

FREMONT BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
Fremont Town Hall, Fremont, NH 03044
September 20, 2017
7PM

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mary Anderson called the September 20, 2017 Budget Committee meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 PM at the Fremont Town Hall. Present were: Budget Committee Chair Mary Anderson, Vice Chair Pat Martel, Selectman Representative Gene Cordes, Mary Jo Holmes, Joe Miccile, and Josh Yokela, and School Board representative Jennifer Brown; Town Administrator Heidi Carlson, and Committee Secretary Susan Perry.

APPROVE MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 13, 2017

Jennifer Brown made a motion to approve the minutes of September 13, 2017 as written. Mary Jo Holmes seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0:2 (abstentions from M. Anderson and J. Miccile).

SCHOOL BUDGET UPDATES/INFORMATION

There was nothing new since last week's meeting. Ms. Carlson will email Ms. Penny tomorrow about money going toward the 2017 tax rate.

TOWN BUDGET UPDATES/INFORMATION

The following 2018 budget submissions with Selectmen's recommendations were reviewed and approved/tabled:

4130 Executive – Selectmen's Office

There was a 2% wage increase budgeted. Also considered was the clerical hours and skill set. More clerical help is necessary and a recommendation will be made soon for another part-time employee, who will work more hours through the end of the current budget cycle.

Mary Jo Holmes recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$118,074 in line 4130 Executive-Selectmen's Office. Pat Martel seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4140 Town Clerk Tax Collector

The Town Clerk/Tax Collector is on maternity leave for 12 weeks. There was a 2% increase in wages for the clerical position. No change in hours was recommended in the 2018 budget. Ms. Carlson was unsure about the increase to \$1,000 in TXC Mortgagee Research & Notification. This is double the current year expense. There was some discussion about the overlap in hours to avoid lines in the office.

Mary Jo made a motion to reduce line 4140305 TCX Ident Mortgagee from \$1,000 to \$500, decreasing the recommended total from \$64,842 to \$64,342. Josh Yokela seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4141 Election & Registration

Carlson explained the budget includes an increase from one election in 2017 to three elections in 2018. There was discussion about possible legislation regarding postponement of elections due to weather. Mr. Miccile suggested that volunteers could assist in planning logistics of shifting an election to another day (Saturday being best) if necessary.

Mary Jo Holmes recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$13,243 in line 4141 Election & Registration. Joe Miccile seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4151 Financial Administration

Mileage and postage are not being used as much by the Treasurer, and have been reduced accordingly.

Jennifer Brown recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$7,210 in line 4151 Financial Administration - Treasurer line. Mary Jo Holmes seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

Jennifer Brown recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendations of \$700 in the Trust Fund lines and \$13,200 in the Budget Committee lines, for a total in 4151 Financial Administration Other of \$21,110. Mary Jo Holmes seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4152 Reappraisal of Property

The increase in the computer line is due to the contracted service fee (software license and user fee). Quarterly reviews are going on now (changes to property are entered as they are done). In 2020, revaluations will be done (market value analysis). The quarterly review process is preferred by DRA. The Capital Reserve Fund will likely go away eventually. The fund will have about \$39,000 by the end of 2017.

Mary Jo Holmes recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$51,410 in line 4152 Reappraisal of Property. Pat Martel seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4153 Judicial & Legal Expense

The Selectmen have requested an increase of \$10,000 due to pending litigation matters that are ongoing. In addition, multiple towns are dealing with the perennial tax issues involving the utility companies.

Jennifer Brown recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$30,000 in line 4153 Judicial & Legal Expense. Joe Miccile seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4191 Planning and Zoning

There is an increase in the contracted hourly rate for the Circuit Rider Planner, which is for technical advice from the RPC Planner.

Mary Anderson made a motion to reduce the Planning and Zoning Clerical Wages line (4191030) from \$19,000 to \$15,000 (making the overall line \$37,765). Josh Yokela seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:1 (nay, G. Cordes).

Josh Yokela recommended the amount of \$37,765 for budget line 4191 Planning and Zoning. Pat Martel seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:1 (nay, G. Cordes).

There was discussion about it being helpful to have more coverage in the Planning and Zoning department. Cordes expressed concern about not being able to do that with only funding to pay the current employee who is working 20-22 hours weekly on average.

