

Town of Farmington
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 9, 2017

Committee Members Present:

Stephen Henry, Chairman
Sylvia Arcouette, Vice Chairman
Neil Johnson, Selectmen's Rep.
Angie Cardinal, School Board Rep.
Elizabeth Johnson
Jodi Connolly
Heidi Mitchell
Tim Brown

Committee Members Absent:

Sam Cataldo

Others Present:

Arthur Capello, Town Administrator
Ruth Ellen Vaughn, Superintendent SAU 61
Tami LaRock, Goodwin Library Director
Ann Titus, Board of Selectman
Library Trustees Linda McElhinney, Bill Fisher, Michelle Elbert, Bobbie Stormann,

1). Call to Order:

Chairman Henry called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

2). Pledge of Allegiance:

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3). Presentation of the Town Budget:

Mr. Capello told the committee that the tax rate minus the warrant articles is down 58 cents due to some "extreme pencil sharpening" by the dept. heads and some increases in revenues. He then began a review of each section of the proposed 2017 Town budget.

Executive- (up \$7,084) partially due to Mr. Capello's salary increase and increased mileage costs that were under budgeted last year

Election, Registration & Vitals- (down \$6,300) due to fewer elections this year

Financial Administration- (up \$4,534) due to a wage increase and a 1.5% insurance increase

Revaluation of Property- (up \$17,035) due to the contract with an assessor to evaluate utility properties in Town. Mr. Capello said the assessor has brought in approx. \$100,000 in additional revenue for the Town so far.

Legal Expenses- (Up \$10,000) to reflect what is typically spent for legal expenses.

Personnel Administration- (up \$15,160) includes the wage pool set aside for potential non-union staff wage increases.

Planning & Zoning- (down \$4,654) includes costs for the contracted Planner services, meeting minutes, part time dept. Secretary and travel costs. Mr. Johnson said the fees paid for advertising have been increased to the actual publication cost and are paid by the applicant.

Gen. Gov. Buildings- (down \$6,871) due to decreased expenses for fuel and maintenance for

town buildings with the new Public Safety Building coming online in March.

Insurance – (up \$6,135) due to increased rates for property liability coverage and deductibles
Police Dept. – (down \$38,078) due to lower wage rates for a younger force and lower building maintenance costs.

Fire Dept. – (down \$19,674) due to lower building maintenance costs and fuel usage.

Building Inspection- (down \$53,180) a warrant article seeks approval to pay the Bldg. Inspector's salary and benefits from the Capital Reserve Fund if approved at Town Meeting. The first 3 months of his salary must be budgeted until the warrant article is approved.

Emergency Management- (down \$3,000) this line is down following receipt of a grant that was included in the budget last year. The amount was removed from the budget this year.

Admin., Hwy. and Streets- (down \$9,054) represents the partial year salary for the current DPW Director who is retiring in July.

Hwy. and Streets- (up \$2,500) due to increased sweeper and mower rentals and materials/labor for erosion control. This line also includes costs for paving Silver Street and Waldron Cross Road and chip sealing for several other streets.

Ms. Cardinal asked why the Highway Diesel Fuel line item has increased.

Mr. Capello said that when the Deputy DPW Director Jason Gagnon took the position there were no accurate long term records regarding the fuel usage and pricing so he used an average price of \$2.10 a gallon to estimate the cost for the year. Fuel prices and usage have gone up and metering is in use at the Town pumps he said.

Mr. Brown said there are some road maintenance issues on School Street and asked to see a plan for future road work.

Mr. Capello said he would ask Mr. Gagnon to supply the information to the committee.

Bridges/Railings- (up \$5,000) to cover the cost of bridge work to be done by the Town/contractors to keep them from becoming "red listed". Currently there are 3 red listed bridges located on River Road, Hornetown Road and Spring Street.

Street Lighting- (down \$2,600) this line reflects the actual cost to maintain street lights in Town.

Sanitation Admin.- (down \$26,000) this line represents a portion of the retiring DPW Director's salary and fewer part time hours worked at the landfill.

Ms. Mitchell asked if the outgoing DPW Director will be replaced.

