

## **ENFIELD BUDGET COMMITTEE (EBC) MINUTES (Unapproved)**

**Thursday, November 19, 2014  
DPW BUILDING 6:00PM**

**Members Present:** Annabelle Bamforth, Fred Cummings (Ex Officio), Sam Eaton (Vice Chair), Shirley Green, Doug Pettibone (Chair), Lori Saladino, Janet Shepard, Dave Stewart

**Excused:** Dan Kiley

**Absent:** Mike Lorrey

**Others Present:** Steve Schneider (Town Manager), Melissa Hutson (Librarian), Richard Crate (Police Chief), Phil Cronenwett (Chair, Library Board of Trustees), Jeanine King (Director, Recreation), Francine Lozeau (Library Trustee).

The meeting opened at 6:04PM

### **Administrative:**

A motion to approve the draft November 13, 2014 minutes was made by Fred Cummings and seconded by Lori Saladino. The minutes were approved with two typos corrected.

### **New Business:**

#### **Departmental Spending Plans Reviews**

##### **Parks and Recreation**

4520 Parks and Recreation (2014 Budgeted, \$54,904; 2014 Request, \$61,850, up 13%). Jeanine King presented the draft budget. Lori Saladino is the EBC liaison for the department. The bulk of the increase over last year is due to a requested increase (~\$4200) to pay for a proposed Market Manager's part-time salary to oversee the weekly Farmer's Market. King does not have enough time to devote to organizing the market in the best way. Dave Stewart raised a question as to why the vendors shouldn't be responsible for this position because they are the ones benefiting from selling their goods. There have been recently about 12 regular participating vendors, two of which are from Enfield and the remainder from the Upper Valley. Doug Pettibone was noted that Enfield residents benefit from the presence of the Farmer's Market as well with easier access to fresh produce. It is expected that the Market Manager would increase participation from the current 12 vendors which would bring in more revenue (\$10 per vendor per day) to help offset the cost of the manager. The other various recreational activities such as the summer camp program, Easter egg hunt, senior stretching class, Halloween, yoga, line dancing were all continued in 2014 and reported to be successful. The afternoon summer camp program had overflow attendance and is self-funded with fees paid by the participants. The morning summer camp program is requesting \$2500 in subsidy from the Town again for next year. Steve Schneider recommends that the Town continues the subsidy (\$5000) to partly fund the salary of the coordinator of the Mascoma Valley Recreation Program. Canaan and Enfield will both equally continue to support this successful program. The current \$15,000 grant from the Upper Valley HEAL,

that also supported the program in 2014, will continue next year. It is not certain how long this grant will be available. All of the various programs have participation fees to pay for the leaders/instructors and the overall program is in the 'black'.

4587 Energy Committee: This spending center will be discussed at a later date.

4583 Patriotic Purposes: This spending center will be discussed at a later date.

4588 Heritage Commission: This spending center will be discussed at a later date.

4611 Conservation Commission: This spending center will be discussed at a later date.

## **Library**

4550 Library (2014 Budgeted, \$153,505; 2015 Request, \$167,416, up 9.1%). The new librarian, Melissa Hutson, was introduced to the Committee and presented the spending plan. She replaces Marjorie Carr who recently retired. Annabelle Bamforth is the EBC liaison for this department. The bulk of the increase over last year is due to a requested increase (~\$15,000) in personnel salaries including up to 2% merit raises. Hutson's position is 40 hours/week; Carr's position was 30 hours/week. A new assistant librarian will be hired soon to fill an opening resulting from a retirement. This initial estimate of salary costs will likely be reduced with firmer numbers on staffing needs later in the year. The amount requested for books and other reference materials was kept constant at \$27,500 vs. 2014 and is used for new book purchases, online references, research websites and subscriptions. The Library continued buying passes to regional museums (Billing's, VINS, Shaker, etc) which are available to library members free of charge and is paid out of the 'Miscellaneous' line. Phil Cronenwett represented the Library Board of Trustees. He indicated that the fundraising for the new library is progressing with about \$1 million pledged. It is now in the 'active phase' with broader public solicitation. The original cost projection in 2009 was \$3.2 million for the entire project that includes a new and expanded parking lot for the Whitney Hall area. It is hoped that a new cost projection, adjusted for inflation over the past 5 years, will not be too much higher after certain adjustments in the plan are made. With the current rate of fundraising, Cronenwett projects a ground breaking in the spring of 2016.

4589 Historical Records: This spending center will be discussed at a later date.

## **Police Department**

4210 Police (2014 Budgeted, \$661,623; 2015 Request, \$648,517, down 2.0%). Police Chief Richard Crate discussed the proposed budget for 2015. Sam Eaton is the EBC liaison for this department. Crate indicated that 2014 has been a good year for the department. The main reason for the reduction in the overall request is the hiring of the fulltime replacement of a retired officer at a lower salary level. Staffing level (7 full-time officers, 2 part-time) will remain the same. A major challenge recently has been a general uptick in the drug activity across the Upper Valley, regarding the illegal sale of prescription opiates and heroin. There have been instances of out-of-state dealers coming into Enfield

and neighboring communities to sell the drugs. The increased costs of the Town's contracted prosecutors in 2014 will continue into 2015. Hiring outside prosecutors is still cost effective because our own officers do not need to spend time at the courthouse during trials. Gasoline for the cruisers is expected to cost less in 2015. The police have been getting their gasoline at the I-89 Exit 16 NHDOT facility at a discount (tax free). No new police cruiser is being requested for 2015.

### **Miscellaneous**

Pettibone asked the Committee for their views on the upcoming budget process and a general guideline for tax rate objectives. He noted that the Committee has received good feedback from the voters from recent Town Meetings. Over the past few years, municipal tax rate increases (<2%) have been held well within real inflation. Holding any tax increases at less than inflation without any loss of services has been possible through gained efficiencies of business conducted by the Town, as well as a slight improvement in the revenue side. It was pointed out that support for the long-term CIP plan takes up about half of that tax increase. Pettibone urged the Committee to continue to support the CIP process because it is a major reason why the tax rate has been stable and more predictable over the past few years. There was a general sentiment by the Committee that while there has been a modest improvement in the local economy, it has not yet translated into meaningful financial improvement for many residents. The Committee generally agreed that a limit of 2% for any tax rate increases was a reasonable goal again to fund Town activities and the CIP plan. Efforts, however, should continue to keep the rate as low as possible and that the Committee will strive to do so.

**Old Business:** None

**Public Comment:** None

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm. The next meeting is on Saturday, December 6, 2014 (8:30AM @ DPW building). The following, draft spending plans will be reviewed: 4200s: Public Safety – Fire, Ambulance etc ex-Police., and 4300s, DPW.