

Unofficial

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING

Hooksett Town Hall

35 Main Street

Thursday, February 23, 2012

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Miville called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

ATTENDANCE

Chari M. Miville, D. Pearl, K. Hughes, F. Bizzarro, JR Ouellette, G. Smith, and T. Lizotte

Absent: T. Keach, Village Water Precinct, Central Water Precinct

Excused: N. Haas, D. Argo

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 4, 2012

D. Pearl motioned to approve the minutes of February 4, 2012. Seconded by T. Lizotte.

Abstained – G. Smith

Vote unanimously in favor

February 9, 2012

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the minutes of February 9, 2012. Seconded by D. Pearl

Vote unanimously in favor

February 10, 2012

D. Pearl motioned to approve. Seconded by G. Smith

Vote unanimously in favor

NEW BUSINESS

M. Miville suggested that the Committee establish by-laws which will consider only the elected budget members as required for quorum.

With the allowance for Water precinct, School, and Council considered a part of the Budget Committee, the quorum is affected and the Committee is not meeting the requirement for quorum.

JR Ouellette asked if legal counsel had been sought.

K. Hughes agrees with the understanding but is concerned with the legality of the quorum.

D. Pearl is in favor of establishing a quorum and suggested seek a legal opinion.

Email dated 2/21/12 from D. Argo

Lee Ann,

I will be unable to attend Thursday's budget meeting due to personal commitments.

Considering the District Deliberative Session has come and gone, I am not asking for back-up representation from the Board.

Thanks

D. Pearl motioned quorum will be established based on a simple majority of the seated elected or Budget Committee appointed members present at the meeting. Seconded by K. Hughes.

Vote unanimously in favor.

M. Miville requested clarification on the email from D. Argo with respect to the attendance of coverage for meetings subsequent to the School Board budget approval.

OLD BUSINESS

Budget Discussion

Total Presented Budget - \$15,968,007

Administration –

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the Administrative budget for \$891,218. Seconded by D. Pearl.

D. Pearl: Often these numbers are dependent on our confidence in the person preparing the budgets. I have a lot of confidence that Dr. Shankle has done his due diligence in preparing these budgets.

M. Miville stated that in this economy, the raises for town employees says something, however he will support the increase.

Vote unanimously in favor

Assessing

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the Assessing budget for \$166,444 Seconded by D. Pearl. Vote unanimously in favor

Budget Committee

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the Budget Committee budget for \$8660. Seconded by JR Ouellette.

Vote unanimously in favor

Fire- Rescue

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the Fire and Rescue budget for \$3,588,035. Seconded by K. Hughes.

Vote unanimously in favor

D. Pearl: I would like to bring up the issue of stipends. This issue came up at a meeting when we asked Dr. Shankle about the reason for the establishment of stipends and the rate. If we see anything is out of line and should be adjusted, it will be for us to decide. I don't think Boards will cut their own stipends. I also am concerned with the rate of the stipend affecting the incentive to serve. If there is any movement here, it will have to start with the Budget Committee. My idea of a "stipend" is to offset cost related to serving. I'm not making a motion to establish a stipend but I think we might want to think about it in the future.

M. Miville suggested adding this item to the self-audit. I wanted to look at all the stipends for all Boards in a snapshot.

T. Lizotte stated he would bring the issue of stipends up to the Town Council and request the Administrator gather the data.

D. Pearl: The Town Council governs committees they appoint like Planning and Zoning but the Police Commission was investigating changing their stipend.

Community Development

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the Community Development budget for \$205,515. Seconded by JR Ouellette.

Vote unanimously in favor

Family Services

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the Family Services budget for \$220,432. Seconded by JR Ouellette.

Vote unanimously in favor

Finance Department

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the Finance Department budget for \$203,219. Seconded by G. Smith.

T. Lizotte stated that they have decreased their banking costs.

Vote unanimously in favor

Public Works

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the Public Works budget for \$2,862,849. Seconded by F. Bizzarro.

Vote unanimously in favor.

G. Smith stated that Building Maintenance for Park & Rec was a jump of \$25,000.

Fire alarms, general repair, pest control, Fire Extinguishers

T. Lizotte: 2010-2012 – If you compare actuals, it exceeds the budget substantially for various reasons. I have confidence in Mr. Lessard and how he is managing that department.

