

FINAL

PRESENT: R. P. McDermott, Chairman; M. Kasprzak, Vice Chairwoman; C. P. Graham, Selectmen; E. N. Small, Town Administrator; L. A. Ruest, Administrative Assistant

BUDGET WORKSHOP:

LIBRARY: Librarian J. Haskell and Library Trustee B. Forgione were present. B. Forgione reported that the budget is the same as last year with the exception of increases in funds for fuel oil and building maintenance. E. N. Small noted that increased costs for employee benefits need to be added as well. C. P. Graham inquired as to the increase in funds for books and materials. B. Forgione explained that the increase shown in this budget line includes expenses that are offset by donations and interest received throughout the year. E. N. Small reported that doing so has been allowed by warrant article. He will add a statement to the budget worksheet explaining this. B. Forgione further stated that it is planned to spend \$18,000 for this budget line although \$15,000 is requested from the budget. She noted that the costs of materials have increased and that this budget line has been level funded for five years.

E. N. Small asked if an amount has been determined for the special warrant article requested by the Library. B. Forgione stated that an amount will be decided at the Trustees next meeting.

J. Haskell reported that the Trustees are looking to purchase a new automated system as the current system is becoming obsolete. C. P. Graham expressed concern with the 5.34 % budget increase over 2011. B. Forgione stated that the Library portion of the Town budget is less than one percent of the total and that should cuts be made, there would be little to no change. R. P. McDermott asked why the Library doesn't build up funds over time rather than three or four thousand dollar increases. B. Forgione stated she feels a few thousand dollars is small and that the increase is mostly costs associated with maintaining the building. R. P. McDermott asked that information or explanation be provided in the comments section of the worksheets.

RECREATION: Parks and Recreation Committee Chairman F. J. Ferreira, Jr. was present and welcomed questions of the Board. R. P. McDermott asked if the proposed \$5,200 for band concerts was enough to cover the costs. F. J. Ferreira, Jr. stated it is, and, in response to M. Kasprzak's suggestion of "passing the hat" at concerts, added that the Commission decided not to do so. In response to C. P. Graham, F. J. Ferreira, Jr. explained that the cost for concerts has been a budget item over time and that on one occasion the Town received a donation to the concert fund. He added that this budget has experienced a one percent increase over ten years and is mostly kept level funded. He noted that Commission Member L. Stan organizes concerts within available funds. M. Kasprzak asked that this additional/historical information be added to the notes section of the budget worksheet.

CEMETERY: Cemetery Trustees L. Walker and G. Hardee were present. L. Walker identified the increases for anticipated pruning and tree removal as well as repair and maintenance of stones. She stated that the Trustees are not happy with the mowing received from the contractor awarded the bid for 2011 and plan to bid this work for 2012. Discussion took place with regard to number of mowings, trimming, care of stones, etc.

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L. Walker explained that cemetery funds held by the Trustees of the Trust Funds have been invested with a new financial institution and that interest amounts should improve for use in 2012.

C. P. Graham asked if the Cemetery Trustees considered a warrant article for the project of pruning and tree removal rather than including it in the budget. L. Walker stated they would consider a warrant article in the amount of \$4,000 for the two cemeteries needing this work.

HIGHWAY: R. P. McDermott stated that an amount for a warrant article for 2012 road work has yet to be determined. He reviewed the recommendation received from the RSMS project and the work part of the 10-year plan. C. P. Graham expressed concern with line 570, pay for the Road Agent. E. N. Small suggested that Road Agent invoices be reviewed to determine the categories where money has been spent. R. P. McDermott offered to help in this regard. The Board reviewed various proposed budget amounts presented and reduced the amount by \$14,440 to \$235,650.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS: As discussed earlier in the year, the Board reviewed Short Term Disability and Life Insurance policy limits with the intention of increasing the amounts to reflect current salaries. A review of the options presented by the Local Government Center took place and the Board decided to include the costs associated with the \$1,000 weekly benefit for Short Term Disability (currently \$500) and change to a “one times salary up to \$75,000” limit for Life Insurance (Option II).

C. P. Graham asked if there is an active Committee reviewing employee benefits and contributions. It was noted that 2012 ends the five-year time period bringing employee contributions for Health Insurance to 20 percent (two percent increase per year over five years). All agreed that a Committee should be established to look at the next five years. It was determined that one member of the Board of Selectmen and one employee should be part of this five member Committee.

E. N. Small provided the Board with a listing of increased costs to employees for Health/Dental/Retirement benefits for 2012.

OTHER:

Special Money Articles: A listing of 2011 special money articles and the balances associated with them was provided to the Board.

Discussion took place with regard to the \$55,000 Highway Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund. E. N. Small explained that Capital Reserve Fund money, to include the Library Improvement CRF, is transferred to the Trustees of the Trust Funds at year end so as to assist with cash flow.

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E. N. Small stated that the changes made today would be included in revised budget worksheets. Default amounts will then be identified. E. N. Small explained the manner in which default amounts are determined.

R. P. McDermott asked the Board if mowing should be bid for 2012. C. P. Graham stated he felt it should given the cost. M. Kasprzak stated it would be acceptable to her to obtain three prices. R. P. McDermott stated he was okay with not bidding in 2012.

Property Tax Warrant: The Board signed the property tax warrant for the December billing.

Absences from the Office: E. N. Small explained that he sent an email on behalf of the Building Inspector who had to leave the office; information was provided to those who conduct business with the Building Inspector. R. P. McDermott questioned the number of people the email was sent to and whether the Board provided this direction. E. N. Small stated that direction was given in the past that should employees not be present in the office that an email be sent and voice mail messages changed notifying that an employee is not available. In this instance, the Building Inspector did not do so and the Town Administrator provided information.

C. P. Graham inquired as to how the meeting between the Town Administrator and Building Inspector went. E. N. Small reported that numerous matters were discussed to include handling of code violations, office hours, communication and documentation. In response to the Board, he provided status of two code enforcement concerns (dumping on Kensington Road and Brown Road). He also noted that efforts are being made to ensure consistency and that the Town's process is met to include maintaining proper files. It was also stated that it is important for code matters to be handled on a pro-active basis to include advance contact to persons to allow for adequate time to address potential violations.

C. P. Graham inquired as to the number of persons conducting an inspection which includes the Fire Chief, Fire Inspector and Building Inspector. M. Kasprzak stated that K. C. Kelley has stated that he will not conduct inspections alone. C. P. Graham stated that he didn't realize when he said yes to hiring J. True that someone was being hired to do what the Fire Chief does for inspections as part of his job. R. P. McDermott questioned why three officials are needed to conduct an inspection. E. N. Small suggested the Board meet with employees. The Board requested to review K. C. Kelley's schedule. E. N. Small stated he reviewed the Building Inspector's schedule with him when they met and noted that he was candid with K. C. Kelley as to not knowing when he leaves for the day and when he is on inspections. R. P. McDermott asked that K. C. Kelley be in the office until 3 p.m. with inspections done during the business day. Question was raised as to the amount of activity at present.

E. N. Small reported that he plans to review the Building Inspector's daily logs. He added that the Building Inspector builds up comp time and has trouble with payroll records. E. N. Small noted that L. A. Ruest is working to amend the form to assist the Building Inspector.

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 12:45 p.m.

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
OCTOBER 26, 2011**

**9:30 AM
TOWN HALL**

FINAL

**MOTION: R. P. MCDERMOTT
SECOND: M. KASPRZAK
UNANIMOUS**