Budget Committee Meeting Minutes Thursday, January 9, 2014

Present: Ann Howe, Chris Howe, Steve Londrigan, Matt Murphy, Proctor Wentworth

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by Mr. Murphy at 7:00pm. Mr. Howe led the pledge of allegiance.

Mr. Murphy indicated that the agenda called for both town and the school budgets to be voted on but since the school budget is not available, only the town budget would be addressed. The school budget and articles would be voted on by the budget committee at the end of the school meeting which is scheduled for 7:00pm on January 14th at the Hampstead Middle School. Mr. Murphy encouraged all committee members should attend the school meeting prior to the budget committee meeting.

Mr. Murphy noted that the committee had not received from the town a clarification of article 6 which addressed the police contract. There was concern raised in the Selectman’s meeting as to whether the figures shown in the article where correct. Inputs from visitors Selectman Murphy and Mr. Jorge Mesa-Tejada that the figures reflect that the increase occurs in the month of April which is what causes the appearance of a distortion in the figures and that the figures should be correct. Because the contract requires voter approval, the effect of the new contract will not be included in the 2014 budget figures but will be in subsequent years.

Mr. Murphy then sought if we should go through the articles one at a time or approve them all in a single vote. Mr. Wentworth made a motion to approve all of the financial articles in a single vote. There was no second so Mr. Murphy proceeded with reviewing the articles one by one asking each member for their vote.

Article 5, the town budget was for $5, 456,149.65 an increase of 1.63% over the previous year. The committee approved article 5 in a vote of 5-0.

Article 6 was the police contract which is for a 3% raise over the next 2 years. The committee approved article 6 in a vote of 5-0.

Article 7 was for allowing a special session of the board of selectman to propose a new contract if article 6 failed. The committee approved article 5 in a vote of 5-0.

Article 8 was to raise $24K for construction of a basketball court. Mr. Murphy noted that the rec department which submitted the article hasn’t presented sufficient information as to how this project will be funded or how the estimates were derived. Mr. Howe indicated he heard the figure for the total project was $48K. Ms. Howe felt that because of seasonality issues the courts use would be limited. The committee disapproved the project 0-4 with Mr. Londrigan abstaining. Resident Mr. Mesa-Tejada questioned Mr. Londrigan on his vote. Mr. Londrigan explained he did not have sufficient information to vote for or against the project.

Article 9 was to raise $10K for a reserve fund to cover repairs in all town buildings. Ms. Howe pointed out that this was different from article 10 which was for a similar amount but for a specific project at the library. The committee approved article 9 in a vote of 5-0.

Article 10 was to raise $10K for a reserve fund to cover replacement costs of the carpets in the library. The committee approved article 10 in a vote of 5-0.

Article 11 was to raise $3951 for Meals on Wheels. Mr. Murphy expressed concern over how such an odd number was arrived at. He also went on to indicate that he felt that this as well as articles 12 and 13 were donations raised through taxation; something he could not support.

Article 12 was to raise $1K to support Greater Derry Adult Tutorial. The committee approved article 12 in a vote of 4-1 with Mr. Murphy voting not to approve.

Article 13 was to raise $1K to support the American Red Cross. The committee approved article 13 in a vote of 4-1 with Mr. Murphy voting not to approve.

Article 14 was to raise $5K for the forest maintenance fund which will be offset by a withdraw from the forest fund of an equal amount. Mr. Murphy asked why this complexity was necessary to which Selectman Murphy indicated it was the way state law has been set up in regards to forests. The committee approved article 14 in a vote of 5-0.

Mr. Murphy went on to approve meeting minuets from the previous meetings.

Ms. Howe motioned to approve the meeting minutes from Aug 15 2013 which was 2nd by Mr. Howe. The approval passed 5-0.

Mr. Wentworth motioned to approve the meeting minutes from September 9 2013 which was 2nd by Mr. Howe. The approval passed 5-0.

Mr. Murphy noted that there was no meeting for the budget committee in the month of October and therefore no minutes.

Mr. Wentworth motioned to approve the meeting minutes from November 6 2013 which was 2nd by Mr. Howe. Ms. Howe amended the motion requesting that spelling mistakes be corrected. The approval passed 5-0.

Mr. Wentworth motioned to approve the meeting minutes from December 19 2013 which was 2nd by Mr. Howe. The approval passed 5-0.

Mr. Londrigan went on to read a proposed amendment to the minutes submitted by Ms. Howe which read "Ann Howe also expressed her disappointment that the Hampstead Selectmen neglected to solicit any input from the existing, and newly elected Budget Committee members before making an appointment.” Mr. Londrigan made a motion to accept the proposed amendment which was 2nd by Mr. Wentworth. The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Murphy opened the floor to public comment. Mr. Jorge Mesa-Tejada reminded the committee that they must approve their minutes in a timely fashion to be complaint with RSA91 requirements. Mr. Murphy indicated he is correcting this oversight with the approval of all of the previous minutes and will be more careful in the future.

Mr. Murphy sought a motion to adjourn which was made by Mr. Wentworth moved to adjourn and Mr. Londrigan seconding the motion with the motion passing unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40.