Mr. Capello said he will be replaced by the current Deputy DPW Director.

Mr. Henry explained that the Selectmen hired Mr. Gagnon almost 2 years ago in anticipation of Mr. Sprague's retirement to give him time to learn three depts. and obtain the necessary licensing and certifications.

Solid Waste Disposal- (up \$14,360) due to contract and tipping fees increases.

Animal Control- (down \$10,799) Mr. Capello said Selectmen had previously budgeted for an Animal Control Officer but decided not to fill the position because of the difficulty in finding a suitable candidate and because animal calls have become part of the Police officers' regular duties.

Mr. Henry asked for the total number of animal calls answered by the dept.

Mr. Capello said he did not know the exact number of animal calls but noted that it is "quite a few".

Health Agencies- (down \$1,684) due to the lack of a request for a contribution from the Boys' and Girls' Club and a 10% reduction in the contributions to all other agencies

Welfare Administration- (up \$2,467) the increase in this line is due to increasing the hours worked from part time to full time with the related salary and benefits increases. Mr. Capello noted that in addition to being the Welfare Director this employee also assists the Planning and Codes Dept., the CIP and EDC Committees, the Police and Fire Depts.

Mr. Henry said that he would like to see a breakdown of the position duties and expenses in next year's budget report.

Recreation- (down \$4,535) due to moving the summer staff costs to the Recreation Revolving Account.

Goodwin Library- (up \$11,450) as recommended by Selectmen

Patriotic Purposes – (+/- \$0) this line will remain at \$1,000 Mr. Capello said.

Other Culture/Recreation- (up \$1,400) due to insurance coverage for the Bouncy House

Mr. Henry asked for an estimated amount of revenue the house is expected to bring in.

Mr. Capello said the revenue would come from the rental fees and he did not know the estimated revenue amount at this time.

Conservation Commission- (down \$39) as per the budget request submitted by the Chairman

Economic Development- (up \$3,629) this line includes the Coast Bus contribution fully funded by the Selectmen. Mr. Capello said the town receives revenue from the ads found on bus shelters around Town from a 50/50 split between the Town and the bus company for the total revenues raised. In 2016 the Town received \$3,100 for a half year of ad revenues he said.

Principle- Long Term Debts- (up \$125,716) due to the bond for the Public Safety Building.

Mr. Henry asked if any of the other bonds held by the Town will "fall off" this year.

Mr. Capello said he thought that one of the smaller bonds would be paid off this year. He said he will check the bonds' status and provide the information to the committee.

Capital Outlay- (down \$30,381) as a result of the receipt of a grant for landfill maintenance.

Sewer (up \$100,502) due to budgeting \$60,000 in anticipation of a grant for development of an assets management plan and increased costs for chemicals, specialized labor, liability insurance and office supplies.

Mr. Capello then said the total 2017 budget appropriation without the warrant articles is \$6,678,213 with \$4,157,808 in revenues and \$2,520,405 total taxes to be raised.

4). Review of Warrant Articles:

Article 4- Long Term Lease- This article seeks approval to enter into a 20 year land lease agreement with NH Solar Garden to lease a portion of the landfill site to install and operate solar panel arrays to generate electricity for the benefit of the Town. Mr. Capello said Selectmen signed a 5 year contract with the company and the Town will receive revenue from the lease, payment in lieu of taxes and savings from lower electricity rates.

Ms. Cardinal asked when the project will start.

Mr. Capello said they have already begun the preliminary paperwork process and will kick into high gear once the plan is approved at Town Meeting.

Mr. Johnson added they are working on the state permits needed and expect to start operating by the end of summer.

Ms. Cardinal asked if other vendors were considered.

Mr. Capello said a few other solar power companies were consulted but none of them presented an offer as good offer as this one.

Mr. Capello said Selectmen also looked at the possibility of installing a solar array on the former Davidson Rubber property which is now a Super Fund site. He said the property is unsuitable for other uses due to the contamination but the EPA and NH DES have expressed some interest in using the land to generate solar power in the future.

Ms. Cardinal asked if plans to generate solar power there are included in the Town's Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).

