

TOWN OF DEERFIELD, NH
MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE
George B. White Building
8 Raymond Road, Deerfield, NH 03037
6:30pm Tuesday, 22 November 2016
MINUTES

Call to Order 6:30pm

1. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

2. Moment of Silence/Prayer

3. Roll Call

Present: James Spillane, Chairman; Bill von Hassel, Vice Chairman; Ian Scott, Kevin Verville, Troi Hopkins (6:33pm), Carol Levesque, Karen Cote, Members; Zach Langlois, School Board Rep Member; Andrew Robertson, Select Board Rep Member
Excused Absence: David Carbone, Steve Giovinelli, Members
Also Present: Jan Foisy, Town Administrator

On behalf of the Recording Secretary, K. Verville asks that members speak into the microphone when speaking.

4. Citizen's Comments

None seen

5. Approval of Outstanding Minutes

Motion: K. Verville moves to accept the minutes from October 25, 2016 as written.

Second: Z. Langlois

Motion: Z. Langlois moves to correct the spelling of Jan Foisy's name (remove the "e").

Second: K. Verville

Motion carries by unanimous consent

**Vote to approve the minutes from October 25, 2016 with corrections.: Yay: 8, Nay: 0, Abstained: 1-
Motion Carries**

6. Old Business

Chairman Spillane asks Z. Langlois for replies from the School Board that the MBC had requested. Z. Langlois responds that the Board is not currently planning to request the \$25,000 increase from last year in the budget. At this point no line has been added for the supply line.

Chairman Spillane states that adding supply line with \$1 would be appropriate.

Z. Langlois states that he has requested the lists from previous years but does not have them this evening. He has the year to date information for the supply line. He states that the 15/16 year to date is \$23,546, year to date for 16/17 is \$22,379. 37% of the line for this year to date, 69% of the line for 15/16 in the same time frame. The document with this information will be emailed to the Chair for distribution to the committee.

There will be an initial school budget to present to the committee on December 6th.

A. Robertson responds to the questions from the October 25th MBC meeting about unanticipated expenditures over \$5000. There was a purchase of Hurst battery powered cutters as requested by the Rescue Squad and the Fire Department so that the town would have two. \$7437.48 for a gear dryer for the Fire Department and Rescue Squad gear. This was recommended by Primex after their walk-through. Fire gear does not dry well in standard dryers or on the line. Vehicle maintenance was up for all departments. There was an increased cost for voting ballots due to an increase in warrant articles. There was an expenditure for audio and visual for the Northern Pass presentation at the Town Hall. Also, an increase in cost for disposal of recyclables.

Chairman Spillane asks if it typical for the town to pay for the audio and visual for a meeting such as the Northern Pass meeting. A. Robertson responds that it was a meeting requested by the town and the video was also at the request of the town so it was viewed as appropriate.

Vice Chairman von Hassel comments that he remembers from the discussion at the Select Board meeting about the cutters that the cost was closer to \$13,000. A. Robertson responds that there was some off-setting money.

A. Robertson states that the Town Budget has a bottom line of \$3,884,707 which is an increase of \$182,797. This is a little over 4.5% increase. Highway and Fire are down. Transfer Station is up, they are looking to purchase a new crusher container. Park and Recreation has a new assistant and the Town is paying half their pay. State Retirement numbers are changing. Group 1 employees are changing from 11.08 to 11.38, teachers 15.7 to 17.36, Police 25.33 to 29.43, and Fire 27.79 to 31.89. There is also a proposal of a 3% pay increase for police officers. Deerfield is currently out of line with the surrounding departments. The Select Board looked at 2.5 to 3% increases for other full time staff and then decided against it.

I. Scott comments that he doesn't feel that the Select Board can add raises without asking the town (*expletive*).

Chairman Spillane states that this language is inappropriate.

A. Robertson states that he can answer general questions. Department Heads can be made available to answer questions.

Chairman Spillane comments that he will draw up a list of departments and this will make it easier for scheduling. Budgets for which there tend to be a lot of discussion will be saved for the Saturday work session rather than during the week.

K. Verville states that typically 7-9 budgets are talked about the night that the budget is received. He has a preliminary list based on previous years.

Chairman Spillane asks if everyone is comfortable with discussion on parts of the budget at this point.

T. Hopkins voices concern that what has been received is a draft proposal budget. There should be a quick review and quick understanding since the committee is not at the point to make a decision.

Chairman Spillane explains that concerns are brought up now and Mr. Robertson can bring them back to the Select Board. A final vote is taken later.

I. Scott expresses his view that the nature of government is to increase spending and his hope to cut the

budget.

