

**MINUTES OF THE BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING
LEE BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

December 16, 2013

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Board members present: Chairman LaCourse, Selectwoman Dennis and Selectman Cedarholm.

Others present: Sharon Taylor, Annie and Paul Gasowski, Leslie Martin, Katrinka Pellecchia and Town Administrator Julie Glover; Town Secretary Denise Duval

1. Chairman John LaCourse calls the Budget Public Hearing to order at 6:00 pm.
2. The Board goes through the Town Budget by department starting with the Selectmen's Budget (4130). Selectman Cedarholm points out that this budget has increased \$18,000 from what was spent last year. After some discussion over temporary help and overtime, the Board reduces temporary help from \$5000 to \$3500 and overtime from \$5500 to \$4500. *{Note: "changes" refers to a change to the ABC recommended budget-jeg}*

Elections and Registrations (4140) does not change.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector (4141) the Board reduces Office Supplies from \$3000 to \$2000. The Board decides that Training and Conference/Travel will be pulled out of all budgets (except police and fire) and dealt with separately.

Financial Administration (4150) budget changes will be as follows: Bookkeeper wages are increased to \$48,000 and Finance Overtime will be zero. Chairman LaCourse asks what the Dues/Subscriptions line is for. TA Glover says it covers the membership dues for the NHMA, ICMA and GFOA which provide training and the NHMA also provides legal advice. The Board reduces Printing from \$3000 to \$2000 and New Equipment from \$1000 to \$500.

Information Technology (4151) does not change.

Property Valuation (4152) does not change.

Legal Expenses (4153) does not change.

Personnel Administration (4155) TA Glover points out that the difference between the department request and the ABC recommendation is that TA Glover keeps a family plan buffer in the budget for changes that come up during the year and the ABC took it out. TA Glover indicates that this budget figure includes the new firefighter position but not a new police officer. The associated costs for new employees for the Library are in that budget. Selectman Cedarholm suggests setting up an expendable trust fund for the Pay in Lieu of Vacation item. TA Glover states that they have to budget as if every employee might take this option but she will look into establishing a trust fund.

Planning & Zoning (4191) is reviewed next and Selectwoman Dennis thinks that maybe NFPA costs in Dues & Subscriptions are being listed in both the fire department budget and the planning & zoning budget. The fire department paid this last year. Maybe both

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departments can use the same site. Chairman LaCourse wants to change the building inspector cell phone from a town cell phone to giving him a \$30 per month stipend. Selectman Cedarholm agrees with the ABC recommendation regarding giving the Planning & Zoning Department \$5000 for legal fees to expend on their own and the remaining \$15,000 in the budget may be expended pursuant to the direction of the Board. The Board agrees to reduce the Overtime line from \$6000 to \$3500. Chairman LaCourse reduces the Building Inspector hours to 20 per week which equates to a budget of \$31,200 per year.

Government Buildings (4194): the Board reduces Bottled Water from \$1050 to \$800 and Landscaping from \$1000 to \$500. Selectwoman Dennis would like to see the Town water tested again since it has been awhile. TA Glover will take care of this.

Cemetery (4195): the Board reduces Capital Improvements from \$1000 to \$500.

Insurance (4196) does not change.

Other General Government (4199) does not change.

Police Department Budget (4210) the Board agrees to keep training within this budget. The Board agrees not to move forward at this time regarding 4210-W3 (New Police Officer), and agrees with the ABC not to fund wage increases listed in 4210-W1, W2 and W4 or an increase in Overtime as requested in 4210-W7. The Board reduces Supplies from \$3500 to \$2500 and reduces Gas/Oil Vehicles from \$27,000 to \$20,000.

Dispatch Center (4211) does not change.

Ambulance (4215) does not change.

Fire Department Budget (4220) has the following changes: Chief salary is now \$57,000 and the Captain wages reduce to -0-. TA Glover points out that due to hiring of the additional fire fighter the overtime line should stay the same. The Board agrees. The Board has not heard a justification for raising the Paid Call wages to \$47,000. The Board believes they will reduce this to \$37,000 but will ask the Fire Department to come to the next meeting to discuss this item along with Dues and Subscriptions and Supplies. The Board agrees to leave Training in the Fire Department Budget.

Emergency Management (4290) Salary will be reduced from \$3000 to \$2000 and Wages will be reduced from \$2000 to \$1000.

Highway Department (4311): Selectman Cedarholm thinks that this budget is very tight. The Board reduces Miscellaneous Other from \$8000 to \$6000 and Selectwoman Dennis would like to reduce Supplies from \$4000 to \$3000. TA Glover points out that Randy Stevens is going to change Miscellaneous Other to Engineering & Permitting. The Board

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reduces Sub Contracted Repairs from \$8000 to \$5000. The Board agrees with the ABC to not reduce Mr. Steven's salary, as he had requested.

Transfer Station (4321): Roger Rice sent an email today, requesting to increase the Part Time Wages to cover vacations, time at the end of the day and the unforeseen. The Board agrees to increase the Part Time Wages from \$29,400 to \$34,200. The Board agrees to strike the Clerical line item in the amount of \$150 and the Engineering line item in the amount of \$100.

