

Budget Committee

Public Meeting

January 21st, 2006

Chairman Carrier convened a business meeting of the Budget Committee in the Ilene P. Reed training room, located at 74 Lockehaven Road, Enfield, NH, 2005 at 8:34 am.

Committee Members: Lee Carrier - Chairman, Gayle Hulva - Vice Chair, Eric Crate, David L. Stewart, Shirley Green, Dominic Albanese - Selectman, Richard Martin, Judy Finsterbusch, Christopher Christopoulos

Guests: Nancy Scovner - Selectman, Curtis Payne - Selectman

Absent: Lori Bliss Hill

Administrative Staff: Steven Schneider - Town Manager, Wendy Huntley – Recorder

- **Administrative**

Dominic Albanese explained that the Regional Associations portion of the budget would have to be a warrant article because the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee have different recommendations for funding.

01-4197-001 (Advance Transit) Eric Crate believes due to Federal and State funding, the Town doesn't need to increase the amount given from previous years. He believes the taxpayers are paying three times for this service: once to the Federal Government, once to the State and once to the Town in the form of taxes. Advance Transit should be more aggressive in seeking personal donations or maybe start minimally charging a fee for rides.

01-4197-006 (Senior Citizens Council) Eric Crate believes that the increased requested from 2005 is justified.

01-4197-113 (Enfield Village Association) Eric Crate believes that EVA is good for the Town but everybody else has gotten cut and so should they. Cutting them will help taxpayers.

01-4197-010 (ACORN) Eric Crate believes that since ACORN hasn't requested money the past couple of years and since the Budget Committee is doing a restructuring of Regional Association donations, that a new request such as this should not be added this year.

01-4197-001 (Advance Transit) David L. Stewart feels the way Eric Crate does. Feels that riders should also contribute to Advance Transit.

01-4197-113 (Enfield Village Association) David L. Stewart believes that EVA should be able to get more personal donations.

David L. Stewart agrees that the Town needs to keep a handle on Regional Association requests and that a structure needs to be created for requests and making donations.

01-4197-001 (Advance Transit) Chris Christopolous fees that Advance Transit has been evasive in answering questions. Does not buy that charging riders twenty-five cents is going to decrease rider ship.

01-4197-006 (Senior Citizens Council) Chris Christopolous believes that the numbers were not there to justify that much of an increase.

01-4197-010 (ACORN) Chris Christopolous believes that the Town should not fund new requests till a plan is in place for requests and donations

01-4197-113 (Enfield Village Association) Chris Christopolous stated that he goes back and forth on this one. Time to tighten the purse stings a bit. Operationally, the Town has to provide services to the Taxpayers. We need to look at the requests from Regional Associations too. His gut feeling is that having the Regional Associations as a warrant article will put the money back into the budget.

Dominic Albanese reminded the Committee that they are to act on behalf of the Residents and not self.

01-4197-001 (Advance Transit) Dominic Albanese handed out a sheet titled Advance Transit Passenger Statistics 7/1/02-6/30/03 and asked the committee members think about the impact to the tax rate versus the impact on the organization functions.

Dominic Albanese believes it was a mistake not having copies made of the Regional Association request packets and distributed to each member.

01-4197-006 (Senior Citizens Council) Dominic Albanese stated that it cost \$118,600+ for services to Enfield senior in 2005. If their requested amount is cut, it may affect the meals on wheel and other essential services to Enfield seniors.

01-4197-010 (ACORN) Dominic Albanese agrees with not funding any new requests this year.

01-4197-113 (Enfield Village Association) Dominic Albanese stated that this is not fat organization. EVA does ask for donations.

Nancy Scovner thanked everyone for a fantastic job on the Budget.

01-4197-001 (Advance Transit) Nancy Scovner stated that the aged people who can't drive and the poor people who work for minimum wage would find a twenty-five cent cost per ride expensive. These people need those rides. Look at the people waiting for the bus. They are not exactly wealthy people.