T. Hopkins responds that she is uncomfortable with Mr. Scott's outbursts.

I. Scott replies that he doesn't care and he is looking out for the interest of the town.

T. Hopkins responds that she understands his opinion but that there is a need to follow protocol.

Chairman Spillane reminds the committee that the protocol includes being recognized by the Chair before speaking and to respect each other's opinion.

K. Verville states that when 2017 is compared to 2016 there is a 4.9% increase. Which is an 18.38% increase over the actual spend from 2015 and a 5.2% increase over the 2015 budget. He requests that the town and school supply what the surplus amount has been each year from 2009 to the present.

A. Robertson responds that can be done as well as provide tax worksheets.

K. Verville comments that it appears that a lot of the 4.9% increase to the budget is due to salary increases- Tax Collector, Town Clerk, IT, Planning/Zoning, Police, Fire and Rescue to a lesser degree, Parks and Recreation, Library, Veasey, Conservation Commission. He asks what the percentage of the 4.9% increase can be attributed to salary increases.

A. Robertson replies that a master list of salary increases can be provided and will be discussed with each department's budget. He responds that the Police budget has a noticeable increase to its budget and more than half of that is due to software upgrades and retirement.

Chairman Spillane requests that the retirement aspect be separated out since it is a non-town responsibility.

I. Scott asks why the town is paying for any retirement since it is a state requirement.

A. Robertson responds that the state requires that the town pay into the retirement fund for teachers and full time town employees. The amount paid is based on the percentage of the salary of the employee.

Chairman Spillane explains that there is a percentage of the retirement paid for by the state and a percentage paid for by the town and a constant down shift is creating an increase for the towns.

7. New Business

K. Verville states that he looked at last year's agenda for the numerical order for the budgets typically discussed this night.

Motion: A. Robertson moves the Municipal Budget Committee budget on page 9 in the amount of \$927.

Second: K. Verville

Chairman Spillane proposes a \$15 per meeting stipend to Ms. Harriet Cady for taking the brief notes during the meetings.

T. Hopkins asks if there will be enough to cover the Recording Secretary.

Chairman Spillane responds that there will.

K. Verville states that based on eight meetings it would be \$120 total.

Motion: Z. Langlois moves to offer the proposed stipend.

Second: K. Cote

Vote to offer \$15 per meeting stipend to Ms. Cady for taking brief notes. - Yay: 6, Nay: 2, Abstained: 0- Motion Carries.

Chairman Spillane asks Ms. Cady if she accepts the offer.

Ms. Cady responds that she does not but will continue taking the brief notes as long as she is in attendance.

Chairman Spillane expresses the committee's gratitude for providing the brief notes.

Motion: I. Scott moves to remove printing from the budget.

Chairman Spillane explains that there are certain legal requirements for posting meetings that require printing.

Second: none seen

I. Scott comments that he plans to go through every line item in this manner. (*expletive*)

Z. Langlois asks Chairman Spillane to remind Mr. Scott to maintain an appropriate level of decorum.

Chairman Spillane reminds I. Scott to be mindful of his language.

I. Scott replies that he will try and he apologizes.

Vote to approve the Municipal Budget Committee budget in the amount of \$927. Yay: 8, Nay: 1, Abstained: 0- Motion carries.

Motion: K. Verville moves the Cemetery budget on page 21 in the amount of \$21,452.

Second: Z. Langlois

A. Robertson states that there is an increase due to tree care. Several trees are dropping limbs causing possible hazard to visitors of the cemeteries and potential damage to the headstones.

T. Hopkins asks how many cemeteries there are in Deerfield.

A. Robertson responds that there are approximately 27 cemeteries cared for by the town.

I. Scott asks why the cemeteries haven't been privatized and the trees cut down.

A. Robertson responds that they are deeded public cemeteries and they have specific language to keep them protected.

I. Scott states that anything public can be sold and privatized.

K. Verville states that he fully supports the \$5000 for the tree care in the cemeteries.

Vice Chairman von Hassel comments about the trust funds and asks if the trust fund could help sustain the cemeteries and cover some of the costs.

A. Robertson states that the trust funds are not able to keep up with the needs. There are trust funds that are set up for specific cemeteries and one trust fund cannot fund another cemetery that does not have enough revenue.

K. Verville gives the example of the cemetery on Leavitt Hill. There were four large trees removed a couple of years ago, because they were a hazard to the cemetery and the roadway.