4195 Cemeteries

There was some rearranging to reflect spending in the budget. There was discussion about administrative vs. maintenance work in the Cemetery Department. Maintenance went well this year. The projects line identifies the phase of work going on.

Mary Jo Holmes recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$17,450 in line 4195 Cemeteries. Gene Cordes seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4196 Insurance

The Town's former long-time property liability carrier (PLT) closed on June 30, 2016 and insurances went out to bid at that time. Commercial insurance carriers are not always geared to municipal departments (police, volunteers, etc.). Fremont chose a pooled risk carrier (Primex), which is also the worker's compensation carrier for the Town. The contract was for 3 years with a cap of no more than 9%. The Town extended the 18-month contract from the initial bid. The high rates due to the Town's claim history will drop off. Ms. Carlson will keep the Board apprised if a final bill is received by the end of the year. The used highway truck was added and will be a new exposure for 2018. Ms. Carlson will check on the percent cap and what the Town's number might be. **This will be put on the December agenda for review.**

Joe Miccile recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$69,406 in line 4196 Insurance. Gene Cordes seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4197 Advertising and Regional Association

LGC provides training opportunities, Webinars, legislative information, etc. Budgeting was done based on an 8-year average of actual charges.

Pat Martel recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$8,582 in line 4197 Advertising and Regional Association. Gene Cordes seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4199 Other General Government

Pat Martel recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$2,500 in line 4199 Other General Government. Joe Miccile seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4210 Police Department (to be reviewed at the October 4th meeting)

The budget covers 26 hours/week of part-time work. The Chief looks to add a new officer as a Warrant Article. A page of additional budget details for the full-time officer proposal was distributed for future discussion.

4215 Ambulance Services

The budget includes a contractual \$500/year increase.

Mary Jo Holmes recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$9,000 in line 4215 Ambulance Services. Jennifer Brown seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4220 Fire Rescue Department (TBD)

There was mention that there will be discussion about movement away from a volunteer force due to issues with availability of personnel, as well as the nature of what is going on in other communities. Ms. Anderson asked to see an activity log.

4240 Building Inspection (TBD)

4290 Emergency Management

The Director's helpful, competent skill set was mentioned. There are no changes to the request.

Mary Jo Holmes recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$4,000 in line 4290 Emergency Management. Pat Martel seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4323 Solid Waste Collection and 4324 Solid Waste Disposal

There is a contractual 3% increase in the solid waste collection budget. The solid waste disposal budget is based on flat tonnage (price per ton increases annually in July). Tonnage figures (MSW and recycling) for the past 10 years have been reviewed and used in the calculations, and were distributed for members to review.

Jennifer Brown recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$232,926 in line 4323 Solid Waste Collection. Pat Martel seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

Joe Miccile recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$102,785 in line 4324 Solid Waste Disposal. Jennifer Brown seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4414 Animal Control

Mary Jo Holmes recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$10,513 in line 4414 Animal Control. Joe Miccile seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4415 Health

Pat Martel recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$750 in line 4415 Health. Jennifer Brown seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4442 Direct Assistance

Jennifer Brown recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$15,800 in line 4442 Direct Assistance. Mary Jo Holmes seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4520 Parks & Recreation (TBD)

4550 Library (TBD)

4583 Patriotic Purposes

Mary Jo Holmes recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$2,735 in line 4583 Patriotic Purposes. Jennifer Brown seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4610 Conservation Commission (TBD)

There was discussion about reducing line items (from a total of \$3,752 as recommended by the Selectmen, to \$1,580) - with the reasoning that the amount requested by the department exceeds what has been spend in the past two years. There was then discussion about valuing the expertise of the Committee, which is not a full Committee at the present time.

There was discussion about the bond authorization currently in place, and concern about having open credit to by land and this being an open liability for the Town. A vote on the Conservation Commission budget was tabled for review of information that Ms. Carlson will get regarding: budget residuals, the statute on how money is to be used, and the default budget (2016?) where zero dollars was recommended for all lines.

4711-4723 Debt Service and TANS (TBD)

OTHER NEXT MEETING DATE: OCTOBER 4, 2017 – Fremont Town Hall, Main Floor Meeting Room

ADJOURNMENT

At 9 PM, Jennifer Brown made a motion to adjourn. Pat Martel seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

Respectfully submitted by,
Susan Perry, Secretary