

1. Deerfield Municipal Budget Committee - Meeting Minutes
December 4th, 2018
Prepared by Kate Nadeau, MBC Meeting Secretary

Call to Order/Pledge

Began promptly at 7pm. No Flag in the meeting room, no Pledge

Roll Call - Later in Meeting

Members present

- John Dubiansky
- Phil Bilodeau
- Ben Miner
- Andrea Hotaling
- Herman Pretorius
- Jo Anne Bradbury
- Zach Langlois
- James Spillane

Excused absences

- David Carbone
- Andy Robertson

Unexcused Absences

- Alden Dill (1)

Approval of Minutes

2 Sets of Minutes to Approve

Motion

Phil Bilodeau moved to approve the November 20th, 2018

Seconded by Zach Langlois

Discussion

- The following corrections were added:
 - Line number 181 Add a line with heading of "Planning Board"
 - Line 193 Vote should be corrected to "table the Planning Board Budget"
 - Corrected Herman Pretorius' name on line 14
 - Line 197 Correct to read "Zach Langlois, School Board Rep"

Vote

- Vote to approve the amended meeting minutes passed 7-0 (yea-nay)

Motion

- Zach Langlois moved to approve the November 27th, 2018 meeting minutes
- Seconded by Phil Bilodeau

Discussion

- The following corrections were added:
 - Correct the Spelling of Kate Nadeau (Line 6)

- Correct minutes to include budget amounts
- Last line of first page, change word “much” to “more”
- 3rd page, 1st line under Municipal Budget Committee correct “hire” to “hired.”
- Corrected other typos on 3rd page.
- Format of Minutes (from 11/27/18, using full names and full numbers moving forward is preferred.

Vote

- Vote to approve the amended meeting minutes passed 7-0 (yea-nay)

Member Ben Minerd Arrived

Citizen’s Comments

NONE

Town Budget Review

Building Department.

Motion

- Zach Langlois moved to approve the bottom line as written in the amount of \$63,809
- Seconded by Phil Bilodeau

Discussion

- Mr. Pelletier – Building Budget Requests are the same, with exception of a request for part-time help to manage and format documents. 1 day or 2 ½ days per week.
- Budget had been approved by the Selectmen as presented.
- If the budget is defeated it would not include money for part-time position. The default budget would be the same budget as 2018. Because the appropriation was not a separate warrant article, the selectmen could fund it with money from elsewhere to cover the new position.

Vote

- Vote to approve the bottom line as written passed 8-0 (yea-nay)

Transfer Station

ADMINISTRATIVE

Motion

- Jim Spillane moved to approve the bottom line as written in the amount of \$79,989
- Seconded by Zach Langlois

Discussion

- Full-Time/Part-Time same number of employees/hours. Only difference is wage differences due to longevity or cost of living.
- 8.19% increase in wages for part-time employees totaling \$5239 proposed.

- Difference in previous budget vs. this budget may be due to cola increases, and a staff person only working 50% of the year.
- Population growth may create a need for more staff in the future.
- Some extra hours allotted for winter clean up.
- Requirements for glass/recycling changing? No end in sight on how things may change. No one wants to use the glass. Cost more to move it than it does to buy it. Looking for an agreement with a new contractor. Currently going to waste management and into landfills.
- Paper costs are up, and return is down because of so much rain. Contaminated cardboard and paper due to the rain. Estimate of a couple of thousand loss on return.
- \$79989 bottom line

Vote

- Vote to approve the bottom line as written passed 8-0 (yea-nay)

SOLID WASTE COLLECTION

Motion

- Zach Langlois moved to approve the bottom line as written in the amount of \$51,028
- Seconded by Phil Bilodeau

Discussion

- Budget Increases include Heavy Equipment- \$7300 for 2 front tires that have been repaired a number of times, vendor recommends new tires. Yearly service on machine budget changes depending on hours of use on machine. Includes another 50 yd container. May have to rent one because one of the vendors (Casella) can't hire drivers to move containers when we need them moved.
- New Safety Compliance, increase from \$1-\$299 for AED, Spill Kits recommended by Insurance company. Some items have expiration dates on them.
- Loader has 4000 hours on it. Machine in great condition

Vote

- Vote to approve the bottom line as written passed 8-0 (yea-nay)

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

Motion

- John Dubiansky moved to approve the bottom line as written in the amount of \$246,602
- Seconded by Jo Anne Bradbury

Discussion

- We are under contractual agreements (2 more years) so most of the increases are based off of the contracts.
- Wheelabrator is trying with the state to get another site, which could make costs go down a little. If not, they have a site in Bethlehem, PA. Other sites are located in PA and Up State NY.