I. Scott asks if the proposal is to remove whole trees.

A. Robertson responds that if needed, whole trees are removed.

I. Scott asks if after next year, there will no longer be any trees that need to be removed.

A. Robertson replies that there will be some upkeep needed.

I. Scott asks what the cost would be to remove all trees completely.

A. Robertson replies that he is uncertain of what that cost would be.

Vote to approve the Cemetery budget in the amount of \$21,452. Yay: 8, Nay: 1, Abstained: 0- Motion Carries

Motion: K. Verville moves the Advertising/Regional Association budget on page 23 in the amount of \$4,019.

Second: Z. Langlois

A. Robertson states that the Municipal Association dues is based on the population. It is relied on heavily for employee training, legal advice. The population has increased therefore so have the dues.

Vote to approve the Advertising/Regional Association budget in the amount of \$4,019. Yay: 9, Nay: 0, Abstained: 0- Motion Carries

Motion: K. Verville moves the Water Holes and Forest Fires budget on page 29 in the amount of \$7201.

Second: Z. Langlois

A. Robertson states that this pertains to the maintenance of the fire holes and maintenance and replacement of fencing around the fire holes. Dredging the fire holes is also part of maintenance. Chairman Spillane asks for an explanation for the sharp decrease in the actuals for 2016.

A. Robertson responds that it is possible that the Fire Chief who does a lot of the maintenance has not yet billed the town.

Vice Chairman von Hassel asks if this would this be a good time for dredging since we are in a drought.

A. Robertson replies that he knows that they have used the drought as an opportunity to expand the water hole by the fairgrounds.

C. Levesque asks if there is a warrant article planned for a proposed cistern.

A. Robertson replies that there will be a warrant article for a 30,000 gallon, approximately \$67,000 cistern between the Town Hall and the Fire Department.

T. Hopkins asks if this would be a second cistern in the town.

A. Robertson replies that there are several cisterns throughout Deerfield. The closest to this proposed location is a 10,000-gallon cistern located at the senior housing just down the street from the Fire Department.

T. Hopkins comments that it is her understanding that during a recent fire in that area of town the existing cistern down the street was not used.

A. Robertson confirms that it was not used but he is not sure of the reason it was not used. It is his understanding that there was concern that the fire at the yellow house may spread and that may have contributed to this decision. There is also a fire pond down the road on Church Street that was utilized. 90,000 gallons of water were used on the yellow house.

K. Verville comments that it is also necessary to sanitize the water and keep it biologically inactive. This budget covers that cost as well.

Vote to approve the Water Holes and Forest Fires in the amount of \$7201. Yay: 9, Nay: 0, Abstained: 0- Motion Carries

Motion: K. Verville moves the Animal Control budget on page 49 in the amount of \$9102.

Second: Z. Langlois

A. Robertson comments that he does not have a lot of detail the budget is the amount requested by the Animal Control Officer. This budget tends to go up and down. It all depends on the number of calls each year.

Chairman Spillane comments that historically the actual vs the requested tends to be half.

K. Verville suggests that line items be discussed separately for clarity.

A. Robertson states that the veterinary services bill is not received until the end of the year.

Motion: I. Scott moves to reduce the Part Time Employee line by 50% to \$2800.

I. Scott cancels the motion.

Motion: I. Scott moves to reduce the Part Time Employee line to \$2500.

Second: none seen

Motion: I. Scott moves to reduce the Part Time Employee line by 50% to \$2800.

Second: Chairman Spillane

A. Robertson states that he is not uncomfortable with that number. The Animal Control Officer can appear if they feel this line is underfunded.

Vice Chairman von Hassel states that he would rather that the line be closer to \$3000.

C. Levesque asks how the employee is paid.

A. Robertson responds that they are paid \$40 per call.

Amendment: Vice Chairman von Hassel amends the motion to \$3000.

Second: C. Levesque

K. Verville clarifies that the motion is to remove \$2800 to have the line be \$2800. The amendment is to add \$200 to bring the new line total to \$3000.

Vote to reduce the Part Time Employee line to \$3000. Yay: 9, Nay: 0, Abstained- Motion Carries

Motion: K. Verville moves to reduce the Animal Control supply line from \$400 to \$100.

Second: I. Scott

Vote to reduce the Animal Control supply line. Yay: 9, Nay: 0, Abstained- Motion Carries

Vote to approve the Animal Control budget in the amount of \$6202. Yay: 9, Nay: 0, Abstained- Motion Carries

Motion: K. Verville moves the Patriotic Purposes budget on page 56 in the amount of \$600.

Second: A. Langlois

K. Verville asks why the budget doubled this year.

A. Robertson replies that there is a planned purchase for large U.S. flags and P.O.W. flags.

Vote to approve the Patriotic Purposes budget in the amount of \$600. Yay: 9, Nay: 0, Abstained- Motion Carries

Motion: K. Verville moves the Heritage Commission budget on page 57 in the amount of \$600.

