

Budget Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 11, 2012

Town Hall 7:00pm

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

Present: Chairman Lamson, VC Gail Klanchesser, members Gail Pare, Liz Taccetta, Selectmen's Rep Cosmas Iocovozzi filling in for Selectman O'Reilly, Mary Crossley; representing the Fire Department: Fire Engineers Wib Goins, Steve Sabine, Ruth Fletcher, Chief Dale Sylvia, Assistant Chief Andy Head; representing the Sewer Commission: Chr. George Fletcher and Skip Cole; Rick Stern and AA Beatrice Marconi. *Absent J. O'Reilly, School Rep Dave Mueller and Sandra Sweeney.*

Minute Approval: *VC G. Klanchesser moved to accept the minutes of January 4 as written. G. Pare seconded. Motion passed 6-0.*

Fire Department 2012 Budget Request of \$ 1,351,124: *G. Pare moved to tentatively recommend \$1,351,124. Seconded by VC G. Klanchesser. Motion passed 6-0.* Before the vote, Chief Sylvia presented a brief overview of the budget.

Ambulance Billing – will now be netted out of revenue line for ComStar resulting in a \$5,500 decrease.

Revenue will be up as there are more paramedics on staff and more participation in mutual aid.

20% WC Supplement: This will be budgeted by the General Government portion of the budget.

Call/PT employees: Rate is going from \$14.00 to \$14.50. 6 Call people hosting 4 rotating positions.

Uniforms: Stock is now internally controlled with better costs with stockpiling.

Vehicle Replacement: Looking at 2014 for fire truck

Ambulance Replacement: 2013.

Chief Sylvia is creating a cycle for future long term budgeting ease.

Capital Reserve Requests: The chief had suggested \$20,000 in each, which would have left a shortfall that would have required replacement year funding. The Budget Committee were in favor of increasing the *W. Article* request to \$40,000 for each. (truck and ambulance funds).

Fire Boat: Chief Sylvia is currently working with a Congressman in an effort to attain a boat via Washington at no cost to the town.

Sewer Commission 2012 Budget Request of \$717,547 (Selectmen's Recommendation). ***VC G. Klanchesser moved to tentatively recommend \$ 717,547. Seconded by G. Pare. Motion passed 6-0. (Sewer Commission asked for \$720,842).***

Before the vote Chr. George Fletcher presented their budget. VC G. Klanchesser asked about the original Selectmen's budget request and noted how it had changed from a \$750 reduction to now a \$3,295 reduction. Selectmen's Rep C. Iocovozzi stated because the Commissioner's budget request did not fund for federal withholdings and town hall staff time required for sewer operations costs, after numerous attempts to resolve 1099 issues, because the Selectmen only has control of stipend pay in their budget, this was the only method left to address the shortfall. Commissioner Fletcher disagreed with the Selectmen's out come from research on 'employees' from the IRS, various attorneys, etc. The Budget Committee recognized there was tension between the Board of Selectmen and Commission, however stated they only wanted to review budget numbers this evening. Capacity and future operations: Mr. Fletcher stated depending on weather, the plant generally operates 45-55% of capacity. The biggest problem they are facing is nitrates. Another concern is storm water issues. They currently have an account called an enterprise account which houses over \$1,000,000. The Budget Committee urged them to create an account or add to this account, that by adding a fee to each sewer bill which will be specifically dedicated to address the nitrate problem/future upgrade. The AA was asked to look into the account structure as it may have to be beyond the operating budget to act like a non-lapsing savings account. Perhaps through a warrant article with a specific purpose. Chr. Lamson suggested two separate motions. G. Pare asked Chr. Fletcher if the reduction in stipends was placed back in their budget would they then fund the needed

costs. G. Pare then ***put forth a motion to add \$3,295 back into the sewer budget bringing the total request to \$720,842.*** L. Taccetta stated that this puts the Budget Committee in an awkward position and didn't feel comfortable supporting this motion as clearly there were other issues. The budget committee members only wanted to address the budget. *No second was forthcoming. Motion dies.* And with that, the budget committee voted on the budget of \$717,547 (***passed 6-0***). VC ***G. Klanchesser then moved for the Sewer Commission to create a fund. This account will be financed by the sewer rate payers via an additional fee which will be used to address federal and state mandates with the Sewer Commission and AA researching the structure. C. locovozzi seconded. Motion passed 6-0.*** Chr. Fletcher feels he can get the thoughts of the Sewer Commission within two weeks (by Jan 25) and come back with a recommended amount. They were congratulated for doing such a good job with the plant.

At 8:28, there was a motion to adjourn. Hearing no opposition, Chairman Lamson declared the meeting closed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beatrice Marconi
Administrative Assistant