Mr. Capello said the property is not Town owned and is managed by the state and owned by a Trust. He added the Town would see some revenues if such a plan were to take place there in the form of taxes or payments in lieu of taxes.

Ms. Cardinal then asked if the Sarah Greenfield Business Park is Town owned and if it would be a good place to generate solar power.

Mr. Capello said the Town currently owns 3 lots in the business park and the remaining lots are privately owned. He said the Town would rather sell the lots and the Selectmen are in the process of determining a price for the sale of the commercial lots.

Article 5- Change the Purpose and Name of the Main Street School Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) - This article asks voters to approve changing the name of the Main Street School

Operations & Maintenance Fund to the Main Street Municipal Office Maintenance Fund which will be funded by any revenue generated from the lease of any space in the Municipal Office.

Mr. Capello said when this fund was set up only the rent from the school could be placed in the fund so the current lease revenues are put into the general fund. The changes would allow revenues from any leases of the building spaces to be put into the CRF to be used for repairs/maintenance of the building he said.

Mr. Brown asked why the Town Meeting must appropriate the funds instead of the Board of Selectmen as they do with other funds.

Mr. Capello said the Selectmen can expend the funds from the original Main Street School CRF but the NH Dept. of Revenue (DRA) advised him to include that the Selectmen will be agents to expend the funds in this article.

Article 6- Add to Highway Equipment CRF- To raise and appropriate \$25,000 to be added to this fund to assist with the replacement of highway equipment.

Mr. Johnson said there is currently \$51,400 in this fund.

Some members recalled the title of this fund should include the word "Motorized".

Mr. Capello said he will research the original title of the fund and correct the title if needed.

Article 7 – Recreation Equipment Fund- To raise and appropriate \$4,000 to be added to the Recreation Equipment CRF.

Mr. Capello said the Recreation Director intends to purchase portable basketball hoops for the Town Hall gym with these funds.

Mr. Johnson said Selectmen sent the purchase out to bid but weren't satisfied with the proposals received and asked the Director to further research vendors/prices for the hoops.

Mr. Capello added this fund can also be used for future replacement of the dept.'s vans.

Article 8- Appropriations of Surplus to Bond- To raise and appropriate (dollar amount of interest earned as of Town Meeting) representing the interest earned on the \$2.1 million bond for the Public Safety Building issued by the Town on July 14,2016 to be used to pay debt service on said bond.

Mr. Capello estimated there will be about \$5500 in interest on the bond.

Article 9- Add to Self Contained Breathing Apparatus Fund- To raise and appropriate \$10,000 to be added to this fund to offset the replacement cost of the SCBA units.

Mr. Capello said the Fire Chief has applied for a 95/5 grant to fund the replacement of the units due next year at a total cost of \$300,000.

Mr. Johnson said the fund currently has \$15,000 in it.

Article 10- Revaluation of the Town- To establish a CRF to be called the Town Revaluation CRF and to deposit \$25,000 from the 2016 undesignated fund balance in the fund.

Mr. Capello said the total cost for the revaluation is \$64,000 and is due to be conducted in 3 years by state law.

Article 11- Police Outside Detail Special Revenue Fund (SRF) - To raise and appropriate \$90,000 from the Police Outside Detail SRF to pay all payroll and equipment expenses of Police officers.

Mr. Capello said the request for appropriation is up from \$80,000 last year to \$90,000 this year because the Police Chief plans to buy 2 cruisers with the funds.

Article 12- Add to Emergency Motorized Equipment CRF- To raise and appropriate \$40,000 from ambulance billing revenues to be deposited in this CRF.

Mr. Capello said there is no tax impact for this appropriation because the money to be deposited in the CRF will come from funds collected from ambulance billing. He said that approx. \$5,000 has also been collected from past due accounts and that the collection agency gets a percentage of what they collect.

Mr. Johnson said the Town's collection rate is at about 72% prior to third party collection.

Article 13- Farmington Cable TV- To raise and appropriate \$60,000 from the Community Television Special Revenue Fund to pay staff payroll, Cable TV programming, equipment and/or repairs associated with Farmington Community Television.

Mr. Henry asked if the Town could give the School District access to this fund.