- Costs for actual transportation and disposal splits the budget about 50/50
- Estimate of \$200,000 for a larger truck, and then in addition buying additional containers. We would then also need a driver. Truck should last due to low mileage.
- Investigate for next year, directly reduce transportation costs. What other options? Waste Management/Casella no longer does home pick up. John looking at other vendors.
- If Landfills close, having a truck won't help.
- Potential of setting up a warrant article, and an account to put money from warrant article in to buy a truck.
- We are discussing this year's budget. Truck may be on the table for next year. Contract negotiations are for the selectmen. We need to review what we are contracted for and our budget.

Vote

- Vote to approve bottom line as written 6-2-0 (yea-nay)
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Motion

- James Spillane made a motion that we as a body request that the fee schedule for electronics accurately reflects cost to dispose of and also compare to surrounding towns. Also review categories/types of items being disposed (all are by the pound).
- Seconded by Herman Pretorius

Discussion

- Electronics disposal fee? Are we charging enough? Have we assessed our fees?
 - Original fee based on the state and what communities should charge.
 - Rate/lb is unchanged. Are the revenues offset? – This is a question for Town Administrator.
 - Assess what we are taking in, vs. our cost to dispose of electronics? Get accounting to break down.

Vote

- Vote to approve request passed 8-0 (yea-nay)

Fire/Rescue- Forest Fires

Motion

- James Spillane moved to approve the bottom line (Forrest Fires) as written in the amount of \$6963
- Seconded by Phil Bilodeau

Discussion

- Chief Matt Fischer in attendance
-

Vote

- Vote to approve the bottom line as written passed 7-0-1 (yea-nay, abstain)

Fire/ Rescue

Motion

- James Spillane moved to approve the bottom line as written in the amount of \$276,867
- Seconded by Zach Langlois
- Zach Langlois proposes we move \$1 from line 111 up to 110 to Full-Time Position.

Discussion

- Town people were not interested in changing this unless it was a warrant article.
- People of the town need to voice their concerns. If we create the full time line with \$1, the selectmen have the flexibility to add full time firefighters and could move the money from other lines.
- Jim Spillane discussed that the town has weighed in. If anything is done it should be through a warrant article.
- Zach stressed that the flexibility to improve coverage is important for public safety.
- Question to Chief- how are things operating? Recently more volunteers have applied or wanted to move from EMT to Firefighter position. Looking at 5 more new from last year and lost 1 member. Due to members moving away and having reduced flexibility, we are looking to hire 1 more. Current Structure- 2 30 hr part-time, with some "on-call" members.
- Are we adequately covered? Answer- Shortage during the day, one call member transitioned from working nights to days but is no longer around. It fluctuates.
- Chief would not look to hire full-time if money was moved but would rather employ another part-time position.

Votes

- Vote to approve the motion to move \$1 to full-time line passed 4-3-1 (yea-nay, abstain)
- Vote to approve bottom line with amended \$1 moved passed 4-3-1 (yea-nay, abstain)

Library

Motion

- Zach Langlois moved to approve the new amended bottom line in the amount of \$144,250 (including discussion below of Increase of \$255 to Heating oil line 411 and \$16,999 to Safety compliance line 814)
- Seconded by Phil Bilodeau

Discussion

- Candace Yost, New librarian,- 2 things we want to address
 - Heating Oil line we budgeted an old number- 375 at \$1.89 but we are currently paying \$2.59

- Amend line 411 from \$1909 to \$2164 (\$255 increase to bottom line to adjust to more current heating oil price.)
- Full-Time Employee? Important to have 2 people in building
-

Vote

- Vote to approve amended passed 7-1 (yea-nay)

Motion

- Zach Langlois move to increase line 814 by \$16,999
- Seconded by Phil Bilodeau.