C. Soucie: That line includes the maintenance for all the buildings not just the Park & Rec. In addition that line has been historically under spent.

T. Lizotte: If you total the entire budget, the whole is still under last year's budget.

Vote unanimously in favor

Recycling and Transfer

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the Recycling and Transfer budget for \$1,099,835.

Seconded by K. Hughes.

Vote unanimously in favor

Tax Collector

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the Tax Collector budget for \$249,032. Seconded by F.

Bizzarro.

K. Hughes stated she is still concern about the amount being budgeted for tax lien mail.

Vote unanimously in favor

Town Clerk

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the Town Clerk budget for \$ 27,178. Seconded by D. Pearl.

Vote unanimously in favor

Cemetery Commission

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the Cemetery Commission budget for \$850. Seconded by JR Ouellette.

Vote unanimously in favor

Capital Budget

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the Capital budget for \$85,377. Seconded by JR Ouellette

Vote unanimously in favor.

Debt Service

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the Debt Services budget for \$265,201. Seconded by JR Ouellette.

Vote unanimously in favor

Conservation Commission

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the Conservation Commission budget for \$10,176.

Seconded by F. Bizzarro

Vote unanimously in favor

Library

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the Library budget for \$551,516. Seconded by JR Ouellette.

Vote unanimously in favor.

Police Commission

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the Police Commission budget for \$3,585,410. Seconded by JR Ouellette.

D. Pearl: I think this again goes to the confidence issue. They are trying to reorganize and they will need a little time to get things straightened out. I'm confident that although we may need to buy two cars, this is a good budget.

M. Miville stated that he was going to inquire about the wage line and spoke with Mrs. McHugh and Acting Chief Daigle regarding the salaries.

Was their money left over in the wage line after the reorganization of the officers? Based on that discussion, the wages congruence to the positions; will the salaries be adjusted as well. Mrs. McHugh's first comment was all the salaries were readjusted based on the changes in positions. The lieutenant was no longer a position and the salary ranges adjusted. I don't know if I asked about the Chief's wages. She did say there is no more flex in the wage line. We can ask them these questions next week. The contract is now available and will be reviewed next week.

Questions:

- **Wage money remaining after the reorganization**
- **What is in budget for the Chief's salary**
- **Looking forward, have they evaluated the Chief's position with regard to pay scale and will they go a comparison with other towns and what will be the benchmark.**

T. Lizotte: If this is a bottom line budget, I would allow this budget to go forward as defended and vote on this tonight.

D. Pearl: At the time the budget was presented, they employed a chief at that given salary. There was no resignation at the time of the budget preparation.

F. Bizzarro: This is the time to show support of the direction that the Commission is going.

Vote unanimously in favor.

Sewer Commission

T. Lizotte motioned to approve the Hooksett Municipal Sewer budget for \$1,947,060. Seconded by D. Pearl.

T. Lizotte: I would like to state that an example of adding a truck to haul their sludge dropped the budget \$213,000 to \$110,000. This shows they are trying to reduce their cost and find efficiencies. We still have the issues with clean up. As liaison to the Sewer Commission, the

problems were more process related and out of their control. It was relative to suppliers and contractors that gave them confidence in the system. It was a bad circumstance.

Vote unanimously in favor.

WARRANT ARTICLES

Warrant Article #8 - Firefighters Contract

Tobey Gamache stated there was a change in the contract. For the Paramedic program which was reduced from \$87,305 to \$73,105. The Paramedic program had not been removed. The benefits will cost you less.

Toby Gamache stated that the contract was negotiated between the Town and the Union without attorneys. There were concessions on both sides. The Union feels it is a fair contract given the economy. The concessions were made with insurance and the raises were fair.

D. Pearl: My initial concern was the pay matrix but after hearing the explanation, the fact that they are trying to come in line with other communities gave me confidence in the contract. I applaud the fact that it was negotiated without attorneys.

V. Lembo: At the last meeting I stated a tax increase and now it is .045 increase.

D. Pearl motioned to recommend the Firefighters contract as amended. Seconded by T. Lizotte.

Vote unanimously in favor.7:0

ADJOURN

T. Lizotte motioned to adjourn at 8:45.

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Ann Moynihan