Solid Waste Disposal (4324): request to increase the Hauling Cost to \$22,000. TA Glover points out that the Board should revisit the fee schedule since the cost to run the transfer station has increased. Selectwoman Dennis states that next year it would be more efficient if the department heads are present during this review process.

Animal Control (4414), Public Health Agency & Hospitals (4415) and General Assistance (4441) do not change.

Public Health Agency & Hospitals (4415) does not change.

General Assistance (4441) does not change.

Direct Welfare Assistance (4442) Selectman Cedarholm reduces Medical Supplies from \$1000 to \$500.

Intergovernmental Agencies (4444) and Private Public Assistance Facilities do not change.

Private Public Assistance Facilities (4445) does not change.

Parks & Recreation (4520): the Board moves \$1000 to Town Sponsored Activities (ie the Fair) and leaves \$26,000 in OYRA. The Board decides to take \$10,850 from Recreation Expenses and add to Highway Department budget for Field Maintenance along with the \$400 presented as Parking Lot Maintenance. The Recreation Budget will keep the Programs which it identified as \$700 for the Easter Egg Hunt, \$1200 for the Fishing Derby and \$1000 for Miscellaneous Events; in addition to a \$1200 Electricity item line and \$500 for Park Signage.

Library (4550): Selectman Cedarholm is not in favor of increasing a Library employee's hours that the Library would like to implement and pointed out that the requested increase reflects a \$22,530 increase above the actual expenditure from FY2013. TA Glover informs the Board that the Trustees can establish a personnel policy separate from the Town which establishes different requirements for benefit; however, the Board controls the budget. For example, their policy could allow for a 35 hour employee to received full-time benefits whereas, a Town employee is not eligible unless they work 40 hours per week. The NH Retirement System however, requires membership when an

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employee works 35 hours. TA Glover points out that there is almost a \$3000 increase in the quarterly payment which may be due to an increase in operating expenses. Chairman LaCourse asks the Trustees for the justification for this increase but there is no response. Selectwoman Dennis asks what the operating expenses consist of. TA Glover reads from the budget detail submitted by the Library: print, non-print, technical, furniture/equipment, consulting fees, programs, professional development, supplies, telephone, maintenance, copier expenses, postage/shipping, electricity and miscellaneous. Sharon Taylor speaks on behalf of the Library to explain the increase in hours. The Library would like to increase the Youth Services Librarian's hours by 3 per week so she can visit schools and private child care facilities in Lee. The Library would also like to increase the Circulation Librarian's hours to 35 due to the increase in loans that happen with other facilities and to cover for and be in charge while the Directory Sharon Taylor is out at other commitments. They would also like to start a family program on Saturdays. The Youth Services Librarian works 25 hours now. Selectwoman Dennis is very concerned with a 35 hour employee getting the same benefits that a town employee has to work 40 hours to get. Chairman LaCourse feels the same way. There is a fairness issue for both Selectwoman Dennis and Chairman LaCourse. Sharon Taylor asks that if the Library's policy was more in line with the Town's policy with regards to medical insurance would the Board be more apt to approve the increase in hours. Selectwoman Dennis and Chairman LaCourse answer affirmatively but Selectman Cedarholm still has difficulty expanding programs that are not essential given the economic situation in this Town, and in light of the decision to not expand the program at the Police Department. Chairman LaCourse asks when their policy first came into effect for 35 hour employees receiving benefits. Sharon Taylor says it has always been this way. They decided that if it was good enough for the NH Retirement System then it was good enough for the Library employees. Selectwoman Dennis isn't quite on the same page as Selectman Cedarholm as far as wage increases are concerned. The data does not support an across the board wage increase for the police personnel; however, she believes that everyone deserves COLA. Chairman LaCourse and Selectman Cedarholm agree. Selectman Dennis also believes that the increase in hours for the Youth Services Librarian is a good idea. It is a great way to reach kids and families. Selectwoman Dennis is simply looking for more alignment with the Town policy. Sharon Taylor believes in valuing long term employees.

Patriotic Purposes (4583) is reduced by the Selectman Cedarholm from \$750 to \$550.

Other Culture & Recreation (4589) has been stricken.

Community Planning Coordinator (4618): this Department is being eliminated and the budget for the Strafford Regional Planning Commission moved to Planning & Zoning.

Conservation Commission (4619) is requesting a \$1000 increase. The Board approves increasing the budget from \$2500 to \$3500.

Agriculture and Heritage Commissions (4912) do not change.

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Chairman LaCourse wants to keep COLA separate for now. TA Glover asks what employees will be considered to receive COLA and who will not be. The Board decides that individuals promoted this year (Planning & Zoning Administrator, Finance Officer and Fire Chief), elected officials, or individuals receiving a stipend will not receive a COLA; all full-time employees plus regularly scheduled part-time employees and on-call fire personnel will receive a 2% COLA for FY2015.

Training for all departments other than police and fire will receive \$500 to use at the discretion of the department heads. Any amount above this shall be brought to the Board for approval. The Board agrees with TA Glover that this should be implemented through a policy.

3. Meeting adjourns at 8:22 pm.

Minutes transcribed by:

Denise Duval, Town Secretary

Minutes accepted by The Lee Select Board:

John R LaCourse, Chairman

Carole Dennis

David Cedarholm