Discussion

- Safety compliance- Furnace Room needs walls torn down and sheetrock estimated at \$6000 to repair wood studs against the furnace.
- Estimate through RB Louis giving a budget of \$11,000 for alarm system/smoke detectors, etc.
- Need to budget \$17,000 based for safety compliance, an increase of \$16,999.
- Should it be requested as a warrant article?

Vote

- Vote to approve the amended line 814 of \$17000 passed 7-1 (yea-nay)

Highway Department

Motion- Highways & Streets Administration

- Zach Langlois moved to approve the bottom line as written in the amount of \$206,628
- Seconded by Phil Bilodeau

Discussion

- Nothing changed in budget

Vote

- Vote to approve the bottom line as written passed 8-0 (yea-nay)

Highways

Motion

- Zach Langlois moved to approve the bottom line as written in the amount of \$272,810
- Seconded by Phil Bilodeau

Discussion

- We are well over budget already for winter maintenance, and we have a reserve fund. Are we going to have to dig into reserves, if so do we need a warrant article for that? Selectmen decide about replenishing reserve fund.
- General condition of some of the roads needing resurfacing and is there a ranking order of roads. What are we handling, etc?
- South Road, warrant article defeated 2 years ago. That road will not get maintenance until a warrant article is passed. It should be funded by state, but the town is having a hard time getting the state to pay for part of it. Road must be brought up to state standards before the State can take it over.

Vote

- Vote to approve the bottom line as written 8-0 (yea-nay)

Highways- Road Sealing

Motion

- Road Sealing Jo Anne Bradbury moved to approve sealing and filling cracks \$1501
- Seconded by Phil Bilodeau

Discussion

- You could have a crew come in and have the entire town crack/sealed but it would probably cost the entire budget.
- Need will possibly be greater next year because we didn't do crack/seal this year.
- More material doesn't solve the issue of limited man power.
- In the current year man power was used for storm clean up and Pleasant Lake Project.
- Internal cost is 150k vs. contracted out would be upwards of 400k
- Internally tackle a larger project, and then save by contracting out smaller roads. Road Agent doesn't want to argue, wants to keep budget and not contract out.

Vote

- Vote to approve resurfacing/sealing as written 8-0 (yea-nay)

Highway- Road Resurfacing

Motion

- Zach Langlois moved to approve resurfacing \$265,304.
- Phil Bilodeau seconded.

Discussion

- Per the road agent this is all that is necessary to be managed in 1 year.
- Nottingham Road- Has gotten bad. Changing scope of work to do Nottingham first, then Cotton the following year.
- Overlaid Range Rd, because in 2000 it had been paved, so it needed a shim and overlay.
- Discussed suggestion for more preventative maintenance

Vote

- Voted to approve budget as written 8-0 (yea-nay)

Highways- Gravel

Motion

- Zach Langlois Moved to approve budget as written for Gravel in the amount of \$16,001.
- Phil Bilodeau seconded.

Discussion

- NONE

Vote

- Voted to approve budget as written 8-0 (yea-nay)

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Bridges

Motion

- Zach Langlois moved to approve line item \$1 for Bridges.
- Phil Bilodeau seconded.

Discussion

- None

Vote

- Voted to approve Bridges line 8-0 (yea-nay)

Dams

Motion

- Zach Langlois Moved the dam line for \$400
- Seconded by Phil Bilodeau

Discussion

- None

Vote

- Voted to approve Dam line 8-0 (yea-nay)

Revaluation and Assessment

Motion

- Zach Langlois moved to approve the bottom line as written in the amount of \$92,151
- Seconded by Phil Bilodeau

Discussion

- Every year we put in \$60,844 as place keeper in the case we have to go to bat. We only spend about 1/3 but it's a safety net if Eversource or property owners want to contest their values.
- There is no definite number of what we would spend.
- There is a rotating schedule to reevaluate homes- approximately 1/5 of properties each year.

Vote

- Vote to approve the bottom line as written passed 8-0 (yea-nay)

Veasey Park

Motion

- James Spillane moved to Table discussion until next week
- Seconded by Jo Anne Bradbury

Discussion

- None

Vote

- Vote to approve to table discussion to next week passed 8-0 (yea-nay)

Town Administration

Motion

- Zach Langlois moved to approve the bottom line as written in the amount of \$238,252
- Seconded by Phil Bilodeau

Discussion

- Maintenance Vendors - \$4038 increase- applied up to date costs of computer modules
- Budget was too low in 2017. We are way over for current year.

