

**MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD AND ADVISORY BOARD
COMMITTEE BUDGET WORKSHOP**

October 6, 2015

PAGE 1

Present: Selectman LaCourse, Selectman Bugbee, ABC Chairwoman Alice MacKinnon, Town Administrator Julie Glover, Cary Brown, Pat Barbour, Bill Henze, Pat Barbour, Caren Rossi and Linda Reinhold.

1. Selectman Bugbee calls the workshop to order and turns it over to Chairwoman Alice MacKinnon who turns the first presentation over to Caren Rossi from Planning and Zoning.

Caren Rossi states that the budget has decreased. Specifically her overtime line item has decreased. Last year legal expenses were \$35,000. This year the budget is \$30,000. Various costs are being re-allocated to their appropriate departments including planning and zoning. The description for 01.41911.540.00 needs to be changed to legal notices. We can eliminate duplicate wage lines. The Inspector's salary remains the same for this next budget. He is currently working 17 hours per week. Ms. Rossi reports that last fiscal year there were \$3,629,352 in estimated cost of construction with an \$18,989.50 in permit fees. Out of this there are 6 new homes, 11 additions, 11 out buildings, 5 garages, 23 commercial projects, 149 miscellaneous projects. This quarter there have been 3 new homes, 5 additions, 4 out buildings, 4 garages, 2 commercial and 45 miscellaneous projects. There is a brief discussion surrounding the town car. Is there a cost to register the town vehicle? No one seems to know.

Caren Rossi is presenting for the Fair Committee as well. The Fair has been a Town sponsored event for 2 years now. This is the first year that the Town has been in charge of the money. The balance in the Fair account is \$5299.15. The Fair next year is September 10th next year. The 250th Celebration Committee will also be funding raising at the same time next year and her fear is that the businesses are going to be tapped out. The Fair Committee would love to have fireworks after the dinner next year. It would cost approximately \$5000 for 20 minutes. The Town will not do the fireworks themselves. It would be nice to do something special; therefore, Ms. Rossi is asking for \$2500 in the FY17 budget. Mr. Brown thought the fair was very well managed and very well done. Ms. Rossi states that last year there were 4 vendors this year there were 14. This was mostly due to the availability of the insurance waiver. Ms. Rossi adds that last year there was no money up into the operating budget for the fair last year.

2. Linda Reinhold states that in FY17 there will be four election events (September, November, Deliberative and Ballot Session). The Town Meeting expense is being reduced. Under Elections there is a Legal Notice line that doesn't appear to be used. The Supervisors of the Checklist need to post notices but there is a question if they need to be in the newspaper or not. TA Glover asks if the Part-time Assistant wages will be used. Ms. Reinhold would like to at some point have an 'on-call' person to help fill in when either she or the Deputy TC/TC needs to be absent. Ms. Reinhold admits it would be difficult to train someone to only work on-call. Mr. Brown asks if there are any requirements to extend the hours of the office. Ms. Reinhold states that there are no requirements, but there have been some comments about being open Tuesdays and Thursdays. TA Glover states that now that we have the doorbell in Town Hall it is more noticeable as to just how many people come in on Tuesdays and Thursday looking to go

**MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD AND ADVISORY BOARD
COMMITTEE BUDGET WORKSHOP**

October 6, 2015

PAGE 2

to the Clerk's office. Ms. Reinhold is not sure if it would warrant having both of them in the office especially since people are doing the online registrations and bill payments. The traffic is way down. Mr. Brown suggests keeping track of how much business and when the peaks are. Ms. Reinhold adds that business between 4-6pm on Monday nights is not busy at all.

3. Bill Humm, Conservation Commission Chair, states that the first four line items of their proposed budget are really quite highly predictable and they need to make a few small increases there. These are costs they most certain that they will incur. Mr. Humm talks about various donations that the Commission has received which also includes grants. There is one piece of land that they are actively looking at for a conservation easement which is a 45 acre parcel in Lee owned by the Goss family. There was a presentation already given to the Select Board.
4. Erick Sawtelle, Ag Commission Chair, states that many things have not done pending the Town Center Committee outcome and the Master Plan. They also need to prepare for the 250th Celebration. They have been asked to do several things. The Ag Commission is asking for \$1000. Selectman Bugbee hears great things about the Back Yard Farming Initiative and hopes that that program continues.
5. Energy Committee is not present. There is talk about doing away with it since they have not heard from them in 2-3 years. The Select Board appoints the Energy Committee.
6. TA Glover states that the Select Board indicated at its last meeting that it wanted to see flat budgets for FY17 from each department. They also discussed whether they were inclined to add a COLA. She reminds the ABC that last year the Select Board did not add a COLA and at the Deliberative Session a resident stood up and requested that a 2% COLA be added to the budget and it passed. The Select Board subsequently reduced that to a 1% COLA. TA Glover states that at Monday night's meeting the majority of the Board was not interested in granting a COLA for FY17. As a result of that the employees would like to speak to this group at the November 3rd meeting to plead their case. TA Glover suspects that this is representative of all departments. TA Glover had suggested November 3rd because most of the social service groups do not show up. Mr. Brown states that he doesn't have a problem with the employees speaking but he is concerned that they will look on the ABC as an outlet for circumventing the decision that rightfully belongs with the Select Board. TA Glover states that since the ABC makes recommendations regarding the budget to the Board and they have made COLA recommendations in the past, it seems appropriate to her to get the conservation going sooner rather than later. They schedule the town staff for 7-7:30. Mr. Brown asks the TA to find out what the other towns are doing. The Town of Lee adopted a step system but abandoned it. The Town of Lee does not have a merit system. Certain departments have given their staff increases. Starting January 1st there will be health insurance changes. Co-pays for prescriptions will be going up. The Town is discussing the implementation of a FSA then if the money is not used it will simply come back to the Town. There are 5-6 employees who do not contribute to their health insurance. The change is that they will gradually begin to start to contribute. Chair MacKinnon would like to see the data on how

**MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD AND ADVISORY BOARD
COMMITTEE BUDGET WORKSHOP**

October 6, 2015

PAGE 3

much it will cost the employee per year. The Town will save approximately \$40,000 the first year. Funding the FSA will most likely be temporary to help the employees adjust. The copy difference can be significant upwards of \$700 per year.

7. TA Glover is putting together information for the Deliberative Session with regards to what is going on at the State level such as Lee has lost \$355, 000 in the adequacy grant money from the State in 5 years. The Town has no control over that. TA Glover reads out of 13 towns/cities in Strafford County Lee is the 5th lowest in terms of town tax rate. Lee is the 3rd highest overall tax rate in Strafford County. Durham and Somersworth are higher. The school is the issue.

8. Selectman Bugbee motions to adjourn. Cary Brown seconds. All in favor.

Minutes transcribed by:



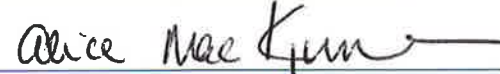
Denise Duval, Town Secretary

Date

Minutes accepted by:



Carole Dennis, Select Board Chair



Alice MacKinnon, ABC Chair



Date