

The Board's meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm. Present were Selectmen Greta St Germain and Annmarie Scribner, Town Administrator Heidi Carlson and Police Chief Neal Janvrin.

Chief Janvrin presented his budget for 2012 and line items were reviewed. The total request for the operating budget is \$431,419.

Janvrin said that he used a 3.5% increase in the clerical line, consistent with what Selectmen had done with other clerical staff. Many other office lines remained the same. He highlighted an increase in equipment, which is based on the meeting with DayStar, who recommended a maintenance program of 3 hours per month (consistent with past years); and that he should begin to replace machines on a cyclical basis, replacing two in 2012.

There was discussion about the copy machine lease, which the Chief believes is up in April 2012. Scribner asked for alternative pricing to be obtained when the lease was up.

There was discussion about the matrix, and an annual step adjustment, which had not been in previous revisions. The Board had determined that once the matrix was in place, it would be used for step increases annually. The salary adjustment would be made April 1<sup>st</sup>, which is how the budget was put together. There was discussion about the evaluation process and how it would work. Upon recommendation of the Chief regarding raises, they would be granted at the April 1<sup>st</sup> timeframe at the sole discretion of the Chief given as a merit increase. This would not be the same for a person becoming certified at a point later in the year. Selectmen said that the raises for all need to be budgeted and if it was not all spent, it would be returned to the general fund and not spent on other, non-budgeted items.

Within the training budget, Janvrin listed several different types of in-service training that he feels are necessary and should be included in the 24 hours per year per person annually. Wages were increased based on the matrix.

Patrol wages reflect step raises and budgeting for the full year of a fourth full-time position. Janvrin stated that he was approved for this fourth position by a previous Board of Selectmen. Scribner said that each Board is not bound by decisions of prior boards. She said that she wanted to see a determined need to keep the fourth position. Janvrin outlined the scheduling problems associated with the part-time versus full-time help.

There are currently five patrol part-time officers and three active full-time officers. One of those full-time officers was hired temporarily to fill a position while Officer Larochelle was on military leave.

The Board said they would like to see the rest of the Town's employees to be able to get a raise this year and felt it may not be the year to add or keep fourth full-time officer.

Janvrin said the contract with the Count Attorney for prosecution is up \$700 (a 6% increase) and this is the first increase since 2009. The Town contracts with the Rockingham County Attorney's Office and shares a prosecutor with the Town of Exeter.

With regard to communications, the full year cost of the air cards for the cruiser computers is included. The JAG Grant paid for the prior year. This is an increase of \$1,600 over 2011.

Janvrin discussed the fuel budget, which is up given the increase in costs that the Town experienced in 2011. He described each of the vehicles, when and what they are generally used for.

Within the maintenance items, there was additional detail provided about the items needed on each of the vehicles.

The amount requested for special details is \$55,000 and is not an impact on the tax rate. The exact amount is also budgeted in revenue.

Janvrin asked the Board if they would support a Warrant Article for a detective's car (a used car), offset by some of the money in Capital Reserve. He estimated that he could get a used vehicle for perhaps \$15,000.

Warrant articles include \$12,500 for the Capital Reserve Account for vehicles; the Special Revenue Fund for OHRV equipment with the same figure as 2011 requested (no tax impact); and a used vehicle for detective use.

The Animal Control budget was then reviewed. The total request is \$12,317.

Selectmen thanked the Chief for the information submitted with his budget. There was general discussion about the budgeting process and the Town's overall decrease in revenues and the budget submissions overall.

Chief Janvrin left the meeting at 6:58 pm. Selectmen reviewed the mail folder and bills to be paid.

At 7:05 pm Lori Holmes came to present information about the Town Clerk's (4140) budget. Selectman Brett Hunter also joined the meeting at this time.

Holmes she wanted to review the Deputy stipend and Clerical lines assuming the Board had questions about her proposal. In answer to a question, Holmes said she did not include raises in the proposal and Scribner explained that they would like to do this for the Clerk's Office as well; by making cuts other places to keep the budget level. Holmes said that she did not want to propose a raise for herself.

Holmes explained that, as a Department Head, she puts together a budget that she feels is the best for the office to provide the most efficient service. She feels she is negligent in her duties without having a Deputy. Holmes stated that most of the towns our size have a Town Clerk and a Deputy Town Clerk. Holmes said that she would keep the same person (Kathy Arsenault) in the position given her training and experience with the Town.

