

**ENFIELD BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
**February 3, 2010 Public Hearing Meeting Minutes**  
**DPW Building – 6:00PM**

**Budget Committee Members:** Judy Finsterbush, Shirley Green, Gayle Hulva, Roberta Morse, Doug Pettibone, Lori Saladino, Paul Mirski, David Stewart

**Excused:** Fred Cummings, Gail Malz

**Administration:** Steve Schneider (Town Manager), Wendy Huntley (Recorder)

**Others:** Donald Crate (Selectman), John Kluge (Selectman), Judy Kmon, Francine Lozeau, Leah Wood, Dan Kiley, Morris Vanderpot, Marjorie Carr, Robert Cavalieri

**Administrative:**

Pettibone called the meeting to order at 6:08 PM

**Public Hearing ~ 2010 Budget**

Handout available to the public: TOWN OF ENFIELD BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT

A Copy of this handout is attached.

Pettibone presented the PowerPoint slides.

Kiley questioned how the Enfield Village Association (EVA) fits in to the current budget with the Budget Committee's philosophical objections listed on page 11 in regards to Regional Associations.

Pettibone explained the Budget Committee sees EVA as separate from Regional Associations. All EVA's activities are directed to the improvement of the town and therefore serves a specific town public purpose. All EVA officials are town residents, including a Town government official, and therefore provides good "town oversight".

Finsterbush added that Delores Struckoff (EVA Executive Director) came before the committee with a presentation in which she spoke about how EVA

generates new tax revenues for the town.

Therefore EVA is viewed as an Economical Development Agency instead of a Regional Association.

Kiley responded that any new tax money generated by goes into the Tax Increment Finance District fund.

Schneider agreed.

Vanderpot questioned if there had been a discussion regarding long and short term structuring of the way the Town does business. Meaning besides open office hours and a work force of certain size, are there other considerations that over time will radically change the way the Town is doing business?

Pettibone answered that the Budget Committee purpose is to set the budget. Early on in the budget process, the Committee decided it was the goal to hold the tax rate level while maintaining the services offered to the public as best as possible. The Board of Selectmen (BOS) is the policy maker.

Schneider added those conversations happen at the BOS level and between Town Manager and Department heads.

Vanderpot commented that in the presentation the feeling doesn't come thru that discussions have occurred regarding maintaining the level of service at its current level in the face of declining revenues. There are many who believe that the revenues will not come back to the way they were for several years. He suggested that the Town needs to undergo a radical change in how it does business. He would like to see the practical points not just philosophical points about how we're not going to have the revenues.

Crate and Kluge both stated that the BOS has made a conscious decision to maintain the employment of the present employees. Barring some further disaster that is our current position.

Crate added that the Town's Departments work diligently to keep costs down.

Schneider commented that the BOS completed outlining a strategic plan vision for the next 5, 10 & 20 years and will be looking for other boards' input. This plan will help to direct us towards what we would like the community to look like in the future and assess how to adapt our operations for the future.

Vanderpot believes that where the Town hopes to go and how it plans to get there should be the headline in the power point presentation. Also added that

comment that he loves the fact that there isn't going to be a town tax increase.

Kiley also commented that he is glad the tax is staying the same. However he is concerned that the capital reserves are just about gone. This is the second year capital reserves have not been funded and probably will not see any funds go into them for the next three or four years. When the Department of Public-Works building is paid off, the Town may have to use that money to buy equipment because the capital reserves have dwindled.

Finsterbush stated that the committee is well aware that the capital reserves have not been funded and that if the economy remains very poor we may have to bite the bullet as the years go by.

Paul Mirski in response to Vanderpot. We have discussed outside influences on our budget, like the requirements for fire departments. There are agencies out there that set up codes and requirements that drive up costs for the Town.

Vanderpot stated that from his point of view, in 10 years our world of economics will not be the same. The costs are coming back down to local governments. Unfunded mandates are the worst thing for the local economy.

Mirski commented in 2012 there is an opportunity to get back some influence from the state. There is a constitution amendment that will hopefully give a representative to each town. Because of this amendment, Mirski himself is not pessimistic about the future.

Mirski added that he feels the State is short changing towns on funding and that is one reason why we are having this discussion on the regionals.

Mirski added regulatory stuff causes us trouble. There is a constitution that states cannot effect changes that cost towns. Not the same with school districts.

