

FREMONT BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING

Fremont Town Hall

295 Main Street

Fremont, NH 03044

April 22, 2015

7:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mike Nygren called the April 22, 2015 Budget Committee meeting to order at 7:00 PM on the main floor of Fremont Town Hall.

Present were: Budget Committee Chair Mike Nygren, Vice Chair Pat Martel, members Mary Anderson, Gene Cordes and Mark Kidd, School Board representative Jennifer Brown, Joe Miccile, and Town Administrator Heidi Carlson.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 13, 2015

Gene Cordes made a motion to approve as written the minutes of January 13, 2015. Mary Anderson seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

III. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS/COMMITTEE REORGANIZATION

Per the direction of Mr. Cordes, Joe Miccile had emailed to the Town Administrator a letter of interest in re-joining the Committee. Mr. Miccile introduced himself, noting that his job hours had changed and would allow him to re-join the Committee now.

Mary Anderson made a motion to appoint Joe Miccile as Budget Committee member until March 2016. Gene Cordes seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0.

The meeting was recessed in order for Mr. Miccile to be sworn in.

Jennifer Brown introduced herself as the School Board Representative to the Budget Committee this year. She was elected to the School Board last month and has been active in the PTA/community.

The Committee members introduced themselves.

There was discussion about waiting until there was a full Board to vote on Chair and Vice Chair.

Gene Cordes made a motion to appoint Mike Nygren as Budget Committee Chair. Mary Anderson seconded the motion. Motion passed 4:2:1 (S. Brown abstention).

Mark Kidd made a motion to reconsider voting for Chair and Vice Chair until the first meeting in August. Mary Anderson seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:0:1 (S. Brown abstention).

After discussion, the Committee members decided to reorganize at the August 19, 2015 meeting. Mr. Nygren would remain Chair and Ms. Martel would remain Vice Chair until the reorganization.

Mary Anderson made a motion to vote on the Committee Chair and Vice Chair at the next meeting in August (August 19, 2015). Gene Cordes seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0:2 (S. Brown and M. Nygren abstentions).

IV. TOWN ITEMS FOLLOW-UP/UPDATES

REVIEW OF 2015 BUDGET REPORT THROUGH 4/17/15

Ms. Anderson was concerned about the road budget and if Fremont was going to get Federal funds back due to the blizzard. Ms. Carlson said that Fremont was eligible for the FEMA reimbursement, which would be about \$15,000 - \$20,000, to be received around June 2015. A public hearing will be necessary to be able to accept and expend unanticipated revenues (put back into the highway budget because the maintenance budget is well over-spent). Ms. Anderson spoke about the poor condition of the roads in Fremont. She favored putting money away for emergencies.

Ms. Carlson noted that the Planning Committee was working to revitalize the Capital Improvements planning, to which the Budget Committee will have a role moving ahead (two members will be on the sub-committee). Fremont is hoping to be part of a pilot program for a road service management study out of UNH through the Planning Commission (interns would do an inventory of Fremont roads and prioritize them by the shape they are in). This would serve as a tool to determine which roads need work done the most (to incorporate this into the CIP).

The library roof project has been completed.

There was focus on doing building improvements to the historic museum during this summer.

Camp Fremont will not run this summer due to the asbestos abatement/work on the tile floors at Ellis School. An alternative would be doing pay-as-you go day trips. In terms of revenue, Ms. Carlson said revenue would be showed as coming in (vs. being raised) so the extra \$25,000 was not added to the tax rate.

Approved 2% pay raises were implemented in the first payroll of April.

Mr. Nygren had a question about the Police Department patrol wages which appeared to be under budget. Ms. Carlson said that the detail line was tracked separately from the general fund. She mentioned that there had not yet been a month with three payrolls; holiday payout was in December.

Mr. Nygren asked about the -\$199 amount in the Conservation Commission line; Ms. Carlson said that this was to pay the Secretary (for minute-taking), where Meredith Bolduc had stepped down from that duty. She said that the Budget Committee had decided to leave a dollar amount in the fund. The Selectmen decided to spend where it was, so the line reflected the -\$199 for clerical work, to come out of the Planning Board budget (about \$1,000).