Mr. Capello said the funds come from the MetroCast Franchise fees and the Selectmen could allow the School District to access the fund if they chose to do so.

Article 14- Landfill Closure Fund- To raise and appropriate \$51,407 from the Dept. of Environmental Services Solid Waste Unlined Municipal Landfill Closure Grant Program to be added to the Landfill Closure Fund.

Mr. Capello said this article allows funds from the grant to be deposited in this fund.

Article 17- Landfill Closure Fund- To raise and appropriate \$25,000 from the Landfill Closure SRF for purposes related to the closure of the Landfill Closure Fund.

Mr. Capello said this article would allow money to be withdrawn from the fund.

Discussion included combining Article 14 and 17, if Articles 15 and 16 are missing or if the articles need to be re-numbered and providing clearer titles for both articles.

Mr. Capello said he would discuss the committee's concerns with NH DRA.

Article 18- Bridges and Road Design CRF- To raise and appropriate \$5,000 to be added to the Bridge and Road Design CRF to pay the Town's 20% share of the required funding from NH Bridge Aid.

Mr. Capello said the plan is to build up the fund in order to be "shovel ready" for the bridge projects when state funding becomes available.

Mr. Johnson explained that the Town's share of the project is to fund the design work for the bridges and noted the Town had to pay \$60,000 for the Main St. Bridge design but had no say

in the design details. He said the fund now has a total of \$91,000.

Mr. Capello added that repair/replacement of the Spring St. Bridge alone is a \$1-2 million project.

Mr. Brown said Gov. Sununu's budget proposal contains more funding for municipal projects so more money may be available for bridge work once it goes through the budget process.

Article 19-To Discontinue the Public Safety Building and Equipment CRF- To discontinue this CRF created in 2006 and to transfer \$3,041 in unexpended reserve funds and accumulated interest to the date of withdrawal to the Town general fund for the purpose of paying debt service on the bond for the Public Safety Building.

Mr. Capello estimated the accumulated interest will total about \$4,000 to \$5,000 by Town Meeting.

Article 20- Building Inspector Special Revenue Fund – To raise and appropriate up to \$65,000 from the Building Inspector Position SRF for the purpose of paying the Building Inspector. As discussed earlier during the budget presentation.

Article 21- Police Contract- To approve the cost items in the collective bargaining agreement between the Town/NEPBA #212 as follows: 2017 (\$19,150.97); 2018 (\$35,656.33); 2019 (\$21,871.79); 2020 (\$6,358.89) totaling \$83,038.

Mr. Capello said copies of the contract proposal were provided to the committee. He said the total tax impact is 19 cents based on the current Town evaluation.

Mr. Henry asked if any raises for this year are included in current budget if the warrant article fails.

Mr. Capello said no Police salary increases are included in the budget proposal.

Article 22- Depreciation of Waste Water Treatment Plant CRF- To raise and appropriate up to \$25,000 to be added to this CRF to help offset depreciation of the plant. This appropriation is contingent on an equivalent match from the Waste Water Enterprise Fund of up to \$25,000.

Mr. Henry asked if the depreciation would be offset through taxation and from the CRF.

Mr. Capello said it would be offset from both sources.

Mr. Johnson said that it was his understanding that during Town Meeting several years ago it was decided that the taxpayers would pay 50% of the cost of depreciation of the plant and the rate payers would pay the remaining 50% of the cost. He added that up until this year the rate payers have been funding the entire depreciation costs.

Mr. Henry said he did not recall the Town ever agreeing to pay the depreciation cost.

Mr. Capello said he will check the Town Meeting records and provide further information to the members.

Article 23- Development of Water Asset Management Program- To raise and appropriate \$60,000 to develop an Asset Management Program for the waste water collections system and for the storm water infrastructure by issuance of bonds/notes and to authorize Selectmen to apply for and expend any federal, state or other funds to reduce the repayment amount and to authorize participation in the state Revolving Fund.

Mr. Capello said this program will provide an inventory of equipment, its life expectancy and assist in budgeting for replacements.

Mr. Henry asked if the plan includes software that could be updated or is a 1 time plan.