Kiley would love to see one or two of the budget committee members run for the school's budget committee or school board. That is where the increase is in our overall taxes.

Stewart agreed there is a need for a big turnover with the school board and school budget committee to effect a change.

Mirski addressed the topic of Regional Associations (RAs). His personal

position is that the Town is in the business to provide services. If the Town is going to fund the RAs then there should be a known specific benefit to the Town. Most of the RAs deal with welfare situations. There should be a contract between the RAs and the Town that should be driven by welfare needs. I think it is incumbent on the RAs to tell the Town what it is they are going to provide the town. If an RA cannot provide that, then the Town should not provide funds to them. It would be a charitable donation but it should be done under contract.

Crate indicated that the RAs have provided some data regarding the services they have done for residents.

Kmon offered that the data seemed to read that we are getting a huge amount of service from the RAs in comparison to what has been given them.

Vanderpot questioned if the RA's are contracted now.

Schneider answered no.

Vanderpot recommended that going forward it should be the Town's practice to get contracts.

Finsterbush commented a few years back we established a task force to study RAs and they met with the welfare department. She explained how much money we potentially save by being able to have residents access these RAs however the tracking or oversight of this activity was impossible.

Saladino supports having contracts however, having worked for LISTEN and she doesn't know if they would be able to give specifics due to privacy and they probably shouldn't.

Pettibone added that contracts would likely cause too much red tape and be unwieldy.

Vanderpot served on United Way board in Massachusetts. The level of reporting can be down to the money, not down to the person.

Mirski stated if the United Way could get an answer then the Town should be able to get an answer too.

Schneider commented there is a fundamental difference between United Way and the Town.

Mirski believes the welfare personnel can get the information regarding who receives services from what RAs.

Schneider offered the example of the Town of Enfield and the City of Lebanon's contract for ambulance service. We don't know how many calls we're going to need covered but we contract on an amount per call. We may be able to come up with something to quantify this so that at the end of the year the numbers can reflect the help to citizens. It would cover; "This is what you want, this is what you want to pay for, and this is what you get".

Bob Cavalieri offered a statement opposing the Town funding of RAs...

"I fully appreciate the good that charitable organizations do for our communities. I do not, however, support our local Town Government mandating the funding of non-profit charitable organizations through use of our tax dollars. Today, because some people are struggling to pay their taxes due to the downturn in the economy, some are on fixed incomes and others are out of work, local government needs to hold the line on its budget. I believe in principal, local government should not decide, or even be involved in, the funding of any charities for the community as a whole. Not to mention, when I asked a fellow Enfield resident what he thought about funding various charitable organizations with our tax dollars, he said he already funds some of those organizations by donating to them and doesn't see the need to do more.

I believe some charitable organizations, such as the LISTEN Center, are based, at least in part, on donations of goods from our citizens. LISTEN then sells those goods back to our community. As individuals, anyone can choose to donate goods to support LISTEN and through purchases in their thrift stores. LISTEN then use the proceeds from sales to the citizens of Enfield to support programs, such as a food pantry, Heat Helpers, holiday baskets, Housing Helpers, summer camp, Thrift Store vouchers, and USDA food, as you can see in the 2008 Town Report. The system of charity is not designed so that those who need it end up paying for it in a per capita way.

I am sure one can make financial contributions as one chooses, but as a Town taxpayer I do not believe we should mandate charitable contributions by raising taxes for all. Funding charities should be a personal responsibility and a personal choice. Please allow each of us as individuals to decide to fund whatever charities we should choose."

Stewart commented he agrees philosophically with Mr. Cavalieri but we are bound by law to help those in need in our town. There is one RA, Advanced Transit that he doesn't think should be asking for Town funding. People should pay for the ride if they can afford it. If someone can't afford the ride, they should come to the welfare office for a voucher. Stewart believes there are people on those buses that can afford to pay something to ride.

Saladino agreed that there are white-collar people taking that bus.

Stewart added there are Hanover employees that ride the bus because of parking issues in Hanover.

Dan Kiley ran a public transit agency. These agencies get more riders when it's free than when riders are charged. With lower ridership, it's harder for them to get grants, which are mostly based on ridership. Also, they can get more matching funds when individuals and organizations give money to support them.

Vanderpot noted we have to fund mandated services but we do not have to give to charities.

Finsterbush explained that this is why the word 'philosophical' is being used. Everyone has his or her own opinion and we've spent hours discussing RAs.

