

Board members present: Chairman Brown, Selectman Bugbee and Selectman LaCourse

Others present: Caren Rossi, Fred Kaen, Bill Humm, Ron Pitkin, Erick Sawtelle, Jen Czysz, Ruth Eifert, Paul and Annie Gasowski, John and Anne Tappan, Katrinka Pellecchia, Bambi Miller, Cord Blomquist, Town Administrator Julie Glover and Town Secretary Denise Duval.

1. Chairman Brown calls the meeting to order at **6:30 pm**.
2. Chairman Brown opens the meeting up to public comment. There is none.
3. a) Chairman Brown opens the 3rd Budget Public Hearing at 6:30pm and begins with recommending reducing the fireworks which are in the fair budget from \$8000 to \$4000. Caren Rossi speaks on behalf of the Fair Committee who met last week and voted to do the same in an effort to help with the budget cuts. A majority of members were present at the last Select Board meeting and saw the cuts being done especially to safety and the committee thinks that if the Board is cutting safety then they should definitely cut the fair budget by \$4000 for fireworks.

Chairman Brown turns the meeting over to Selectman Bugbee for his suggested reductions. Selectman Bugbee recommends reducing the Gas/Oil/Vehicle line within the Police budget by \$3k. Select Bugbee suggests using the Contingency Fund should the Chief need more money later. Chief Dronsfield says he is uncomfortable with cutting this line but if he can come back to ask for more money should he go over then ok. TA Glover states that the Contingency Fund has \$20k in it but the State views that this fund money is supposed to be for unanticipated expenses ie emergencies. Selectman Bugbee states that they are not anticipating the gas to go up. Chairman Brown suggests asking the department heads to reduce their own budgets by a certain amount instead of the Board cutting them. There is no time for this since this is the final budget hearing. Selectman LaCourse and Chairman Brown do not support this recommendation.

Selectman Bugbee recommends reducing the Night Shift Incentive line within the Fire budget by \$1000. Chairman Brown states that given what the Town has seen in the past week or two relative to fire and first responder activity he would not be in favor of cutting any of their resources. The Chief states that they hope to get more people certified and filling these shifts. Selectman LaCourse and Chairman Brown do not support this recommendation.

Selectman Bugbee recommends reducing the Salt/Sand/Magnesium line within the Highway budget by \$4000. Steve Bullek states that he would not support this cut for obvious reasons. More roads are being added to this town every year which increases the areas needing material. Salt goes up and down and right now it happens to be low. It can go as high as \$70 per ton. Right now it is \$47 per ton. He has been going through it with the storms they have been having this year. Mr. Bullek states that he is not as tight with the material as his predecessor. He has already spent up to \$12k. Selectman LaCourse and Chairman Brown do not support this recommendation.

Selectman Bugbee recommends reducing the Rent Assistance line within the General Assistance budget by \$5k. Selectman LaCourse and Chairman Brown agree.

Selectman Bugbee recommends reducing the Town Fair line within the Parks & Rec budget to 0. Caren Rossi states that she appreciates what the Board is doing right now. As a tax payer she would say yes to cut it but as a member of the Fair Committee she feels confident that she could raise the \$3500 difference for the fireworks but not the entire \$7500 for the fireworks. She asks if this can be revisited after they review the Warrant Articles. The Board agrees.

Erick Sawtelle agrees with Ms. Rossi, but suggests instead of cutting it to 0 that a small amount be deposited into a building fund so that perhaps next year they can raise enough money towards the fireworks. The fair has proven to be a great community event most everyone enjoyed the fireworks last year. Ms. Rossi adds that she ran this idea pass the TA and because it is a trust fund it would have to be a deposit which would have to be a warrant article. Mr. Tappan confirms this. Ms. Rossi asks that the Board fund some amount to the fair so that they can arrange for some activity whether it be the fireworks or a bonfire or ice cream social. Selectman LaCourse would like to see it at \$4000. Chairman Brown agrees.

Selectman Bugbee asks the Board what it thinks about funding the ORYA. Chairman Brown thinks this could be reduced and Selectman LaCourse agrees and suggests reducing to \$15k. The others agree.