The library roof repair work has been completed. There are a part-time and a full-time position for police officers (to fill a vacancy); the training cost would be for an applicant who needs training.

V. SCHOOL BUDGET

Mr. Kidd had requested a spending report from the school and this was emailed out this week. Mr. Cordes said it would be helpful to see the end-of-the-year spending. Ms. Brown mentioned that all purchase orders were due by May 14th and there will be a better idea of what was spent and what is left.

Ms. Anderson noted that the Committee had approved spending some of the Sanborn tuition line surplus money on the asbestos project. There was a substantial increase (7.9% for next year) in the tuition cost (normally it was around 3-4%). Ms. Anderson had concern about the tuition increase, saying that it was higher than the cost of living and that Fremont had no say in the (Sanborn) budget. She felt that the contract was the problem and she wondered if there was any movement apart from the MOU work. Ms. Brown said that the Superintendent and Administration was working on the MOU (to see if Fremont was double-paying for 504 resources). The Budget Committee asked for an update on the plan/scope of work and begin date for the forensic audit. Mr. Nygren said that previous Boards paid the tuition without question (e.g. if there was a surplus at Sanborn, would money be reimbursed to Fremont). Ms. Anderson thought it was good that effort was being made by Fremont now to get money back if possible. Mr. Nygren wondered if the audit would include this, noting that it seemed that the contract was not carried out in good faith/if there

were grounds to break it. Mr. Cordes felt that this was the job of the SAU and that the Budget Committee could just send letters of concern to the School Board.

There was discussion about having line by line transfers or not. Ms. Anderson thought it was agreed that the SAU was finishing this process this year (that was past practice) and, starting July 1, the lines would be overspent, knowing that the funds would be gotten from someplace else. This would help in looking at spending history. Mr. Kidd said that he thought the Board decided against this (and continue doing transfers). Mr. Kidd wanted to see transfers, especially in light of Mr. Safina's resignation, as he wanted to make sure no payouts were hidden.

The Budget Committee asked to get monthly financial reports and line item transfers (if they were still being done) between now and the end of the fiscal year. Mr. Nygren would email the Superintendent about if they will continue doing line item transfers or not.

The Committee discussed the best way to get questions to The Budget Committee, e.g. if the Board would continue to collect questions directed through the Chair to the School Board Representative. Mr. Nygren said that last year, individual members would email budgetary questions to the school and cc the other members, being careful not to start discussions. This procedure was done with Town departments as well. He felt that this was a quick way to get answers as individuals were reviewing the budget (rather than waiting until the next meeting for an answer). Ms. Anderson said that last year she and Mr. Kidd were new and there might not be as many questions this year.

Ms. Anderson suggested that the Board clearly direct Ms. Brown at the August 19th meeting as to what they would like to see in the school budget reports to facilitate their review this year, where there was not a lot of time in the process. She said that a lot of the items that were asked for last year had been reported in the past (e.g. teacher salaries). Many times, the School Board Representative will know the answers to questions at meetings. Ms. Brown said that she was new but would do her best. Ms. Anderson will email things she would like to see in the budgets and people can add to the list if they would like before the next meeting.

Ms. Carlson said the town budgets might be done by the end of September. Ms. Anderson preferred to have the Selectmen review budgets first. She wondered if the Budget Committee should look at both the Department submissions as well as the Selectmen's approvals. Ms. Carlson mentioned that it will quicken the process to look at the Department submissions when they are available. Mr. Nygren felt that it would not be very different from the Selectmen's approvals. The Budget Committee decided to receive budgets after the Selectmen approve them whenever possible.

Ms. Carlson mentioned the idea of video-taping live meetings downstairs. The space would be a little smaller and available for Wednesdays when the Planning Board was not meeting there. The Committee members did not seem to have an issue with this.

VI. NEXT MEETING DATE: AUGUST 19, 2015 AT 7 PM

- Reorganization
- Budget content the Committee wants to see presented in Town and School reports
- Meeting schedule for the fall.

Gene Cordes made a motion to schedule the next Budget Committee meeting for August 19, 2015 at 7 PM at Town Hall. Pat Martel seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:30 PM, Gene Cordes made a motion to adjourn. Mary Anderson seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

Respectfully submitted by,

Susan Perry, Secretary