Mr. Capello said the program contains both a plan and software where the information can be updated.

Mr. Johnson said the program also includes GPS mapping of the infrastructure locations.

Article 24- Fund Future Technology Fund CRF with TDS Franchise Fees- To raise and appropriate up to \$500 from the TDS Franchise Fees to be added to the Future Technology Capital Reserve Fund.

Mr. Capello said the fund now has \$33,000.

Mr. Henry asked if the fees come from TV or phone service.

Mr. Capello said the franchise fee comes from cable TV service only.

Mr. Johnson said TDS pays same rate as paid by MetroCast.

Article 25- DPW Contract- To approve the cost items in the collective bargaining agreement between the Town/Teamsters Local #633 as follows: 2018 (\$10,088.15); 2019 (\$5,327.88); 2020 (\$7,646.43) totaling \$23,062.26.

Mr. Capello said the total tax impact of the contract is 5 cents over 3 years.

Article 26- By Petition- Move Town Meeting to Saturday-

Mr. Capello said the petition seeks to move Town Meeting to Saturday instead of the current Wednesday meeting. He explained that currently the meeting is opened on Tuesday for voting for elected offices/ballot questions, recessed and reopened on Wednesday for the Town Meeting portion.

Ms. Cardinal asked if the Selectmen will vote to recommend the article.

Mr. Capello said he did not think the Selectmen were required to vote on the matter as there is no appropriation of funds involved but said he will find out if a board vote is needed.

Mr. Brown asked how many members are in the DPW union.

Mr. Capello estimated that there are 10-15 DPW union members who include all full time employees in the waste water, sewer, highway and solid waste depts.

Mr. Johnson said the Police union membership includes 8 Officers, 1 Detective and 3 Sergeants totaling 12 members.

Mr. Brown then asked for the number of non-union Town employees.

Mr. Capello said there are approx. 25 non-union employees in the Municipal Office, Town Hall (Rec. Dept.) and Fire Dept.

Mr. Brown said he would like to see a balance and fairness across the board between non-union and union wages and benefits.

Mr. Johnson said Selectmen have tried to get contract language in sync with Town policy regarding benefits, holidays, etc.

Mr. Henry asked if the Town is seeing any savings with the health insurance provided by the Teamsters to their members.

Mr. Capello said the Teamsters health insurance is not as expensive as the Health Trust used by the Town. He said the savings is found from not seeing an increase in premiums paid by the Town from those employees being added to the Health Trust.

Mr. Johnson added the contract with the Teamsters contains a clause that allows the Town to re-open negotiations with the union if the federal government determines the insurance policy is a "Cadillac" coverage plan that carries a 40% tax on the value of the plan.

Ms. Cardinal said the welfare rents line projects an increase over the previous year.

Mr. Capello the rents line has decreased by \$1,000 and that the increase is found in the Inter government welfare payments. He said budgeting for this line is "hit or miss" and might have to be increased during the year. They look at potential cases at about the half year point to plan

the budget and try to do what is possible to reduce it he said.

Ms. Cardinal asked why there are no income or expense lines regarding the TIF District.

Mr. Capello said this information would be found in the Assessing Dept. data. He said the Advisory Board needs 1 more member who is a non-business owner in or abutting the district to begin overseeing the district.

Ms. Cardinal asked if the Selectmen can modify the size of the committee.

Mr. Capello said a Town Meeting vote would be required to change the size of the Advisory Board. He said the Town has sent mailers to property owners in/abutting the district and has had a hard time getting members.

Ms. Cardinal asked about the cost for the revaluation of the Town.

Mr. Capello said the revaluation costs \$63,000 every 5 yrs and \$120,000 every 10 years.

Mr. Henry suggested that a Capital Reserve Fund be started to save for the expense.

Mr. Capello said there is a proposal to create a revaluation fund this year (Article 10).

Ms. Cardinal asked if plans for the old Fire and Police stations are included in the CIP.

Mr. Capello said the Selectmen haven't determined what will be done with the property and are looking at creating a summary of Town owned property. He said the Police Station was originally intended to be a teen center and may become a teen or senior center after they move to the Public Safety Building.