**Finsterbush made a motion to adjourn the Public Hearing. Shirley Green 2nd. All in favor.**

**Regular business session:**

Pettibone called the meeting to order at 7:08

Draft minutes of January 14th 2010:  
Mirski had several changes.

It was agreed to make the changes and then have draft minutes sent to all committee members. Approval of the minutes will be on the agenda of next year's first meeting.

**Warrant and official State Form Budget**

Schneider stated tonight the Committee is to vote on whether to recommend the warrant articles involving any appropriations brought forward by the public, boards and committee. Non-monetary articles are voted on Tuesday (March 9th) before the deliberative session (Saturday March 13th).

**Article 3:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee's and Selectmen's recommended sum of four million, eight hundred seventy-six thousand, three hundred sixty-seven dollars, **(\$4,876,367)** , for general municipal operations. This article does not include

any additional special or individual articles addressed. (Estimated tax impact \$5.51 per \$1,000 valuation.)

**Mirski made a motion to recommend Article 3. Hulva seconded. No discussion was had. Motion passed by a vote of 8 Yes - 0 No**

Article 4: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred ninety thousand dollars (**\$190,000**) to purchase the following Public Works vehicles/equipment:

Backhoe: \$140,000 Appropriation, 25.455 cents estimated tax impact per \$1,000 valuation, \$51 estimated tax impact on \$200,000 home.

F550 1-Ton Dump Truck: \$50,000 Appropriation, 9.091 cents estimated tax impact per \$1,000 valuation, \$18 estimated tax impact on \$200,000 home.

\$190,000 Total appropriation, 34.546 cents total estimated tax impact per \$1,000 valuation, \$69 total estimated tax impact on \$200,000 home.

**Hulva made a motion to recommend Article 4. Finsterbush seconded. No discussion was had. Motion passed by a vote of 6 Yes - 2 No**

**Article 8: (By Petition)** Shall the Town of Enfield raise and appropriate the sum of three thousand, four hundred seven-two dollars (**\$3,472**) in support the Tri-County Cap Community Contact Office? This is \$16.00 per household Tri-County CAP uses to assist with Fuel & Electric Assistance and Homeless Outreach. (Estimated tax impact is less than .631 cents per \$1,000 valuation.)

**Mirski made a motion to recommend Article 8. Saladino seconded.**

Mirski questioned if there is a contract with Tri-county CAP.

Schneider responded no.

**Motion failed by a vote of 0 Yes – 8 No The Budget Committee does not recommend Article 8.**

**Article 9: (By Petition)** Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of thirteen thousand nine hundred dollars (**\$13,900**) to help support the home health, maternal and child health, and hospice care provided in patients' homes and in community settings by the **Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice of VT and NH**? In 2009, the VNA & Hospice of VT and NH made 2,256 homecare visits to 220 residents and provided approximately \$141,561 of uncompensated care to Enfield residents. (Estimated tax impact 2.527 cents per \$1,000 valuation.)

**Green made a motion to recommend Article 9. Stewart seconded.**

Stewart questioned if there is a contract with the Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice of VT and NH.

Schneider responded no.

**Motion failed by a vote of 0 Yes – 8 No The Budget Committee does not recommend Article 9.**

**Article 10: (By Petition)** Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of seven thousand two hundred fifty-eight dollars (**\$7,258**) for the Grafton County Senior Citizens Council for services for Enfield residents in 2010? These services include congregate meals, home delivered meals, transportation, adult in-home care, outreach support, ServiceLink support and more. In 2009, Grafton County Senior Citizens Council, Inc. provided services for 166 Enfield residents, and ServiceLink provided services for 88 residents, and the cost of providing these services was \$126,979.84. (Estimated tax impact 1.320 cents per \$1,000 valuation.)

**Green made a motion to recommend Article 10. Stewart seconded.**

Stewart questioned if there is a contract with the Grafton County Senior Citizens Council.

Schneider responded no.

**Motion failed by a vote of 0 Yes – 8 No The Budget Committee does not recommend Article 10.**

**Article 11: (By Petition)** To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of five thousand two hundred fifty dollars (**\$5,250**) for Advance Transit for the 2010 calendar year. Advance Transit provides Enfield residents free rides to hospitals, shopping centers, schools, and regional agencies in the Upper valley. The service reduces traffic congestion, improves access to jobs and employment opportunities, and enhances mobility and transportation options for residents with disabilities. Support for the Advance Transit program will help to sustain this free service for the benefit of the community. (Estimated tax impact is .955 cents per \$1,000 valuation.)