Second: Z. Langlois

C. Levesque comments that the Heritage Commission is trying to get an elevator for the Town Hall. They have added some costs for publicity and updating the website.

J. Spillane asks why the

I. Scott asks what is the Heritage Commission.

C. Levesque responds that it is an appointed commission by the town for the preservation of the historic buildings and the Historic District in the center of town. If people wanted to make changes to a building in the historic district, for example windows, they could come to the Heritage Commission for guidance.

Motion: I. Scott moves to strike the line item for the Heritage Commission.

Second: none seen

I. Scott urges the committee to strike this line item. He comments that the Heritage Commission is unnecessary and should not exist to tell people what windows they can and cannot use.

C. Levesque replies that it is not the job of the Heritage Commission to tell people what they can and cannot do. It is a commission that provides advice.

I. Scott states that it would be more appropriate for the Heritage Commission to be a private organization within the town.

A. Robertson responds that the Heritage Commission exists through an RSA that gives the town the ability to form such a commission. He continues that the Select Board has no intentions of getting rid of the Heritage Commission.

I. Scott asks if the RSA states "shall" or "may".

A. Robertson replies that the RSA states "shall".

I. Scott reiterates that the Heritage Commission should be disbanded since it does not exist in the NH Constitution.

A. Robertson responds that the NH Constitution has no bearing on the RSA for the Heritage Commission.

K. Verville points out that the motion to strike the line item did not receive a second, he recommends returning to the original discussion.

Chairman Spillane asks about the unspent money for this year.

C. Levesque comments that in recent weeks there has been some work done on the website for which they have not yet been billed.

Chairman Spillane asks if there is currently a waiver for the Town Hall not having an elevator.

C. Levesque states that there isn't a waiver and if an ADA lawsuit came forward the entire Town Hall would be shut down.

Vice Chairman von Hassel asks what the difference is between the Historical Society and the Heritage Commission.

C. Levesque replies that the Historical Society is a private non-profit which was started in 1973. It does not receive town funding. The Heritage Commission is appointed by the town.

Vote to approve the Heritage Commission budget in the amount of \$600: Yay: 8, Nay: 1, Abstained: 0- Motion Carries.

Motion: K. Verville moves the Forestry Commission budget on page 59 in the amount of \$6.

Second: Z. Langlois

A. Robertson states that the Conservation Commission now handles what previously had been under the Forestry Commission's jurisdiction.

Vote to approve the Forestry Commission budget in the amount of \$6: Yay: 9, Nay: 0, Abstained: 0- Motion Carries.

Motion: K. Verville moves the Tax Anticipation budget on page 61 in the amount of \$1.

Second: Z. Langlois

A. Robertson the purpose of this line is to cover expenses to seek approval for special permission to accumulate a debt.

Vote to approve the Tax Anticipation budget for \$1: Yay: 8, Nay: 1, Abstained: 0- Motion Carries.

Motion: A. Robertson moves the Executive budget page 1 in the amount of \$7,461.

Second: Z. Langlois

A. Robertson explains that this is what the Board of Selectman and a member of the Trustees of the Trust Fund are paid on an annual basis.

K. Verville points out that only one out of any many as three members of the Trustee of the Trust Fund receive a \$100 stipend.

A. Robertson states that each Select Board member receives \$150 per quarter. The Trustee is paid once at the end of the year.

Vote to approve the Executive budget in the amount of \$7,461. Yay: 9, Nay: 0, Abstained: 0- Motion Carries.

K. Verville confirms with Mr. Langlois that the school budget will be brought to the December 6th meeting. K. Verville states that he will not be in attendance for that meeting and asks that the school budget be put in the MBC cubby for him to pick up.

8. Citizen's Comments

Ms. Harriet Cady states that she would like to see the Heritage Conservation website funding be pared together with other website funding in town rather than have the website completely independent of each other.

She comments that she attended the two-day workshop regarding labor laws and overtime. states that she would like to see the town have a more complete inventory of what is maintained and what sold each year.

Chairman Spillane asks Mr. Robertson if he is clear on what he has been requested by Ms. Cady. A. Robertson acknowledges that he is. The board has looked at one municipal website but have not yet decided to move forward.

9. Adjournment

Motion: K. Verville moves to adjourn

Second: Vice Chairman von Hassel

Vote to adjourn: Yay: 9, Nay: 0, Abstained 0: - Motion Carries

Next Meeting: Tuesday November 29, 2016 at 6:30pm