

Fremont Town Hall, Fremont, NH 03044

October 11, 20177PM**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Mary Anderson called the October 11, 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, Selectmen's Representative Gene Cordes, Mary Jo Holmes, Kathy Miccile, Josh Yokela, and School Board Representative Jennifer Brown. Town Administrator Heidi Carlson and Secretary Susan Perry were also present.

7 PM HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT BUDGET (4312) – LEON HOLMES JR, ROAD AGENT

Road Agent Leon Holmes Jr reviewed the Highway Department Budget (4312) and Warrant Articles for Red Brook Road, Beede Hill Road, and two Capital Reserves. Highlights included:

- Overall increase of \$22,000 over last year's operating budget
- Increase of \$3,000 from last year in the winter salt line (based on 2017 usage so far)
- Decrease of \$10,000 in the winter equipment hire line (Town owns a 6-wheeler)
- Increase in the full-time wages (to increase the current 32 hour position to full-time person plus 2% COL added by Selectmen). The rationale is to be able to retain necessary, good help and for safety reasons. It was noted that an estimated \$30,450 would be in the Personnel Administration budget Line for the benefits.
- Reduction in the part-time wages summer line, which would combine with the part-time wages winter line
- Part-time and Full-time Overtime lines would be combined
- \$1 should be placed in lines to hold them if they are not being used (vs. putting zero)
- The training line covers \$60/class for three classes through the UNH T2 Center, which the Road Agent will make mandatory for the new employee.
- Reduction in the general supplies line (guardrails are in their own line #4312340)
- Increase in the drainage line due to culvert replacement and catch basins
- Increase in hot/cold patch line based on usage this year.
- Decrease in backhoe fuel based on use and current price
- Increase in truck fuel line (for two trucks instead of one)
- Increase in truck maintenance line (to maintain two trucks)
- Decrease in sealcoat and crack seal line (crack seal done on Sandown, South and Shirkin Streets at \$2,500/day x 6 days in 2017)
- Decrease in hot top and reconstruction. Budget in 2018 is to finish North Road.
- It was noted that the Town received \$99,000 in supplemental Block Grant Funds (SB38) to be used specifically on road upgrades and improvements. This was used to do additional work (in addition to 2017 Warrant Article) on North Road. The Road Agent noted that a total of two miles of North Road was done.
- The roadside mowing line covers tractor rental for three weeks.
- The increase in the painting lines line covers painting lines (North side of town) at intersections, etc. for safety.
- Increase in the tree work line to remove dangerous trees and to do pruning
- Increase in the engineering fees to finish engineering for North Road, and plan for the following budget year's projects.
- There was review of the Warrant Article for Beede Hill Road Reconstruction (\$213,094). It was noted that this is the busiest road in Fremont and there was discussion about how to best present the article so taxpayers will vote for it.
- There was review of the Warrant Article for Red Brook Road Reconstruction (\$162,710). There was discussion about the idea of doing a bond payment (short term) now that the Complex debt has been retired, in order to do these types of projects. It was noted that there would not be much savings in this.
- Other Warrant Articles include: \$25,000 contribution to the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund (current balance of \$90,000); \$25,000 contribution to the Bridge Capital Reserve Fund (for two red-listed bridges, estimated construction of at least \$500,000 each to repair.
- It was noted that the life of a road is about 20 years.
- There was discussion about the importance of having safe roads that are used by taxpayers daily, as well as the fact that Town services are thinly staffed.
- The Selectmen will review the budget and ideas. Mr. Holmes asked to attend the Budget Committee meeting to hear the vote on his budget.

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APPROVE MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 4, 2017

Jennifer Brown made a motion to approve the minutes of October 4, 2017 as written. Pat Martel seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

SCHOOL BUDGET UPDATES/INFORMATION

Ms. Brown reported that Susan Penny reconciled the last Sanborn bill and there were credits. The unexpended fund balance was \$651,765. There was discussion about the School Board's suggestion of holding a public forum on the budget on November 8th, to be live-streamed at the public library, with the Budget Committee in attendance to hear the budget overview and community feedback. Ms. Carlson will post the new meeting location.

There was review of enrollment numbers. There was a decrease in Ellis enrollment from September 1, 2016 to September 1, 2017 of 16 students (noted to be a class size). Ms. Brown explained that Ellis is slowly using personalized learning and those seventh and eighth grades have small advisories (with Unified Arts teachers) now instead of homerooms (101 students in those two grades). She noted that some teachers teach both seventh and eighth grade (e.g. in science). There was discussion about elementary and high school class sizes, which are declining even in Sanborn as well.

The 2017 tax rate has been set at \$29.19. The rate is down from \$29.88 in 2016 due mostly to the school's returning surplus. The Town increased by \$0.54. Tax bills will go out in the mail on Friday.

TOWN BUDGET UPDATES/INFORMATION

Updated expense sheets were distributed (Police, Parks & Recreation). Ms. Carlson will ask Chief Twiss for comparable police pay (e.g. Chester). There was discussion about paying police officers for physical training as a perk, for safety and for detainment (vs. using a merit-pay plan, or inclusion in salary as part of the job).

4520 PARKS & RECREATION

The camp paid for itself for the first time this past summer. Ms. Carlson noted that having Ellis teachers part of the camp program worked very well. The \$500 increase in the PG Gymnastics line refers to the portion the program plays for trips for each child.

Gene Cordes recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$55,235 in line 4520 Parks & Recreation. Jennifer Brown seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:1 (nay, Martel).

4550 LIBRARY

Mary Jo Holmes recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$130,978 in line 4550 Library. Jennifer Brown seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4711-4721 DEBT SERVICE

Gene Cordes recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$111,740 in line 4711-4721 Debt Service. Pat Martel seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

4723 INTEREST ON TAX ANTICIPATION NOTES

Jennifer Brown recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$1,500 in line 4723 Interest on Tax Anticipation Notes. Mary Jo Holmes seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

FREMONT BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

FINAL

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4316 STREET LIGHTING

Pat Martel recommended the Board of Selectmen's budget recommendation of \$5,700 in line 4316 Street Lighting. Jennifer Brown seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

The Board preferred seeing the Fire and Rescue budget after the Board of Selectmen make a recommendation (if possible).

Ms. Carlson will have a new budget summary with totals for the next meeting. Ms. Brown will be absent for the October 18th meeting.

OTHER NEXT MEETING DATE: OCTOBER 18, 2017 – Fremont Town Hall, Main Floor Meeting Room

ADJOURNMENT

At 9:10 PM, Gene Cordes made a motion to adjourn. Jennifer Brown seconded the motion. Motion passed 7:0.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Perry
Secretary