She said she did not feel that another set of eyes is not enough reason to do away with the former Deputy with seven years of experience, referring to the discussion last year regarding the Board's desire to have another person as the Deputy Town Clerk. Holmes said she feels she has a responsibility for the office and the residents and to find the best person for the job. Given seven years that has been invested in training and getting Arsenault proficient in her job; she feels she is the best candidate.

Scribner suggested keeping the majority of money in the clerical line and having a Deputy position with a stipend of \$500. Holmes said it was more about the position and she cannot train someone within the \$500 budget for a Deputy.

She detailed that she works for State agencies and provides services on behalf of those agencies. In order for a Deputy to come on board, they have to work 30 days in the Clerks office prior to being eligible to go to training, and the trainings do not just automatically happen after that period. She listed off several 8-hour training days that are required.

There has not been a Deputy since March. The Clerk and Deputy are sub-registrars, and are the only ones who can issue a vital record and the Town Clerk is currently the only one who can do that.

Arsenault is no longer bonded as the Deputy Town Clerk and cannot take State deposits to the bank. So, if Holmes must make a bank run, some services cannot be offered during the period she is gone.

There was general discussion about the work within the Clerk's Office and the services they provide, as well as how their computer systems work. She said people don't want to wait. St Germain mentioned the complaint she received from resident Ken Brown while standing at the Town Clerk window registering town vehicles. Mr Brown stated that they are not convenient for him as a town resident.

The Board thanked her for her time and said that once they had made their decisions, if she wanted to come back, to let them know. Holmes left the meeting at 7:30 pm and Dan Tatem came in to the meeting at this time.

Tatem met with the Board with contracts for the work approved last week for the Cooperage project. He gave the Board an update of progress this week. He detailed out the contracts for each of the trades. He also detailed the time lines for the project.

They have had to get a renewed Driveway permit from NH DOT, which has been taken care of. There will be a site meeting on Tuesday with all of the contractors to get everything underway. The pole (PSNH) relocation is also underway. The Town and Stantec do not have any influence over the other utilities that also have to move their lines. This is progressing along, and can be worked around if the pole relocation is delayed beyond next week.

Stantec said that \$327,038.75 is the new total with adjustments to contracts made this week. He is still anticipating other decreases once hard costs come in and work is completed. Tatem presented three copies of each of the contracts, which were processed by the Board, signed by Hunter and witnessed by other Selectmen.

These contracts included:

Paving – Brox Industries Inc \$196,131.25  
Guardrail – CWS Guardrail & Fence \$67,325.00  
Monumentation and As-built survey – E C Mitchell \$27,300.00  
Site Work – Dzioba Construction \$34,157.50  
Curbing – Granite State Curb Setters \$2,125.00

Tatem said the Town would receive a book of all the documentation. He also said that the Town would receive a bill for the coring of the roadway, which has been completed and approved by Stantec for payment. The Board thanked Tatem and he left the meeting at 8:00 pm.

Selectmen updated Hunter on the meeting earlier with Chief Janvrin.

Selectmen discussed their overall thoughts on the Police Department budget and maintaining a fourth full-time officer. This is a difficult decision, but the Board is also looking at the economy and the budgetary effect on residents. The Board wants to see a wage increase for the balance of employees.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

1. Selectmen reviewed the minutes for 22 and 29 September 2011. Motion was made by St Germain to approve the minutes of 22 September 2011 as amended. Scribner seconded and the vote was approved 3-

0. Motion was made by St Germain and seconded by Hunter to approve the minutes as amended for 29 September 2011. The vote was approved 2-0-1 with Scribner abstaining.

2. Selectmen reviewed an email from Gene Cordes regarding the heating system at the Town Hall. Selectmen discussed this at length and the pros and cons of doing it now versus waiting for the renovations plan to be put together and fully funded. There was discussion about the open areas in the basement now, and that those would be covered by renovations at the time they are done. All of the ductwork is due to be replaced with the new proposal, and would be redone with the heating systems in any event, due to its current inefficiencies.

The Board discussed the full cost (perhaps \$95,000) and that the offset of a grant could fund most of the cost, making the payoff very short for a new system that is "green." The funds are already in the Town Hall Renovations Capital Reserve Fund, if the grant is awarded and the offset is needed. Scribner moved to commit up to \$30,000 for the geo-thermal heating system replacement project, as a potential maximum matching payment toward the grant. Hunter seconded and the vote was approved 3-0.

