

# **Budget Committee**

## **Public Meeting**

### **October 28, 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, at 8:40am.

**PRESENT:** Lee Carrier - Chairman, Gayle Hulva - Vice Chair, Eric Crate, Shirley Green, Richard Martin, Judy Finsterbusch, Bob Cusick, Lori Bliss Hill, Dominic Albanese - Selectman

**ABSENT:** David L. Stewart

**GUESTS:** none

**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF:** Steven Schneider - Town Manager, Wendy Huntley - Recorder

- **Administrative**

. Approval of August 24<sup>th</sup> minutes tabled till next meeting.

#### **Update on Salary and Benefits**

Steve Schneider explained the following:

A questionnaire was sent to all full time employees regarding benefits and there were an excellent number of employees who responded.

Health & salary were most important issues.

The results were then shared with all employees.

Steve Schneider's philosophy is that raises should be based on performance.

The "steps" system will be revamped.

Prescriptions are usually the biggest impact on health insurances.

We've split up into 5 smaller teams.

Salary

Health INS

Retirement

Time off

Other

Next week meetings are set up to meet with each group.

The more employees buy into these things the easier it is to sell.

Being a little more like the rest of the world is.

Bob Cusick questioned if the state has any plans that the town could enter into a group?

Steve Schneider responded that we already are with the New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA).

Steve Schneider explained that self-insurance is really the most cost effective way to go if you have the number of employees. You would have to have at least 200 members before it makes sense. If we could get other Towns in together, it might make sense.

Lee Carrier asked what with timing with all of this?

Steve Schneider responded that he may be able to incorporate some of this in the 2007 budget, but really the goal is to set outline for long term. We may not resolve all issues this year, but we will be starting in the right direction. You don't want an employee to go home with less money than they did the year before. Our job is to prepare the employee for when they are not with us anymore, not pay for them when they are not with the Town any more.

Investigating health savings accounts as well.

When an employee retires, the biggest cost they have to worry about is Health Insurance.

Steve Schneider stated that the budget he is looking at has 4-1/2%: 3-1/2 performance 1% cola.

Lee Carrier asked when we look at the benefits, what was the formula used?

Dominic Albanese responded that the Select Board budgeted for 2007 the 4-1/2% but around December 1<sup>st</sup> Steve will come back to the Board with the changes that will be coming with benefits. The first worksheet of January will show the changes.

Steve Schneider spoke to how he and the Board of Selectmen would like to make the benefits as flexible and available for as many employees as possible. Concession/benefits must balance.

Lee Carrier asked if there are any towns that have 401 retirement plans?

Steve Schneider responded that he doesn't think the Town can offer 401's.

Dominic Albanese spoke about the Police Department and what is going on. This is a journey we are starting this year. It's not all going to be done this year. We have a lot on our plate this year with this and the Town Hall/Library building project.

Lee Carrier stated that the greatest thing is to get understanding thru to the employees.

Bob Cusick asked if anyone didn't actually get the 4-1/2% in 2006?

Steve Schneider responded yes.

Steve Schneider explained how he and the Police Chief, with the DPW Director, sat down and reviewed the pay scale and came up with a scale of merit for employee reviews.

Gayle Hulva asked if the Town pays for the person and the family plan?

Steve Schneider answered yes.

Gayle further question as to how much the Town pays.

Steve Schneider responded that it depends on the plan.

Dominic Albanese spoke about the Police Department. He explained that an officer has resigned. Then the next day Steve Schneider was giving a notice that the Police Officers were going to file for a Union. The Board of Selectmen met with the Police Department as a group.

Steve Schneider then met with the members individually. The analysis is that the Department was being polarized. Bottom line is that the members of the Police Department have reached out to Board of Selectmen and things are getting better.

Lee Carrier asked how many Police personnel will be voting on union?

Steve Schneider answered: Five

Bob Cusick questioned if any are part-time?

Steve Schneider responded that there are no part-timers at the present.

Steve Schneider explained that the Police Officers had filed their intention. They then filed the petition. Now the Town has a period of time to interject.

Steve Schneider explained that in the long, long term, if a union forms and is here for 30 – 40 years there are going to be issues. For the short term is not a big deal.

Judy Finsterbusch asked if this the first union in the Town of Enfield?

Steve Schneider responded, yes.

Lee Carrier commented that it's all about communication.

**Update on Town offices and Library:**

Dominic Albanese explained that at the meeting held on October 23rd, the Board of Selectmen and the Building committee heard loud and clear that there was no support for a project that size and little support for library expansion.

We met with architects; and we will shrink the footprint of the new building, and the Town Offices will be on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. We are not going to separate the 2 issues of the Town Offices and Library.

Bob Cusick added that the language should be the Whitney Hall building and not Whitney Hall because people think the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.

Lori Bliss Hill questioned if the Whitney Hall building is on the historic register?

Dominic Albanese responded, no.

Lori Bliss Hill the asked if there were any outside funds available?

Dominic Albanese answered, yes. Grants, cap reserves etc.