Selectman Bugbee recommends reducing Fire Ponds & Cisterns from \$20k to \$15k. Chairman Brown thinks that the Town is woefully behind in the cistern program. Selectman Bugbee thinks that they have more than enough money in their fund. Caren Rossi speaks in opposition of this. The prices for dredging the most recent ponds were much higher than they expected and she thinks that the future prices are also going to come in higher than what the CIP has them figured for. Construction costs keep going up higher than the inflation rate. Ms. Rossi states that what is not included in the CIP plan is a maintenance plan for the 3 ponds that they have dredged. This is their fault for not planning for this but was realized in November that they did not have this planned for. Selectman Bugbee withdraws his request to reduce this reserve fund.

Selectman Bugbee recommends reducing Fire Equipment from \$200,000 to \$135,000. He thinks that they need to stop putting this much money away for things that he doesn't think they are ever going to buy. Ms. Rossi points out that when the department head comes to the CIP Committee they just add everything to the CIP. It is a wish list and it is the Board's job to fund it or not. Selectman Bugbee states that the Board needs to go through this list more closely then and take things out. The Fire Chief states that in his opinion they are already behind the eight ball in the Fire Department and they are just trying to bring it up. Everything in their plan is a replacement plan and not a wish list. These are all 10-20 year purchases that they are replacing things that they have. Chairman Brown reminds the Board that Lee is growing and especially on the first responders side is getting busier and busier. Just look at the last 4 weeks to see that. One of the fires ended up with 78 firefighters on scene that Lee managed. This is NH which has no sales tax or income tax therefore property taxes are going to go up. Chairman Brown states that taking resources away from the first responders or other services should require a whole lot of consideration. Selectman Bugbee states that we can't afford to have everything we want. Selectman LaCourse would like to reduce to \$175,000. Selectman Brown agrees.

Selectman Bugbee recommends reducing the Revaluation Fund from \$20,000 to \$15,000. Selectman LaCourse and Chairman Brown agree.

Selectman LaCourse recommends reducing the Transfer Station Equipment Fund from \$38,000 to \$25,000. Selectman Bugbee would like to drop to 0. After discussion surrounding the future purchases, Chairman Brown suggests \$20,000. Selectman LaCourse agrees with Chairman Brown.

Selectman Bugbee recommends reducing Highway Dept. Roads and Bridges from \$60,000 to \$50,000. Chairman Brown and Selectman LaCourse agree.

Selectman LaCourse recommends reducing the new Fund to Renovate Town Hall Fund from \$100,000 to \$50,000. Chairman Brown agrees.

Jen Czysz, Executive Director SRPC, appreciates the challenges that the Board is going through right now but she would like to go over some of the benefits to not eliminating the dues for SRPC and answer any questions in regards to this. She passes out a letter that she sent at the end of today summarizing some of the things that they have done over the last year or so and the value of those services and how the town's dues have been spent. Caren Rossi reminds the Board that at the last meeting she had asked to keep the consulting fee line so the town could still hire SRPC on an as needed basis. Selectman Bugbee says that he is hearing two different things. He is hearing that the town is not getting too much bang for their buck and they are being charged for things that they were not charged for in the past. Ms. Rossi states that in looking back at the last 4-5 annual reports from the SRPC other agencies were benefiting from our dues and not the Town of Lee. In her thinking she would like to try it for a year, to pay for things as they are needed. Ms. Rossi goes through the letter and points out several things that the SRPC was either paid for by the Town of Lee (in addition to our dues) or that the Town of Lee never asked for but they are taking credit for providing. Ms. Rossi states if you add up the cost for what the Town of Lee may have wanted it would be around \$1500 compared to \$5300 plus additional costs. Ms. Czysz rebutted these comments with explanations for anything the Town might have paid. She adds that they provide free traffic counts and studies if we ask. Steve Bullek states that 90% of the traffic counts that she speaks of are done on state roads and state intersections. The Lee Police Department has its own traffic counter if he should ever need it and he wouldn't need to know what the traffic count is at the intersection of 152 and 155.

Bill Humm, Conservation Commission Chair, states that they definitely use the services of SRPC and have benefited from that usage. They were disappointed to see that the proposed line item of \$5300 had been reduced to 0. He understands the motivation but he doesn't know if she has room in her budget to pay for the Conservation Commission to pay for their projects individually.

