

**BUDGET COMMITTEE
JANUARY 22, 2009
DPW – 6:00 pm**

Members Present: Lee Carrier (Chair), Shirley Green, Gayle Hulva, Gail Malz, Richard Martin, Roberta Morse, David Stewart (Vice-Chair)

Excused: Lori Saladino

Absent: Don Crate (Selectman)

Staff: Steve Schneider

The meeting was called to order at 6:09 PM.

1. APPROVAL OF 01/08/2009 MINUTES

It was moved by STEWART, seconded by MORSE, to approve the minutes of January 8, 2009 as amended. The Motion carried. (FINSTERBUSCH abstained.)

2. REVIEW SELECTMEN'S TAX PROPOSAL OF 01/20/2009

Schneider advised of the presentation he and CARRIER provided to the Selectmen of the Memorandum of 2009 Budget Changes. The changes outlined in the Memorandum resulted in a tax rate of 6.60. Schneider said the Selectmen are of the opinion that the Town needs to demonstrate that measures are being taken to reflect the current economy. They asked that the tax rate be as close to the current rate of 6.86, but under.

Schneider said in considering where to put money back into the budget, the issues of employee wages/benefits were discussed at length. Originally, the proposed 2009 budget included a 5 hour/week increase for the Deputy Town Clerk, which would make the position eligible for insurance benefits. Potentially this could increase insurance costs up to \$20,000 annually, depending upon the insurance package chosen by the employee. Schneider said the Selectmen feel it is more important to put money back into the Public Works budget this year, where if the year turns out better than expected, more could be spent. Schneider said in New Hampshire, it is difficult to create a contingency line in your budget because you have to raise the tax rate to fund it. Putting money back into the Public Works budget provides cushioning not otherwise allowed.

Schneider said the Selectmen agreed to add the following back into the budget to bring the tax rate up to 6.80:

- \$24,500 Police Department New Equipment to purchase a new cruiser
- \$22,000 Highway & Grounds New & Replacement Equipment to purchase a new pick-up

- \$45,000 Highways & Grounds Pavement Maintenance
- \$10,000 into various other departments including Town Clerk & Tax Collector personnel time, Fire Department budget, etc.

The above changes bring the total budget to \$4,678,000. Revenue projections remain at \$1,744,000. The overlay is \$21,000 and the Town has \$59,000 in credit. That leaves \$3,007,000 to be raised in taxes, which is equal to a tax rate of 6.80.

Enfield's tax rate was 6.59 four years ago. It has increased \$0.25 over the last four years; an average increase of 1%.

3. REVIEW OF WARRANT ARTICLES

CARRIER said one of the major articles on the Town Warrant will propose a transfer of \$211,800 from municipal capital reserves to Public Works equipment reserves.

It was noted that a petitioned article would be presented at Town Meeting for Enfield to separate from the School District. If approved, the School District will have to form a committee to study the effects of Enfield's departure.

The Budget Committee will review all of the petitioned articles and their potential increased expenditures at the next meeting.

4. GENERAL COMMENTS IN PREPERATION FOR PUBLIC HEARING ON 02/09/2009

CARRIER advised of the 2008 Budget Committee Letter he prepared for the Annual Report that was emailed to the Committee members previously. He asked members to submit comments to him.

It was noted that CARRIER's, MARTIN's and STEWART's terms with the Budget Committee were expiring. CARRIER and MARTIN have chosen not to run for re-election. Friday, January 30th, is the deadline to submit names to fill the vacant seats in the next election.

5. ACTION ITEMS

~~10/30/08: All departments are to submit their budget numbers to the Committee by the next meeting.~~

~~10/30/08: DPW is to provide a breakdown of their proposed \$180,000 funding request.~~

~~11/13/08: Members are to come up with \$560,000 in budget cuts.~~

~~11/20/08: Stewart will take up preservation concerns with the Library staff during that department's budget review.~~

~~11/20/08: Schneider is to provide stats on the number of employees per department.~~

~~11/20/08: STEWART was asked to follow up with Library staff concerns about preservation of WWII articles during the Library budget review.~~

~~11/22/08: CARRIER will provide an organization chart to Committee in the future.~~

11/22/08: Schneider will provide a list of the DPW Special Projects.

11/22/08: Mr. Daniels will provide calculations of savings from the reclaimer.

~~11/22/08: Mr. Daniels will provide a report on pothole maintenance.~~

11/22/08: Mr. Daniels will research other municipalities that have the infrared unit and how it is working for them.

11/22/08: Mr. Daniels will provide the cost to complete the Tax Mapping project.

~~11/22/08: CARRIER will provide a list of DPW equipment (vehicle inventory).~~

~~12/18/08: Beth is to email Lee Hanover rates/fees for permit applications.~~

6. ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned at 6:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Rivard, Secretary