Steve Schneider explained that if the building does go on the historical register then it would only be for the existing building and not the expansion.

Dominic Albanese spoke about a Fire & Safety Building and that this issue only came up three weeks ago. April Whittaker had brought it up a couple of years ago. A Fire & Safety Building is not in the mind of the Board of Selectmen at this time.

Richard Martin added that the Fire Wards are not behind it. As far as he is concerned, a Fire & Safety Building can wait at least 10 years till the population is large enough.

Lee Carrier stated that there is a couple of things we can do for the Fire Department. We can fix the Fire Station up some.

Dominic Albanese explained that money has been put in the budget to get things done, and things haven't been done.

Break 9:40 – 9:55

Steve Schneider spoke about the process going forward with the Town Hall Library expansion project and that the Architect and Project manager are going to work on a couple of options based on the meeting held October 23<sup>rd</sup>. The next public meeting is still on for November 13<sup>th</sup>. We will continue to have meetings to get the information out to everyone.

Dominic Albanese recommended that Budget Committee come to the meeting on the 13th.

### **Review of the 2007 budget. Only major items.**

Steve Schneider explained that this budget was constructed to attempt to come up with a new facility that will not impact the operational budget.

#### **Lines 01-4194-XXX**

General Government Buildings

Steve Schneider explained that these lines are for year-to-year maintenance expenses.

**01-4194-436 Union Street Station** has \$6,000 budgeted for maintenance.

**01-4194-432 Center Hall** has \$10,000 budgeted for painting.

Gayle Hulva asked if the interior or exterior of the Center Hall was being painted?

Steve Schneider responded that he was not sure.

**01-4194-734 DPW Garages Special Projects** has \$25,000 budgeted for paving of the driveway from Lockhaven Road to the building.

**01-4194-743 Ambulance building** has \$1,800 budgeted for asbestos abatement and roof repairs.

Lee Carrier spoke about the process this year: There are so many major things going on, unlike other years when we've gotten into the minutia and then we're scrambling at the end.

### **Review Capital Projects**

**01-4901-717 Lockhaven Road** has \$70,000 budgeted for the Cross/Drainage project.

Steve Schneider explained that the Town has an application in to the State for this project. The figure may change when the Town gets feedback from the State.

Dominic Albanese informed the Budget Committee that the Whaleback Mountain Road bridge is done, the ramp is going on the Community Building, and that Oak Grove road is fixed.

### **01-4902-748 DPW Vehicles**

Steve Schneider explained that in reality all of the vehicles are in the plan. The number of vehicles requested is fluid. \$90,000 for the roller is out. There is an opportunity to rent a roller for \$4,000/month.

Dominic Albanese stated that the request for \$25,000 for an SUV is out.

Steve Schneider explained that the mechanics truck will be shared with W/S and percentage will change.

Dominic Albanese stated that he would like inventory list.

Eric Crate asked if these vehicles requested will be replacing something or added to the fleet?

Steve Schneider responded that the vehicles requested would be replacement vehicles.

Steven Schneider believes the total may be changed to as little as \$35,000.

### **01-4915-724 Sand/Salt Facility**

Dominic Albanese stated that this is being investigated.

Lee Carrier would like to know where the lawsuit stands with the State of Maine and the EPA.

Steve Schneider informed the Budget Committee that he doesn't really have numbers from the Fire Department yet. Fire Chief, David Crate has said that they would like to get a rescue truck.

### **01-4915-743 Fire Vehicle/Equipment**

Need to add in \$80,000 for a rescue truck

Lee Carrier spoke about what Tim Jennings said at the 2006 Town Meeting as to why do we vote to put funds into Capital reserves and then vote to expend. Why create the wash?

### **01-4915-760 Municipal Vehicles**

Steve Schneider explained that this is a new line. In an effort to address the mileage for the Building Inspector and others, it has roughly an annual cost of \$3,100. Looking into purchasing a vehicle for the Building Inspector, Planning/Zoning Administrator and other employees to share for conferences etc.

Lee Carrier commented that this opens up a whole new can of worms. We can look at the numbers.

Steve Schneider replied that we could reduce the mileage lines. The current \$3100 spent would be the same as having had a car payment.

### **Capital Improvement Program (CIP)**

Dominic Albanese explained that State Law says that the Planning Board manages the CIP, the Board of Selectmen or a special committee is the overseer.

Bob Cusick commented that this is the opportunity for the Town to form the right group to manage the CIP.

Steve Schneider informed the Budget Committee that there is a common coverage in **##-###-341 Telephone/Communication** for all departments. We have a meeting next week with Paetec to review these issues. This line also includes cell phones. That is really the only one that is dramatically different from last year.

Dominic Albanese suggested that the committee look at the ambulance budget. Dominic praised Mike Mehegan for doing a tremendous job.

Dominic Albanese reminded the Budget Committee that tazers are in the Police Department budget again this year and computers.

### **Update on Meetings with Department Heads**

Lee Carrier requested that as far as Budget Committee members meeting with Department heads go, that each member make these meetings a priority now so that they can be the department's advocate.

