

# FREMONT BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING

Fremont Town Hall  
 295 Main Street  
 Fremont, NH 03044  
October 9, 2013  
 7:00 PM

It is noted for the record that no quorum was available for the 02 October 2013 meeting, thus no meeting was held.

## I. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Charles Kimball called the October 9, 2013 Budget Committee meeting to order at 7:02 pm on the main floor of Fremont Town Hall.

Present were: Budget Committee Members Gene Cordes, Charles Kimball, Pat Martel (arriving at 7:15 PM), Joe Micelle, Mike Nygren, and Greg Fraize; Town Administrator Heidi Carlson, and Recording Secretary Susan Perry. Members of the public included Elizabeth Rosa.

## II. PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION: PARKS & RECREATION BUDGET (4520)

Elizabeth Rosa reviewed the Parks & Recreation budget. It was noted that, with the illness of Dick Rand, community volunteers have helped with maintenance of the fields, etc. It is not clear if Mr. Rand will return to work so this would need to be addressed. Some budget items are overdue, such as fertilization of fields. There would be events such as a Halloween party at Cooperage Corner where a unit was donated for this use. The Commission hopes to help defray the cost of an outdoor movie theater by charging a small fee and doing a raffle at the Halloween party, among other ideas. Ms. Rosa mentioned that sometimes people think that the PTA runs events they do so they hope to inform people when events are actually run by Parks & Recreation so people were aware of what they pay for.

Ms. Rosa noted that there was an increase in the SP Games line because a lot of the equipment was old and needed to be replaced. She said the goal was to spend less than was budgeted but also to make the program as enjoyable as possible for children. She mentioned that there was a new Lead Counselor.

Mr. Kimball noted the increase in the Food line. Ms. Rosa said that sometimes the program supplements children who cannot afford "Friday Pizza Days" and she said that it was not always known how many children would sign up each year (Camp is becoming more popular). The T-Shirt line included replenishment of new larger size shirts as well as shirts for counselors in a bright green color so students could identify staff easily.

Ms. Rosa said they could estimate/do a breakout of speakers for next year, but that information was not available now. There was an inquiry about the Mowing and Labor line. This covered labor costs (the Town owns the mower).

Ms. Rosa informed that more children went on field trips last year and the price increased a little. Mr. Nygren was concerned about over-spending (the field trip line) that was allocated a certain limit. Ms. Rosa explained that the first trip had to be done because information about it had already gone out and that two trips did not happen because the line went over-limit. Mr. Nygren asked why they were asking for less than was spent last year for field trips and Ms. Carlson said that money could be transferred if need be. Mr. Nygren said that it seemed like the field trip program was successful and suggested considering charging more. Ms. Rosa wanted to survey the community to see if it

would be reasonable to increase the program a bit more this year (\$10 in the tier process). Results of the survey could be shared with the Budget Committee upon completion.

It was noted that the proposal for 2014 was up slightly for Facilities & Grounds due to some work but that it may be lower again next year. There was a discussion about what to do about maintenance personnel in light of Mr. Rand being ill.

Ms. Rosa explained that there was a bookkeeping issue with the new Play Group line since there was a new Playgroup Coordinator and she had only this week connected with the Parks & Recreation Commission to understand the Commission's oversight of Playgroup.

Mr. Micelle wondered if the electricity line would increase due to the use of the outdoor movie theater and Ms. Rosa replied that it should not affect the budget much (she likened the theater to an inflatable jump house).

*Joe Micelle recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$43,559 in 4520 PARKS & RECREATION. Greg Fraize seconded the motion. Motion did not pass 3:3. This would be brought up again at the next meeting.*

