

**Town of Farmington
BUDGET COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 26, 2011
356 Main Street – Farmington, NH**

Members Present: Neil Johnson, Brian St.Onge, Sam Cataldo, Cindy Snowdon and Ann Titus

Members Absent: Arthur Capello (excused), Mike Morin, Steve Henry (excused), and Chris Somma

Selectman's Rep: Paula Proulx

School Board Rep: Joe Pitre (excused)

Public Present: Interim School Administrator Mike O'Neil

Vice-Chairman Brian St.Onge opened the meeting at 7:02pm.

1. Review of Minutes:

Ann Titus motioned to accept the minutes of 9-28-11 as amended, 2nd Neil Johnson. Motion carried with Paula Proulx and Cindy Snowdon abstaining.

2. Review of School Budget:

- a. Mike O'Neil reviewed the calendar dates that the School Board will be reviewing the individual school budget proposals; they are November 10th, 14th, and 15th at 6:30 in the high school library. Neil asked Mr. O'Neil to confirm the dates and email the Budget Committee a confirmation.
- b. Neil asked what the change to the retirement was this year. Mike O. explained the total amount of change was \$137,000 which was a percentage change from 8.02% to 11.03%.
- c. Brian asked what the contract services are that Northstar provides and Mike O. said he would research this.
- d. Neil asked why the copier service contract is higher and Mike O. explained the numbers will balance out at the end of the year and they actually expect the copier contract costs to be lower this year.
- e. Brian asked why there is a huge increase in the telephone bill at the learning academy and Mike O. said that he believes they added a line but he will check further.
- f. Neil asked why the mileage line is so high for the voc. Ed. Line and Mike O. explained it is an encumbrance but he will need to look further into why the cost is high.
- g. The amount on the speech line was questioned and Mike explained the higher expenditure is due to the shifting of a salary line for a speech therapist to a contract service because they did not fill the position.
- h. Neil asked why the telephone line for HWMS 7-8 has a huge increase and Mike said he will check but he thinks it is an allocation issue because the HWMS 4-6 line is low.
- i. Neil questioned what was expended out of the equipment replacement-installed FHS line and Mike O. replied he would need to check.
- j. Neil questioned why the transport, spec. ed purchased services line is overspent and Mike O. replied he would need to do some research on this line.

3. Review of School Grant Expenditure Fund:

- a. Brian asked what happens when a grant line is over-expended like the teacher salary line is. Mike O. explained that if a grant line is over-expended then they have to request to move budget lines around and also he will do some research on the over-expended lines.

4. School Budget Presentation Dates:

- a. The school budget presentation day was set for Saturday, December 10, 2011 at 9am in the Selectmen's Chamber. Copies of the proposed budgets should be turned into the Budget Committee by December 1st. The public hearing is scheduled for January 7, 2012 with all materials to the Budget Committee by December 30th.

5. Review of Town Budgets:

- a. Neil asked if there is going to be enough funds to pay for the contract Town Administrator through the remainder of the year and Paula said that Pam told her the line should be fine.
- b. Neil asked why the legal services line is overspent and Paula explained there have been a number of issues that have had to be reviewed by legal like the easement for the landfill, questions from the Planning Board and Police Union negotiations.
- c. Brian asked why the water/sewer line for the town hall is overspent by \$700 and Paula explained that is based on actual readings this year instead of estimates.
- d. Neil asked why the part-time maintenance line is overspent and Paula explained the town is paying for a little extra maintenance help because one position is not enough to cover the amount of work that needs to be done. She also reminded the Committee that two years ago this line paid for two full-time people and was cut down to one.
- e. Neil stated he is concerned that the police training line is not expended and Paula explained that the Police Chief sent his officers to all the necessary, required trainings and that this line pays for extra training that he would like though he tries to wait until the end of the year to use in case overtime is required for other things.
- f. Neil noted that the per-diem fire coverage is close to being all expended. Paula reminded the Committee that \$10,000 was cut from the line last year and probably shouldn't have been. The fire department has had to use for per-diem hours because a full time position has not been filled, also there were quite a few large fires and serious accidents.
- g. Neil asked if the town is going to be short on the EMS billing services and Paula replied that she thinks it is a percentage of the billed amount but she will double check.
- h. Paula explained the highway department overtime line is over-expended due to the amount of snow that fell from January to April and then Hurricane Irene. Also the outside services line for the highway department is over spent for the same reasons. Ann asked if the town hired outside services to remove snow and Paula said yes. Ann then asked if the Charles St/Bay Rd. project are on budget and Paula said yes it is on budget and on time.
- i. Brian asked if Paula is aware of a RSA that states the town must appropriate .25% of the valuation to a repair/maintenance of roads line and Paula replied no.
- j. Sam asked what is included in the contract sweeping line. Paula explained the town hires and outside sweeper to clean the roads three times a year though this year it took a little longer because there was an excessive amount of sand from the winter.

- k. Sam asked why the highway radio repair line is so low and Paula explained that there was an antenna that had to be repaired and also there appears to be an error with a PO number but Pam is looking into it.
- l. Sam asked why the town rents a mower instead of purchasing one. Paula said this is going to be discussed during the budget process.
- m. Sam asked why the tire line is so high and Paula explained they budget for tires for all department vehicles except for the PD.
- n. Sam asked what is expended out of the highway new equipment line and Paula said a number of chainsaws were purchased after Hurricane Irene and a trench box was also purchased.
- o. Cindy asked what happened with the welfare rents line and Paula explained the town used to budget \$85,000 but the line was cut this year, plus there was a larger need. She also explained that a new welfare director was just hired and she will be establishing new guidelines.
- p. Neil asked how collections are going for the tax and water/sewer bills. Paula explained that according to Pam payments are coming in and the tax rate should be close to the projected rate.
- q. Neil said he would like a detailed accounting of the Rec. Revolving Account giving the example that so much was money was brought in for the senior trip to X because 6 people paid \$X and then \$X was spent for gas for the trip. Paula said she would check to see how detailed of a report she could get.

6. Other:

- a. Ann asked if the Planning Director is looking into prospects to rent the upstairs to and Paula explained they have to wait until the school department is completely out of there before the area is assessed.
- b. Neil said he questioned LGC to see if a SAU Budget Committee can be formed and their response was that SAU budgets are overseen by SAU Boards and there is no RSA to allow a budget committee to be established. The Committee discussed the possibility of a warrant to rescind the split of the SAU so the Budget Committee can review the budget.
- c. Paula stated that Selectman Gerry McCarthy would like to know is the SAU required an air quality test at their new location since the building was closed up and vacant for so long. Also he would like to know if the insurance covers on ½ the basement or the whole thing of which some of it is being used for CAP storage. Lastly, Gerry would like to know if the CAP storage that is in the basement requires electricity for fridges and such.

At 8:40pm, *Neil Johnson motioned to adjourn, 2nd Sam Cataldo. Motion carried with all in favor.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Brandy Sanger
Recording Secretary

Ann Titus, Secretary