01-4197-113 (Enfield Village Association) Nancy Scovner stated to the committee that the Town has given \$10,000 to EVA since it began. They count on it. We wouldn't have the Farmers' Market, Sweet Treats, Christmas Party and other social activities or the decorations around Town. The Town wouldn't have most of the stuff on Main Street if it weren't for EVA. The best thanks we can give them is to maintain our level of contribution. Nancy Scovner stated that she would not like to see the Regional Associations as a warrant article.

01-4197-001 (Advance Transit) Curtis Payne believe that Nancy Scovner stated it best. The people standing out at the bus station are not the wealthy. Curtis has ridden the bus and the people on the bus probably would rather not ride the bus but have to ride the bus. Relative to what we give, riders get a tremendous value. The Federal Government and State also keep cutting too.

01-4197-006 (Senior Citizens Council) I support seniors all the time. They are the ones who supported us to get us where we are. \$700 isn't going to break the Town.

01-4197-113 (Enfield Village Association) Enfield has been seen in a different light by the area due to EVA. The Town now is a cut above, seen as a jewel in the area.

01-4197-010 (ACORN) Without a group like ACORN, you may see a spike in HIV and disease in the area.

01-4197-113 (Enfield Village Association) Richard Martin stated, that drives down Main Street are a lot nicer. He agrees with Chris Christopolous that the Departments are being nickel and dimed and now the Regional Associations need a closer look. Budget Committee's job is to cut where it can.

01-4197-113 (Enfield Village Association) Shirley Green stated that she had voted to decrease funding because of how successful they are. Their membership is growing. Believes that they should be able to apply for more grant money because they are now able to show what they have done.

01-4197-006 (Senior Citizens Council) Shirley Green believes that they only showed a need for an additional \$1,000 in the paperwork.

01-4197-001 (Advance Transit) Shirley Green recognizes that a lot of people in Enfield use the bus.

01-4197-001 (Advance Transit) Judy Finsterbusch is suspect of statistics given by any organization requesting funds.

01-4197-006 (Senior Citizens Council) Judy Finsterbusch supports cutting the rate of increase.

01-4197-113 (Enfield Village Association) Judy Finsterbusch voted to keep funding at \$10,000. Believes it sends a bad message to say great job – but here is less to work with.

Gayle Hulva state that she voted in favor of cuts in funding the Regional Associations. She is in favor of creating a subcommittee for coming up with criteria in regards to funding the Regional Associations. She believes the Regional Associations need to step up to the plate like Departments.

Lee Carrier stated that he had voted in favor for funding all Regional Associations like the Board of Selectmen's budget.

01-4197-001 (Advance Transit) Lee Carrier stated that he voted in favor because Advance Transit came in and spoke with the Board of Selectmen.

01-4197-006 (Senior Citizens Council) Lee Carrier stated that he was in step with what Curtis Payne had said.

01-4197-113 (Enfield Village Association) Lee Carrier spoke to the Committee about 78 Main Street and stated that when complete, the estimated revenue to the Town will be \$6,000 from taxes and water/sewer. EVA is currently in negotiations for another house and that house will kick in another \$5,000 in taxes for the Town. Due to EVA, the Town of Enfield's overall value has been increased by .5%-2% because of the projects on Main Street. EVA spends about \$50,000 to run EVA. Lee Carrier is willing to share financials with anyone. The \$10,000 requested is 20% of the annual budget for EVA. 78 Main Street cost \$68,000 to purchase and EVA has put in another \$250,000 to date. In 2005, EVA has put a list together of 150 skilled trades people within the Town. EVA has approached fifteen of these people. Out of the fifteen people, thirteen gave contributions to 78 Main Street totaling \$105,000. What message does it send to the balance of people when the Town is decreasing their funding? By the time EVA is done, they will have put about \$350,000 in 78 Main Street. For the river walk, EVA has spent about \$19,000. The river walk brings the community together. It's a community thing. The Town can't collect money the way EVA can.

Chris Christopolous made a motion to restore **01-4197-001 (Advance Transit)** funding to \$4,000. Dominic Albanese second. Seven in favor. Two opposed. Motion carried.