### **III. JON TWISS, POLICE CHIEF: POLICE BUDGET (4210), POLICE DETAILS (4211) & ACO (4414)**

Carlson introduced Police Chief Jon Twiss, indicating that he began working in Fremont August 1<sup>st</sup>, and had been working with Carlson on the budget. Chief Twiss came to Fremont with 28 years of law enforcement background with the Town of Derry. He had a long detailed law enforcement history, including some prior budget oversight, fleet management, etc. The Board of Selectmen reviewed these budgets last week and made updates. Chief Twiss had seen that in Fremont there was a lack of training experience of uniformed officers to do proper investigations. The Town is not planning to replace the retired Deputy Chief, but Chief Twiss is proposing to hire an Investigative Supervisor and has submitted a job description to the Selectmen for review. This position would oversee investigations as well as other duties. He said that experienced officers looking to retire would benefit from this type of job for 30-32 hours/week (the limit for retirees); and that depth of experience would be a great asset to Fremont. He said there needed to be improvement in training officers properly (changes in laws, new techniques, maintenance of certifications, weapons qualifications, etc.) Training was also important since, as Fremont is a small town, often the officers act as first responders for medical emergencies. This was also important in order to reduce liability.

The Police Department server was down this week; a repair quote would be available tomorrow.

There was discussion about the need to replace vehicles that need repairs and have high mileage/are outdated. Where Warrant Articles to fund new vehicles have failed in the past, Chief Twiss proposed leasing two cruisers over a 3-year period. This would reduce maintenance costs and increase the safety and efficiency for officers. The current budget included 2 vehicles being taken out of the fleet (as trade-ins) and trading in two additional vehicles that the Department does not need. This will also reduce the Town's insurance coverage by two vehicles (or \$1,000 annually). This will leave the Department with 3 cars. The Honda Civic, Expedition and Dodge would be trade-ins. The 3-year cruiser replacement program (leasing 2 vehicles) would cost \$25,000 each year of the lease. This includes all costs. At the end of the lease, Fremont would own the vehicles for \$1. It was noted that Crown Victorias are no longer used as cruisers so the accessories were obsolete.

Mr. Kimball wanted to learn how much would be saved on maintenance with two new cruisers. Mr. Cordes felt that they should consider a pay raise for people who were not on the Matrix (who got a 2% increase).

Another budget change was an increase in Callout Wages due to the increased need of police for several events around the Town's anniversary celebration next year. There was an increase in the Communications line due to Rockingham County's (dispatch) system upgrade. No firm decision was yet made but they were trying to pass the cost off to Towns who use their service. If so, Fremont would be charged a one-time user fee of \$1,792. The budget would be dropped by that amount if the upgrade were not needed.

Discussion included the idea of making the Board of Selectmen agents of the Capital Reserve Fund. Ms. Carlson clarified that the Capital Reserve could not be used to make lease payments but could be used to make a down payment.

The only change to the Animal Control budget was a 2% raise. The budget was based on past years' expenditures. The Town Clerk collects revenues, which go into the general fund. Most revenues are from dog licenses (issuance of summons, notices, fines, etc.). Kennel cost was paid as needed. The AC Officer's job was more formalized this year (not being uniformed or on the matrix). The Animal Control budget will be reviewed by the Selectmen and brought back to the Budget Committee, as in all other Department's no raises had been approved to this point for cost of living.

With regard to the vehicle purchases, Mr. Kimball wanted to get more information on the leases: 1) Cost comparison of direct purchase vs. (municipal) lease and 2) Estimate on impact of non-routine maintenance costs.

#### IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

##### A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 16, 2013

*Pat Martel motioned to approve as written the minutes of September 16, 2013. Gene Cordes seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:0.*

##### B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 25, 2013

*Gene Cordes motioned to approve as written the minutes of September 25, 2013. Mike Nygren seconded the motion. Motion passed 4:0:2 (abstentions from G. Fraize and P. Martel)*

#### V. OTHER

The following Town budgets would be reviewed at the next meeting (besides the Police Department and Fire Department):

- 4151 Financial Administration – Other
- 4195 Cemeteries
- 4196 Insurance
- 4197 Advertising & Regional Associations
- 4199 Town Report
- 4290 Emergency Management

On Tuesday, October 22, 2013 at 6:30 pm, the School Budget will be presenting the School Budget FY 2014-2015 at the SAU Office. Information on the School Trust Funds had been compiled by Trustee of Trust Funds Bookkeeper Pat Martel. This was placed on file with the minutes.