**Stewart made a motion to recommend Article 11. Mirski seconded.**

Mirski questioned if there is a contract with Advance Transit.

Schneider responded no.

**Motion failed by a vote of 0 Yes – 8 No The Budget Committee does not recommend Article 11.**

**Article 12: (By Petition)** Shall the Town of Enfield raise and appropriate the sum of five thousand four hundred ninety one dollars (**\$5,491**) for the support of professional mental health services provided by West Central Behavioral Health? This appropriation will be used to pay West Central Behavioral Health for services provided to uninsured and underinsured Enfield residents who



use West Central Behavioral Health's psychological, psychiatric, case management and emergency mental health services. Last year one hundred and thirty nine (139) Enfield residents were patients of West Central Behavioral Health. Of the 139 served 69 were Enfield's children. Enfield's appropriation will only be used to support services to Enfield residents. (Estimated tax impact is .998 cents per \$1,000 valuation.)

**Saladino made a motion to recommend Article 12. Stewart seconded.**

Finsterbush questioned if there is a contract with West Central Behavioral Health.

Schneider responded no.

**Motion failed by a vote of 0 Yes – 8 No The Budget Committee does not recommend Article 12.**

**Article 13: (By Petition)** Shall the town raise and appropriate the sum of seven thousand dollars (**\$7,000.00**) for Headrest, Inc. for services for Enfield residents in 2010. These services include 24-hour Hotline, substance abuse counseling, residential detox, transitional living, NA meetings, and more. Headrest has always provided these services to the citizens of Enfield regardless of the ability to pay. (Estimated tax impact is 1.273 cents per \$1,000 valuation.)

**Saladino made a motion to recommend Article 13. Finsterbush seconded.**

Stewart questioned if there is a contract with Headrest.

Schneider responded no.

**Motion failed by a vote of 0 Yes – 8 No The Budget Committee does not recommend Article 13.**

**Article 14: (By Petition)** Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of two thousand three hundred dollars (**\$2,300**) to help support the crisis intervention and support services and community outreach and violence prevention program at WISE (Women's Information Service) located in Lebanon, NH and serving the Town of Enfield as well as twelve additional towns in the Upper Valley of Vermont and New Hampshire. (Estimated tax impact is .418 cents per \$1,000 valuation.)

**Green made a motion to recommend Article 14. Saladino seconded.**

Morse questioned if there is a contract with WISE.

Schneider responded no.

**Motion failed by a vote of 0 Yes – 8 No The Budget Committee does not recommend Article 14.**

**Article 15: (By Petition)** Shall the Town of Enfield raise and appropriate the sum of three thousand four hundred sixty three dollars (**\$3,463**) for the support of public health program services provided by Mascoma Valley

Health Initiative in 2010? This appropriation represents an allocation of 75 cents per capita. This appropriation will be used to pay Mascoma Valley Health Initiative for services provided to adult, youth and child residents of Enfield who use Mascoma Valley health Initiative's public health immunization, youth alcohol and drug prevention, after school program, outreach and referral services. In 2009, Mascoma Valley Health Initiative conducted a seasonal flu clinic in Enfield and immunized more than 500 individuals. This appropriation will be used to support MVHI's work to protect and promote the health of Enfield residents. (Estimated tax impact is .630 cents per \$1,000 valuation.)

**Finsterbush made a motion to recommend Article 15. Stewart seconded.**

Stewart questioned if there is a contract with MVHI.

Schneider responded no.

**Motion failed by a vote of 0 Yes – 8 No The Budget Committee does not recommend Article 15.**

Schneider explained that the BOS chose to show their votes as a 3 Yes – 0 No count and asked the budget committee if they too would like to show their vote in this manner?

The consensus by the budget committee was to reflect the numbers for/against.

Schneider then requested a motion for the MS-7.

Pettibone asked if the BOS was in agreement with the Budget Committee's recommendation for the baseline budget (Article 3)...

Schneider responded yes.

**Finsterbush made a motion to approve the MS7. Morse seconded. No discussion was had.**

**Motion passed by a vote of 8 Yes – 0 No. The Budget Committee approved the MS-7.**

**ADJOURN:** Finsterbush motioned to adjourn, Saladino seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 7.30.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Huntley  
Recorder