TA Glover asks if there is any further discussion about the budget, for instance thoughts on adding money back in that was cut in a previous meeting or cutting any further. Selectman LaCourse asks if TA Glover is still concerned about one item. TA Glover states yes she is nervous not to have a cushion in the Health Insurance budget. Typically they budget for a family plan which would be \$22,000. This is funding that they will NOT be able to get from the

Contingency Fund if they need it. Selectman LaCourse supports bringing it back in. Chairman Brown asks if we have ever had to use this buffer in that past. TA Glover indicates that we have. Chairman Brown supports putting it back into the budget. There is further discussion. Selectman Bugbee says that if something should happen then they can get the money from some other place. He thinks there is enough leeway in other line items so the finance administration doesn't have to worry. The Board can pull it from somewhere else. Selectman Bugbee reminds everyone that about \$200,000 is put back into the budget almost every year. Chairman Brown is worried about where we will get the money from, but ultimately decides to take it out. TA Glover just wants all departments to understand that if she has to come back to the Board then it may come out of everybody's budget.

Selectman LaCourse and Chairman Brown have no more changes.

TA Glover reminds the Board that the Planning Board has a public hearing on Thursday night and there may be minor changes; therefore, she will not be able to finalize the Warrant until Friday morning. Selectman Bugbee is happy to hear this.

b) The Board and TA review the changes to the articles made thus far. Article #4 is now \$50,000. The name of the fund in Article #4 is changed per DRA to Renovating Town Hall Capital Reserve Fund. TA will change totals in Article #5 once she calculates the budget with tonight's changes. Article #6 is now \$149,000. Article #7 is now \$11,000. Article #8 is now \$175,000. Article #9 is still \$35,000. Article #10 is not \$50,000. Article #11 is still \$55,000. Article #12 is now \$20,000. Article #13 is still \$20,000. Article #14 is now \$15,000. Article #15 is still \$15,000 and the name of the Fund is changed per DRA to Internal Service Expendable Trust Fund for Accrued Benefits. Article #16 remains the same. Article #17 is still \$20,000. Article #18 remains the same. The Board agrees to support Warrant Articles #4-17.

Selectman Bugbee states that the TCVC was given authority by the Board to get 2 new cost estimates on the Town Center project. They met with one gentleman yesterday and then the 2nd gentleman just prior to this meeting. They need to check the 1st gentleman's numbers and they still need the 2nd gentleman's numbers. The TCVC would like some time to go over these numbers one more time and finalize them with the Board on Friday. He can give the whole number tonight but would like the opportunity to check all the numbers before discussing in detail. They will not have the numbers from the 2nd gentleman until tomorrow. The Board agrees to meet Friday morning at 8:00am at Town Hall. John Tappan indicates that there are significant changes but he is leery about giving out numbers yet.

Caren Rossi asks if the Board can vote on the budget thus far so that the department heads do not have to worry about something happening later or Friday morning.

TA Glover reviews the changes to the budget. The Board agrees to change the General Assistance Rent line to \$15,000; to cut the ORYA to \$15,000 and to cut the Town Fair to \$4000. Selectman LaCourse moves to approve the changes that were just listed in the budget and the warrant. Selectman Bugbee, seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

Selectman Bugbee gives an overview of changes to Article #3. The Lee Public Library Community Center Foundation has come forward and offered to fund raise for the cost to

renovate the existing library in the amount of \$370,750. Katrinka Pellecchia asks if the number has changed from the meeting this afternoon. Selectman Bugbee says no but he can't talk about numbers. So that cost will come out of the project. The words "renovating and" will come out of the 2nd sentence in Article #3. The 20 year bond that just sold from the NH Bond Bank is 3.05%. They are quoting 4%.

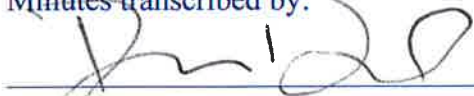
Cord Blomquist volunteers to pay for the TCVC mailer that they planned to send out within the next week.

There is discussion surrounding whether or not the first year's bond interest should be in the warrant or not. Selectman Bugbee thinks that they need to tell the public what the worst case would be in terms of how high the first year's interest could be.

Chairman Brown closes the budget public hearing at 7:52pm.

4. TA Glover gives the Board the deed for the sale of 2 Spruce Drive for signatures. This was a property that the Town took by deed.
5. Chairman Brown moves to accept the meeting minutes from 1-14-2019. Selectman LaCourse, seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**
6. Chairman Brown moves to adjourn at **8:10pm**. Selectman Bugbee, seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

Minutes transcribed by:



Denise Duval, Town Secretary

1/28/19

Date

Minutes accepted by The Lee Select Board:



Cary Brown, Chairman



Scott Bugbee



John LaCourse