general fund as they came in under budget. Jack mentioned that \$15,000 was placed in the pavilion Cap reserve but people need to decide which direction to take.

Budget Committee Schedule: A discussion regarding departmental schedule took place with Chr. Lamson ultimately meeting with the AA to finalize the details.

New Members Janis and Michael Marconi were sworn in.

At 9:36pm, the meeting adjourned with no objections.

Respectfully Submitted, Beatrice Marconi, Administrative Assistant