DPW~ Eric Crate

PD ~ Bob Cusick

FD ~ Dave Stewart

Administration ~ Shirley Green

Library ~ Lori Bliss Hill

Fast Squad ~ Gayle Hulva

Community Development & Building Inspection ~ Judy Finsterbusch

Cemetery and Conservation ~ Gayle Hulva

Recreation ~ Richard Martin

### **Miscellaneous Items**

#### **Regional Associations**

Judy Finsterbusch gave the Budget Committee an update on the task force regarding Regional Association requests. Judy stated that Diane Monmaney, Human Services Director, is more than willing to come in and speak to the Budget Committee regarding the regional associations. If we don't fund them in this way, Diane will end up having to spend out of her budget. There are three new regional associations requesting money this year. We would like the Budget Committee to look over these Associations. Would like every one to become familiar with what is being requested.

The task force decided that they need the committee approval for an amount and then decide to a percentage or number increase for year to year. Dave Stewart recommended that we have a super majority vote it with the committee for the amount or percentage for increases. Any increase should not be tied to the COLA but review cost increase realistically. Take a look at how each Association impacts the population of the Town. How the monies we allocate specifically improve benefits to the people of Enfield and the tax structure.

Lee Carrier asked Judy Finsterbusch if the group has set a structure that qualifies an Association for funding?

Judy Finsterbusch responded that the group feels that they cannot do first come first serve and limit it to a certain number of requestors. We need to establish a total amount, and then allocate.

Eric Crate added that we do have to have a number certain that we can allocate between the associations.

Dominic Albanese expressed “hats off” to the task force group for working on this and that the group will need to talk about this at town meeting. Maybe we need to raise this budget by the pay increases like 4.5 [based on performance]

Lori Bliss Hill recommended that the group do a comparison of what area towns are contributing to these regional associations.

Dominic Albanese added that the group should marry the per capita to that comparison.

Lee Carrier expressed that all regional Associations are coming in together for one meeting.

Shirley Green commented that meeting with the Regional Associations was very informational.

Bob Cusick question whether the Budget Committee knows enough about the associations and if there is an agenda for the Associations to cover certain points?

Steve Schneider stated that we want the executive summary from each association.

The request was made for eight more Agency Request books.

Steve Schneider informed the Budget Committee that there are three personnel changes from part time to full time.

- 1.) Executive office, under Human Services, making the Human Services Director a fulltime position. She would also be assisting other departments as necessary.
- 2.) DPW, Planning/Zoning, Building Inspector shared secretary part time position to a fulltime position.
- 3.) DPW part time seasonal Grounds worker to full time permanent/floater and eliminating the part time seasonal position. The floater will cover other departments to help reduce overtime.

Judy Finsterbusch expressed that she is extremely impressed with Diane Monmaney.

Steve Schneider has met with Lebanon's City Manager to discuss making a Regional Human Services Office. (Like ambulance and sewer)

Dominic Albanese stated that from the board of Selectmen's perspective we wanted more support for Steve. We resisted sharing Diane with Lebanon. With the floater we would get more stability with groundwork, reduce overtime with Solid Waste and safety coverage with confined spaces. Jim and Phil are flat out and need an extra person.

Dominic Albanese relayed that Alisa is working on job descriptions for the floater and full time Human Services Director positions.

Lee Carrier will schedule x amount of minutes for each association and would like Diane Monmaney to come before the Budget Committee.

Lee Carrier will create a schedule for the regional associations.

Lee Carrier advised that the Budget Committee would be spending more time on the Regional Associations this year to clear things up for down the road.

**Regarding the General Operating Budget:**

Lee Carrier questioned if a budget is no more that what is was last year or 1-2% over, don't we have enough faith in Steve to run with it than have the person come in?

Eric Crate added that unless a department head has something special that they want to inform the Budget Committee on.

Steve Schneider suggested that if the liaison feels the Department Head needs to come in, then okay, otherwise the Department Head would not need to. We need to look at the big items. If something small look out of line we will still look into it, but not spend so much time on reviewing all the little items that are not issues.

Bob Cusick would like to talk about the PD.

Steven Schneider is willing to go with Bob Cusick to talk with the Police Department regarding budget.

Lee Carrier commented that Eric Crate has a big job with the Department of Public Works.

Steve Schneider is happy to go with Eric as well.

**4150-530 Public Information**

Dominic Albanese asked the budget Committee what their feelings were to printing and distributing taxpayers booklets.

Lori Bliss Hill stated that the public already has three resources to go to for this information. Why mail to each taxpayer?

Dominic Albanese advised that the Budget Committee will discuss this issue when the budget is reviewed.



**01-4150-625 Postage**

Dominic Albanese advised that this line is increased to accommodate the taxpayer booklet mailing. \$4,600 included for mailing.

Dominic Albanese stated that there is an increase of grand list estimated at \$2,000,000 and is actually at \$10,000,000.

**Action Items**

**Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn came forward at 11:14 PM from Lee Carrier with a seconded from Lori Bliss Hill. Motion carried.