

ENFIELD BUDGET COMMITTEE (EBC) MINUTES (Approved)

Thursday, January 29, 2015

DPW BUILDING 6:00PM

Members Present: Annabelle Bamforth, Sam Eaton (Vice Chair), Shirley Green, Dan Kiley, Doug Pettibone (Chair), Lori Saladino, Janet Shepard, Dave Stewart

Others Present: Steve Schneider (Town Manager)

Excused: Fred Cummings

Absent: Mike Lorrey

The meeting opened at 6:05 PM.

Administrative:

A motion to approve the draft January 22, 2015 minutes was made by Janet Shepard and seconded by Shirley Greene. The draft minutes were approved with no change.

New Business:

After the last meeting, an oversight was picked up whereby the expenditures for the CIP reserve fund (\$318K) and the overlay (tax abatements, war service credits, \$70K) were inadvertently omitted. Steve Schneider reviewed changes in the budget to make up for these additional appropriations, targeting a tax rate with no more than a 2% increase over 2014. These changes involved both the revenue side and the expenditure side of the equation. Several areas of non-property tax revenues were revised upwards slightly (Post Meeting Note: total about 7%) where Schneider believed previous projections were too conservative. Most of the make-up for the omitted expenditures came from reductions in spending by a number of cost centers. These downward adjustments mean that less will get done overall but the core mission of providing the essentials should be intact.

Adjustments in Line Item Spending: Here is a brief summary of the more important changes: A portion of the salaries of several employees, including Schneider, were shifted from the General Fund budget to the Water and Sewer budget to more accurately reflect the time spent on Water and Sewer activities. This adjustment had a trickle-down effect on benefit costs associated with salary such as retirement and FICA payments etc. Other downward adjustments were made essentially across the board. Executive Office (4130) was reduced by about \$25K, Technology (4131) by about \$14K, Financial Administration (4150) by about \$7K, Legal (4153) by about \$2.5K, Personnel Administration (4155) by about \$45K, Gov't Bldgs (4194) by about \$10K, Liability Insurance by about \$4K, Police (4210) by about \$7K, Fire (4220) by about \$3K, Highway Administration (4311) by about \$20K, Highways and Streets (4312) by about \$85K mostly from road maintenance, Solid Waste Collection (4323) by about \$5K, Solid Waste Disposal (4324) by about \$10K, Human Services Direct by about \$4K, Parks and Recreation

(4520) by about \$4K by eliminating the proposed Farmer's Market Manager, Library (4550) by about \$4K, Capital Outlay (4902) by \$10K by paying for the DPW compactor and line striper outright from an equipment reserve fund and thus avoiding the costs of leasing. With these new adjustments, the General Fund budget now stands at about \$5.64M. With all of the revenues considered, a tax rate increase of 2.0% vs 2014 is projected at \$6.39/\$1000 property valuation. All told, it is a very lean budget. It was acknowledged that inflationary pressures continue to mount for the town to do business and careful attention to spending is required for 2015. It should be kept in mind that a little less than half of the tax increase is going to support the CIP plan and the rest is for general operating functions. There was general agreement that continued support of the CIP plan is essential.

Update on Expected Warrant Articles for Town Meeting:

There are 4 'monied' warrant articles expected to be acted upon by the EBC after the Public Hearing next week: 1) the municipal budget based on General Fund appropriations of \$5.64M, 2) the CIP Plan about \$318K, 3) the new replacement fire truck, about \$407K, and 4) The DPW recycling compactor and line striper, \$45K.

Old Business: None

Public Comment: None

The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 PM. The next scheduled meeting is the Public Hearing for the budget which will take place on Wednesday, February 4 (snow date Feb 5) at 6:30PM at the DPW Building.