

CITY OF BERLIN

New Hampshire

Minutes of Council Budget Work Session of 04/03/2013

Council Conference Room

6:30 pm

Members:

Mayor Grenier
Councilor Higbee
Councilor Theberge
Councilor Otis
Councilor Nelson
Councilor Benski

Staff:

Pat MacQueen, City Manager
Patty Chase, Finance Director
Angela-Martin Giroux, Health and Welfare Director
Terry Letarte, Recreation Department Program Director
Denise Jensen, Library Director
Yvette Leighton, RN Health Department

The Council came out of a non-public meeting with legal counsel at 7:03 p.m. and after reviewing a draft agreement, passed out by the Manager, unanimously passed the following motion:

“Moved that the Council hereby authorizes the signing of an agreement with Avitar for a statistical update at no additional cost or term extension subject to any conditions required by the City Attorney, the City Manager and/or the Board of Adjustment.”

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Angela Martin-Giroux, Health and Welfare Director, distributed a hand out and then reviewed last year's budget, revenues and expenses.

City Manager MacQueen explained that the highest expense in the Health Department is the cost of nursing staff. Last year the Health Department was able to avoid a capital expenditure that would have been detrimental to the department's survival. The Health Department brings in almost all their own revenue. The Mayor voiced his opinion that many citizens utilize the Health Department's services and he asked Director Martin-Giroux to list some of them. Some of the services provided are: Restaurant Inspections, Responding to Sanitation Complaints, Cholesterol Testing, Blood Sugar Testing, Blood Pressure Testing, TB Testing, Foot Clinics, Home Visits and Flu Shots.

Director Martin-Giroux reviewed their staffing and that the average number of patients serviced by the Health Department is seventy per month. The Health Department contracts with AVH for some services such as PT and OT.

The Mayor asked if they have any capital requests and Director Martin-Giroux responded that they are requesting new flooring at a cost of \$15,000.00. Councilor Theberge asked about the water damage to the existing floor and the City Manager responded that at times water comes in on the alley side of the building.

WELFARE

Director Martin-Giroux then went on to review the Welfare Departments budget requests. The Welfare Department does receive some revenue when liens are redeemed.

Mayor Grenier asked about any potential issues that might arise with federal spending cuts and Director Martin-Giroux agreed that this may be problematic for the City especially in terms of fuel assistance.

LIBRARY

Director Denise Jensen distributed a handout and then reviewed the services the Library provides and shared statistical data. Councilor Higbee inquired of how many individuals the Library serves and Director Jensen shared that there are 4,217 active cards. Councilor Theberge asked if the Library has Wi Fi and the Director responded they do not provide this service.

The Director explained that the Library is open 39 hours per week and that current staffing is not adequate especially when a staff member calls in sick. She requested that the Council provide for additional per diem funding. The Library utilizes digital downloads through the State Library but the cost will increase with this budget year. The City Manager will write a letter to the State Librarian requesting for a cut rate due to our demographics.

RECREATION

Director Terry Letarte distributed a handout and reviewed some of the programs her department offers such as the Ski and Babe Ruth Programs. Her department offsets expenses with user fees but that isn't enough to meet the Department's needs. Director Letarte expressed concern regarding the loss of revenue from Tri County Cap's Summer Program and the potential loss of appropriate levels of staffing needed to operate the summer programs. Mayor Grenier asked how much would be needed and Director Letarte calculates an additional \$5,000 above her original \$11,000 request should be enough to provide adequate levels of staffing.

With no further questions the meeting adjourned at 8:00 Motion by Higbee and 2nd Theberge.

Respectfully submitted,
Patty Chase
Finance Director