3. Further action on the Personnel Policy was deferred.

4. Budget reviews: Selectmen reviewed the Tax Collector (4150) budget with expenses updated to 09/30/2011. Carlson advised the Board that the request for Service Agreements needed to be increased based on the bill received for this fall. The Board agreed to make their recommendation on that line item \$2,200.

Lengthy discussion ensued regarding the Board's philosophy regarding the \$500 Deputy Tax Collector stipend. The Board decided to keep with their original work plan begun in 2011 with deputy stipends remaining at \$500.

With other recommendations based on use of funds this year, and plans for 2012, the Board's final number remained the same as the 2011 default allocation of \$25,700. Motion was made by Scribner to recommend the Tax Collector budget at \$25,700. St Germain seconded and the vote was approved 3-0.

Carlson distributed the Solid Waste (4323 and 4324) budgets. Solid Waste Collection consists of the Waste Management Contract for collection of MSW and recyclables. The new calculation of the contracted rate is \$248,234 including a fuel adjustment that is an increase for 2012 (not a reduction as it was in 2011). St Germain moved to recommend \$248,234 for Solid Waste Collection. Scribner seconded and the vote was approved 3-0.

The Solid Waste Disposal budget (4324) was reviewed. Scribner moved to recommend \$116,560. Hunter seconded and the vote was approved 3-0.

The Animal Control budget (4414) was reviewed with updates submitted by Chief Janvrin this week. Selectmen reduced the kennel line by \$250 and training by \$100 to be consistent with current year spending. Scribner moved to recommend \$11,135 for Animal Control. St Germain seconded and the vote was approved 3-0.

Selectmen then returned to discussion of the Town Clerk's budget and the appointment of a Deputy. The Board discussed a 3.5% increase in the clerical wages (\$13.18 per hour). The budget proposal included level wages for 23 hours per week. The Selectmen discussed this at length, again reviewing the Deputy pay. The Board allocated \$500 for the Deputy stipend and put 1,000 hours of clerical support at \$13.18 into their recommendation (\$13,180).

Other minor changes were made to the Board's recommendation consistent with spending trends in 2011. Scribner moved to recommend \$50,171 for the Town Clerk's budget, which is level-funded with 2011 default. St Germain seconded and the vote was approved 3-0.

Scribner asked for the updated copy of the Fire Rescue Department rationale to be available for Board members work session on Tuesday evening. Carlson will contact Chief Butler for the updates.

Carlson asked the Board about an appointment for the Highway Department at the request of Mark Pitkin. The Board suggested that next week would be fine.

5. There was discussion about Seacoast Farms and the decision from last week to forward the Planning Board's request to John Ryan to review. The Planning Board would like to do a site compliance walk.

6. Selectmen reviewed an RFP drafted to include painting of windows at the Town Hall, painting the Meetinghouse, and repairs to the Highway Shed and repairs to the roof of the well house on Main Street. Acknowledgement/permission from the State of NH Trails Bureau is pending for the well house work.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

1. Selectmen reviewed the accounts payable manifest \$37,762.14 for the current week dated 07 October 2011. Scribner moved to approve the manifest. St Germain seconded and the vote was approved 3-0.

2. Selectmen reviewed the folder of incoming correspondence and invoices for payment in future weeks.

3. Carlson discussed a School District proposed mailer insert for the Town's November newsletter. Larry Dobson had made the request as a subcommittee member working with the School Board on a survey they want to get out to residents. Selectmen suggested using Survey Monkey or a similar online version believing they will get much better results. Selectmen suggested an article in the November Town Newsletter outlining the purpose of the survey and details on where and how to access it. The Board had indicated that they did not want to get into the habit of newsletter inserts.

4. Copies of the September budget trending report were distributed to Board members.

### **NEXT WEEK**

The next regular Board meeting will be held on Thursday October 13, 2011. The Board will hold a work session at 6:00 pm on Tuesday October 11, 2011 to work on personnel evaluations. There is a Budget Committee meeting on Wednesday October 12, 2011 at 7:00 pm.

With no further business to be brought before the Board, motion was made by St Germain and seconded by Scribner to adjourn the meeting at 10:55 pm. The vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Carlson  
Town Administrator