Mr. Johnson said the \$250,000 bond payment is missing from the budget as it will be covered by project savings and interest.

Mr. Capello said the bond payment is included in the 58 cent decrease.

Mr. Henry asked for the tax impact if all of the warrant articles are approved by voters.

Mr. Johnson said the tax impact is 22 cents the first year.

5). Goodwin Library Budget Presentation:

Trustee Linda McElhinney began her presentation with a note of appreciation to the dedicated group of Trustees, Friends of the Goodwin Library, Library Director Tami LaRock, staff and volunteers. She then presented an overview of some of the improvements and cost saving measures undertaken at the library as follows:

Janitor- the janitorial contract was canceled and a former Librarian was hired to conduct janitorial duties reducing the line from \$10,000 in 2016 to \$8,300 for 2017. She added that this janitor can also act as a Librarian if additional coverage is needed.

Computer and Technical Upgrades- the previous network administrator's contract for \$10,500 was canceled and a technician from Tech Soup 2 Nuts completed computer network upgrades from the ground up for \$6,000.

Fuel Costs- the library joined with the Town to receive reduced fuel rates and is ready to join in with the Town to receive reduced electricity rates. Ms. McElhinney said she attended the meeting where the installation of a solar array to generate solar power at the landfill was discussed and said the library is interested in participating in the program.

Landscaping- She said much of landscaping is overgrown, has insects and is in decline but the library has not had any funding to fix the problems. Piscataqua Landscaping of Elliot, ME has offered to donate thousands of dollars in time and materials to improve the landscaping this spring and has also offered to assist with the annual plant sale.

Volunteers- Volunteer hours over the last year total 672.5 hours which shows an amazing

outpouring of dedication and caring for the library she said.

Friends of the Goodwin Library- Ms. McElhinney said the Friends raise \$1,800 each year to pay for the museum passes for use by patrons but this year they stepped up their efforts and raised \$4,000 that was used to provide a baby changing station and supplies, a bike rack, 2 air conditioners for the second floor, reimbursement of the cost for the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and the museum passes.

Farmington Public Library Association- \$23,781 in funds from the association's Memorial Fund were used to purchase security cameras and to pay \$14,000 in legal expenses to research/confirm the by-laws and their status as a Trust.

Trust Funds -Ms. McElhinney said she spent many hours researching at the Registry of Deeds and the archives to come up with a list of the fund accounts held by the Library as requested by the Budget Committee. She said she attempted to use the same format as the Town Trustees use for their reports using what information was available in the "scant recordkeeping" in the old records.

Art Preservation- funds from this account are to be used to preserve all art in the library. There is \$5,000 principle which has earned about \$30 in interest so far she said.

Telvio Trust Fund- these funds are to be spent for Historical Non-Fiction materials. The fund was set up with a \$12,000 principle and the \$713 in interest was spent for these materials.

Thayer Bequest- this fund had a principle of \$56,000 and currently has a \$9,000 balance.

M & M Account- Ms. McElhinney said she determined that this account was set up using excess funds from the Mainstay Account and had a balance of \$8,977. Each year \$4,000 is taken from the account and applied to the operating budget and now the current balance is approx. \$4,000. The account will be depleted next year following the \$4,000 transfer to the operating budget she said.

Thayer Memorial Fund- this account supplied the funds for legal expenses as mentioned earlier in the presentation and now has a balance of \$9,000.

Mainstay Fund- not much information was found regarding this fund. Ms. McElhinney said she plans to meet with the fund investor to review the portfolio for the account and will provide a breakdown of the account to the committee following that meeting. She added that \$16,000 is transferred from the account to the operating budget each year.

Capital Reserve Fund- each year \$5,000 is taken from the operating budget and deposited in this fund for future capital expenses. She said \$39,000 was withdrawn from the CRF to pay for the new fire escape so the account currently has a balance of approx. \$7,000.

Ms McElhinney then said she would like to address some issues brought up each year at Town Meeting.