Vote

- Vote to approve the bottom line as written passed 8-0 (yea-nay)

Legal

Motion

- Phil Bilodeau moved to approve the bottom line as written in the amount of \$42,000.
- Seconded by Zach Langlois

Discussion

- Report run in September.
- Are we still only spending 2/3 of what we budgeted for?
- Unknown
- Number of lawsuits seems to have tapered down.
- Jim asked if we should bring number down- but others felt we cannot predict future lawsuits.
- Give it more time to see how things balance out.

Vote

- Vote to approve the bottom line as written passed 8-0 (yea-nay)

Insurance

Motion

- Zach Langlois moved to approve bottom line at \$385,217.
- Seconded by Phil Bilodeau

Discussion

- Upcoming budget based on a 2-year budget we inherited. In the 2017 budget the staffing configuration was much different at that time. Other positions making different salaries and needing different levels of single vs. family insurance plans are in the current budget..
- Police department is finally fully staffed.
- Line 290 section 125 was stated to be for administrative costs of section 125. What is the \$1050 fee we might have in this line item? Question directed to book keeper or finance director.

- Line 521 is deductible reimbursement. Who gets this benefit? Anyone with insurance coverage has this benefit.
- Rates are changing for insurance coverage. New retirement rate for full time people, it seems like the \$79,000 was high but finance director did look at this number and approved it.

Vote

- Vote to approve the bottom line as written passed 8-0 (yea-nay)

Personnel Administration

Motion

- Zach Langlois moved to approve the bottom line as written in the amount of \$96,500.
- Seconded by Phil Bilodeau

Discussion

We are still maintaining a line for performance line but not using it. Why aren't we moving that down to a dollar

Motion

- Jim Spillane moved to reduce performance line to \$1.
- Andrea Hotaling Seconded.

Discussion

- Similar to the Bright Ideas program this would reward employees when an employee goes above and beyond.

Vote

- Vote to approve changing line .190 to \$1 failed to pass 2-6 (yea-nay)
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- Vote to pass bottom line as originally written passed 8-0 (yea-nay)

Police Department

Reevaluated based on Andrea's question last week.

Motion

- Zach Langlois moved to approve new bottom line for Police to \$820,063 which would include an increase to the retirement line .230 of \$28,086
- Seconded by Phil Bilodeau

Discussion

- Dollar on line .192 allows us to accept special details from other towns.
- Relying on numbers from book keeper.
- Money is for our own guys.

Vote

- Vote to approve new bottom line as written passed 8-0 (yea-nay)

George B. White Building

George B. White page 21. John reported on two items that the Andy Robertson had reviewed. The heating oil estimate was overstated by \$5442 and line .411 of the budget should be reduced to \$24,700 . Additionally, the water testing line .390 needs to increase by \$130 to \$2030. With those changes the bottom line would decrease from \$205,167 to \$199,725.

Motion

- Zach Langlois moved to approve the amended bottom line to \$199,855
- Seconded by Phil Bilodeau

Discussion

- None

Vote

- Vote to approve the bottom line as amended passed 8-0 (yea-nay)

Old Business

School Contract Update- Inside binders includes operating and default budgets as well as new approved contract between school board and teachers' union. To be discussed next Tuesday, December 11, 2018.

Figure from last year includes 2 warrant articles, so reality is once warrant articles pass, they become part of the budget. Big issue is that we can't all fit in one building, but we will continue to fit in one building for this year. No modules planned for this year.

New Business

Resigning from Budget committee-Ben Minerd.

Motion

- Zach Langlois moved to accept resignation.
- Phil Bilodeau seconded.

Discussion

- Discussion of how soon to fill vacancy. Should we wait until January or fill by December 18th? If people can express interested by the 18th then we at least have someone sitting in for remainder.
- Disagreement on opening and how long to open position for.
-
- Motion on the floor to publicize opening as we normally would (post tomorrow Dec. 5th) for selection on the 18th.
- Invite candidates to come make their case on the 18th.

Vote

Vote to Accept resignation 8-0 (yea, nay)_

Adjourn

Motion

- Zach Langlois moved to adjourn the meeting
- Seconded by Phil Bilodeau

Discussion

- None

Vote

- Vote to adjourn passed 8-0 (yea-nay)