

OFFICIAL

**TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES
Budget Workshop
Wednesday, June 16, 2004**

PRESENT: Chairman DiBietto, P. Fitanides, M. Jolin, P. Loiselle, P. Rueppel, D. St. Pierre, G. Longfellow (arrived late at 6:45 pm), D. Belanger (arrived late at 7:00 pm), M. Ruel (excused)

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman DiBietto called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

BUDGET WORKSHOP:

The Town Council members discussed areas within the default budget in need of additional funds. The following two departments were identified:

Fire - \$86,573

Assessing \$34,579 (which includes a full time assessor at a salary of \$52,000)

P. Loiselle and P. Rueppel both stated that they support the hiring of a full time assessor because it would result in a positive cash flow.

D. St. Pierre also supported the hiring of a full time assessor and stated that it is important to maintain the town assessments so that the town isn't hit with a drastic reval.

P. Rueppel motioned to hire an Assessor.

P. Rueppel withdrew her motion until all the discussion is complete.

Administration - \$15,366 represents the increase in Internet service and hydrant fees.

The subcommittee on wages and salaries has yet to report. This committee could impact this department. M. DiBietto recommending by passing this department.

D. St. Pierre identified essential services as Fire, Police, Emergency Management, Solid Waste and Highway.

P. Rueppel questioned the possibility of combining jobs in order to save money.

M. DiBietto stated he believes the Council should direct the department heads to live within their budget.

P. Loiselle asked, "If this is the case, how does the Council address the issue of a full time Assessor."

M. DiBietto felt it might be necessary to freeze funds.

D. St. Pierre would like to prevent closing any essential departments such as Fire.

M. Jolin stated that as a result of this philosophy, and the fact that the town has survived previous default budgets, the public has a sense that the town can function with a default budget. The Town needs to be impacted in a visible way; i.e., decreasing garbage collection.

M. DiBietto stated that regardless what is done at the Council level, the consequences must be communicated to the public with the help of the media.

P. Rueppel stated she did not support cutting paving but rather would like to cut back on winter plowing and require residents to maintain some of the roadways with private plows and snow blowers.

M. DiBietto stated there would be liability issue if we went forward with that philosophy.

P. Loiselle motioned to authorize the Fire Department to overspend by \$85,000 and Assessing to overspend by \$45,000 and the funds to be taken from paving. D. St. Pierre seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

D. Belanger	No	G. Longfellow	No
P. Fitanides	No	M. Jolin	No
P. Loiselle	Yes	D. St. Pierre	Yes

P. Rueppel No Chairman DiBitetto Yes **3 – 5 Motion failed.**

P. Loiselle motioned to authorize the Assessing Department to overspend by \$45,000 and the funds to be taken from Paving. D. St. Pierre seconded.

Roll call vote:

D. Belanger	Yes	G. Longfellow	No
P. Fitanides	No	Chairman DiBitetto	Yes
M. Jolin	No	P. Rueppel	No
P. Loiselle	Yes	D. St. Pierre	Yes

4 – 4 Motion failed.

P. Rueppel motioned to authorize the Assessing Department to overspend by \$45,000 and the funds to be taken from Administration. Seconded by P. Fitanides.

Roll call vote:

D. Belanger	No	G. Longfellow	No
P. Fitanides	Yes	Chairman DiBitetto	No
M. Jolin	No	P. Rueppel	Yes
P. Loiselle	No	D. St. Pierre	No

2 – 6 Motion failed.

D. St. Pierre asked “ Is the purpose of this meeting to promote only two departments? I'd rather see parks and fields closed rather than a fire station.”

D. Belanger stated he would rather see no fire inspections for a day rather than a station close.

Also they should consider using officers to fill the third position to keep the North Station open.

M. DiBitetto stated the reason they are considering going to a day shift is so that they can use the officers to cover that station.

D. St. Pierre motioned to direct the departments to live within the default budget and develop a plan to accomplish this.

G. Longfellow seconded.

P. Rueppel stated the people have spoken by voting a default budget and it is the job of the new administrator to manage and live within this budget.

Roll call vote:

D. Belanger	Yes	G. Longfellow	Yes
P. Fitanides	Yes	M. Jolin	Yes
P. Rueppel	Yes	Chairman DiBitetto	No
P. Loiselle	Yes	D. St. Pierre	Yes

7 – 1 Motion passed.

D. Savoie stated that when we agree to freeze 100,000 for paving, I would suggest that we hold that money until next year when we see what the real numbers will be. We did encumber 100,000 this year and that will help alleviate the crunch.

M. Jolin motioned to freeze the paving budget for the coming year through August 31st, 2004

Seconded by P. Loiselle

Roll call vote:

D. Belanger	No	G. Longfellow	No
P. Fitanides	Yes	Chairman DiBitetto	Yes
M. Jolin	No	P. Rueppel	Yes
P. Loiselle	Yes	D. St. Pierre	No

4 – 4 Motion failed.

D. Belanger stated, “Since we have a new town administrator coming on board, and we are accomplishing nothing, we should adjourn.”

***Motion to adjourn
Second by P. Rueppel
Unanimously in favor***

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Ann Moynihan

Michael J. DiBitetto
Town Council Chairman