In 2012, an average of 93% of the library budgets were supported by their Towns in NH;

In 2014, the average NH Librarian salary was \$14.05 an hour, in 2016 it was \$12.23 an hour at the Goodwin Library;

In 2013 the library budget was \$281,117, 2014 (\$273,706), 2015 (\$260,000), 2016 (cut to \$250,000 and then increased to \$260,000 at Town Meeting).

Ms. Arcouette thanked the Trustees and Director for providing the information requested to the committee and asked if the same amounts will be taken from the Trust funds in 2017.

Ms. McElhinney said that \$16,000 from the Mainstay Account and \$4,000 from the M & M Account will again be withdrawn and noted that the M & M Account will be depleted after this

year.

Mr. Henry said he has often heard comments that the library has a half-million dollar fund and that they should spend that money. He said people should be aware that only the interest earned on that account can be spent.

Library Budget Review

Salaries and Benefits- Mr. Henry said the largest portion of the proposed budget is for staff wages and benefits.

Ms. McElhinney said that figure includes plans to add Wednesday hours and added that the library is currently open 30 hours a week and they would like to add 7 hours to be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Wednesday totaling 37 hours a week. She said the library is currently paying 190 staff hours per week.

Mr. Henry said that comes out to having 6 people working at a time.

Book Purchases- This line is down from \$18,000 to \$16,000.

DVD and Audio Book Purchases- This line has been increased due to increased demand for these materials.

Building and Grounds- down to \$6,000 from \$17,000 last year. Ms. McElhinney said some of the reduction is due to changing the janitor and the network administrator.

Ms. Elbert added there was also about \$10,000 in expenses for repair/replacement of the oil tank and boiler.

Ms. Arcouette asked if there are plans for the funds in the Major Building Repairs line.

Ms. McElhinney said they plan to install a chairlift to provide handicapped access to the second floor of the building.

Ms. LaRock said this is a modified lift that will allow disabled individuals to participate in events held in the Community Room upstairs. She added that they have also applied for a grant to help cover the cost of lift and the building modifications needed.

Mr. Johnson noted there is \$33,500 in income and asked where this is shown in the budget.

Ms. McElhinney said the information can be found in the Dividends line.

Mr. Brown asked the Director to define the library's customer base.

Ms. LaRock said the customer base is about 70% adults and 30% children.

Discussion also included consideration of changing open hours, attendance during day and evening hours, use of the Community Room and the ability for patrons to use other resources during scheduled programs.

Mr. Johnson asked about the possibility of charging for use of the Community Room currently under consideration.

Mr. Fisher said the Trustees have looked into the issue and found there is no state law that prevents charging for use of the space and noted that other libraries charge a fee to use space in their libraries, some at exorbitant rates. He said the fees could be placed in a fund to help offset the cost of the structural changes needed to make the building ADA compliant.

Mr. Johnson asked if there are other potential sources of income for the library.

Ms. LaRock said they have applied for the Family Place Grant which would enable them to send the Asst. Director to New York for training in investing in families and early child literacy.

Mr. Johnson then thanked them for the "fantastic job" of preparing and presenting the budget.

Mr. Henry asked if the library was still providing free services to non-residents.

Ms. LaRock said with the complete withdrawal of the Middleton students from the School District

and the expiration of all library cards held by Middleton patrons the library is now charging \$40 per year for a non-resident library card.

Mr. Henry suggested the staff reach out to Middleton as they have little in the way of library services.

Ms. LaRock said they are looking at developing some sort of cooperative venture between the 2 towns.

Mr. Brown asked if volunteers undergo a criminal background check.

Ms. LaRock said she does not request an official criminal background check due to the fee for the checks so she does her own checks including online research and discussion with the Police Dept. She added that volunteers are not allowed to work one-on-one with patrons.

Mr. Brown, who has a law enforcement background, said that historically libraries have some problems in this area and suggested Ms. LaRock look into getting the background check fees waived as a non-profit organization.

Ms. Arcouette said volunteer hours may qualify as an in-kind match for some grant funds.

6). Public Comment: None

7). Adjournment:

Motion: (Arcouette, second Connolly) to adjourn the meeting passed unanimously at 9 p.m.

Respectively submitted

Kathleen Magoon

Recording Secretary

Stephen Henry, Chairman