

**Budget Committee Meeting**  
**Minutes of**  
**January 5, 2012**

**Members Present:** Robert Balon, Robert Demers, Jay Holmes, Lisa Kardell, Bruce Lary (Chairman), John Losier, Terry Oliver, Terry Rhoderick, Steve Roy, Jeff Schall

**Others Present:** Robin Frost, Denise Vallee, David Graham, Don Provencher, Jeff Stewart, Steve Gauthier, Jean Gauthier, John Lapierre, Sr., Grace Lapierre, John Lapierre, Jr., Peter Dupont, Francis Dalphonse, David Rich, Ron Donato, Joe Ramsey, Glen Eastman Lisa White, Buddy Holmes

**Press:** Melissa Grima, Berlin Daily Sun

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lary at 6:28 pm

**Meeting Minutes:** Robert Balon made the motion to accept the minutes, after the results of the roll call vote are added. Terry Oliver seconded the motion and all approved.

**Cemetery Department Budget:** Buddy Holmes presented his 2012 budget, line for line. Two part-time position were cut and supplies in the amount of \$200.00 for an overall reduction of \$12,459.

**Highway Department Budget:** Cuts were made in several areas. Fuel prices are affecting the overall budget, but he was able to cut \$1598.00.

Robert Demers asked if they did their own repairs, which Buddy replied they did as much as they can for all the departments and do not charge them an hourly rate. The departments only have to buy the parts necessary for repairs; it comes from their budget. No money is made on performed repairs.

Robert Demers also questioned the painting of the cross walks. Feels these are the states roads they should pay for the painting. Buddy responding by saying the state doesn't care if they are stripped or not, it's the town who wants it painted so it falls on the town.

Robert Balon questioned the street lights and the cost of keeping them all on. Denise Vallee responded with the number of street lights, and their cost. (See below) She further stated Terry Oliver and Buddy Holmes will go out in the morning and do a physical count and inspection to help determine which lights could be considered turned off. All the upgrades have been done to the light fixtures for a total of 321 lights. Monthly fees on the lights are as follows:

238 fixtures @ \$7.66/ month  
24 fixtures @ 10.34/ month  
1 fixtures @ 9.41/ month  
58 fixtures @ 10.34/ month  
(+) Delivery Charge = \$3,038.00/ Month

Buddy Holmes interjected the only ones who can turn off any of the lights are the selectmen.

Fuel is up \$7650.00 due to the rising cost, but Mr. Holmes state he has done cuts in the Sanitation Department which will off set this rising cost. Denise Vallee also inter jected there is revenue set aside for this.

**Solid Waste:** the reduction here is the opposite of the increase in the Highway Department, making it a wash.

**Public Comments:** David Graham commented the only thing being discussed is the dollar amount that needs to be cut. More on how and what is going to be cut and mostly how it is going to affect the community. Some areas we have no control over such as the school and county taxes. Be very thoughtful before doing cuts. Hope we never have to abolish some of our departments that could hurt the kids, elders, the Common, trash collection, snow removal and response time from the police/fire departments and EMS. It's time to think about the effects of your vote.

Glen Eastman states he is concerned about the talk of \$800,000.00 being talked about. Doesn't think this board has the right to take it away. You need to put your name on the public's rights you are taking away. Put together a budget to service the town best.

Mr. Donato states all are going through a hard time not hearing anyone saying they are going different places for bids. Budget Department has to make good decisions.

Robert Demers stated he has no idea where the \$800,000.00 figure came from; it has never been brought up at these meetings.

Jay Holmes blames the management they need to look at the man hours and how they work the budget. Tighten your belts, cut something. You shouldn't have filled positions that need to be cut now.

Bruce Lary, for the record, "this board, as a whole, has not discussed a \$800,000.00 cut. Jay (Holmes) said we/us, he can't use this term, as it's not the board's thoughts." Jay Holmes stated when he said we and us he was referring "to my wife and my feeling."

**Old Business:** Chairman Lary asked if there was any old business. There wasn't any.

**Adjournment:** Terry Rhoderick made the motion, seconded by Steve Roy. All in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm

Sharon Amero