Chris Christopolous made a motion to restore **01-4197-006 (Senior Citizens Council)** funding to \$6,450. Dominic Albanese second. Seven in favor, two opposed. Motion carried.

Judy Finsterbusch made a motion to restore **01-4197-113 (Enfield Village Association)** funding to \$10,000. Chris Christopolous second. Six in favor. Two opposed. Lee Carrier abstained. Motion carried.

Judy Finsterbusch made a motion to zero fund **01-4197-010 (ACORN)**. Chris Christopolous second. All in favor. Motion carried.

Nancy Scovner and Curtis Payne agree to go along with the zero funding for **01-4197-010 (ACORN)**.

Lee Carrier stated that now no warrant article will be necessary for the Regional Associations and opened the floor for general comments.

Eric Crate questioned lines in the Ambulance budget :**01-4215-680 (Uniforms and Safety Gear)& 01-4215-740(New Equipment)**. Wanted to know why jackets, safety vests are listed in the -740 line and not in the -680 line.

Dominic Albanese explained that the selectmen gave the directive to the Fast Squad in June for no more spending for non-essential items. The Fast Squad will be under scrutiny in 2006.

Lee Carrier recommended that the lines be left as is and let the Board of Selectmen manage the Fast Squad this year.

Eric Crate questioned line **01-4550-822 (Library Special Projects)**. Eric Crate understands that the Library Trustees payback any expenses charged to this line, but they never use the entire budget amount so isn't that part of the Tax Rate?

Dominic Albanese thinks that maybe we could just fund \$1 in that line. Will look into it.

David L. Stewart is looking forward to 2006 and looking at the benefits package for employees and keeping the employees happy. David is will to be on the committee

Dominic Albanese spoke about how the selectmen were informed this morning that the furnace at Union Street Fire Station had a crack in it.

Richard Martin explained that Chief David Crate believes that it is patched and will probably get thru this winter, but will need \$4,000 to replace it.

Dominic Albanese made a motion to take \$2,500 out of **01-4220-660 (Fire Vehicle Repair and Maintenance)** reducing the line to \$7,500 and put a total of \$4,500 into **01-4194-436 (Union Street Station)** to fix or replace the furnace, increasing the budgeted amount to \$5,500. Chris Christopolous second. All in favor. Motion passed.

Shirley Green stated that she too is looking forward to the Benefits being looked at this year.

Judy Finsterbusch thanked everyone for making her first year on the budget committee stimulating.

Gayle Hulva also is looking forward to having the benefits and health insurance plans looked at. Questioned whether the water and sewer funds are now enterprise funds.

Dominic Albanese suggested that a small committee be formed in 2006 to research enterprise funds.

Eric Crate questioned whether the old garage on Shedd Street could possible be used for a salt shed.

Lee Carrier reviewed that the Town is not spending more money in 2006 than in 2005. Regarding the tax rate, the Board of Selectmen is to decide on a revenue amount. If the revenues hold up like in 2005, the tax rate should remain the same. We've done a great job.

Break 10:15-10:25am.

Steven Schneider stated that it is too early for actual revenue figures. In 2007, hope to have established goals for revenues before deciding on the budget. The majority of revenues come from property taxes. Early on, would like to establish a tax rate. Steven Schneider then reviewed the handout in the packet from the meeting of the 19th labeled Town Tax Rate Review. The goal in 2006 is to keep the tax rate at \$6.59/1,000 or as close as we can.

Lee Carrier distributed and reviewed a sheet labeled Town of Enfield Accrued Income & Suggested Disbursement. There are six capital reserve accounts that are not currently being used. These lines should be cleaned up.

David L. Stewart asked whether the \$9,034 could be used for the glass crusher?

Dominic Albanese suggested using the \$3,307 in the Revitalization account to offset the payment to EVA and the \$17,066 to offset the payment for the new cruiser.

Action Items

Next Meeting: Public Hearing, Monday Feb 6th at 6:00PM, at the DPW Facility, in the Ilene P. Reed training room, located at 74 Lockehaven Road, Enfield, NH.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn came forward at 11:45 am from Judy Finsterbusch with a seconded from Chris Christopolous. Motion carried.