

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

November 16, 2017

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Board & Committee members present: Chairman LaCourse, Selectman Bugbee, Selectman Brown, Pat Barbour, Brian Burke, Thomas Murdoch, Cord Blomquist and Chairwoman MacKinnon.

Members not present:

Others present: Town Administrator Julie Glover, Bill Humm and Linda Reinhold

1. Chairman LaCourse calls the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and turns the meeting over to Brian Burke.
2. Mr. Humm states that the budget for this next FY is identical to the last. The CC received \$4050 in FY16 and \$3500 in FY15. Selectman Bugbee states that the CC has \$19k as of October 18th and it keeps growing, but the commission does not seem to be spending as much as they are getting for appropriations. Selectman Bugbee asks what the plan is for the \$19k. Mr. Humm states that approx. \$3500 (*ed. \$2,805*) is in the Dave Allen memorial fund. He adds that over the years it has been very difficult to predict what their needs are going to be for land stewardship or the management of town owned properties. The commission has found there are significant costs with regard to invasive plants particularly along Garrity Road where Japanese Knot Weed was just taking over and the commission decided it was essential to get that under control. Over the next several months they have a plan to develop long term management for the fields that Joe Ford wished to have kept open. The property has gone from 14 acres of open fields to about 7 acres since Mr. Ford granted the easement to the Town. Mr. Humm estimates spending \$5000 towards the Joe Ford property this next year.
3. Linda Reinhold explains that there will be 3 elections in FY19. Legal notices increased because the cost to advertise has gone up and the Supervisors have to notice every time they meet. The same goes with the printing of ballots. The training line increased for the Moderator and Assistant Moderator. The new assistant town clerk has started and is still in training. She is doing great. Selectman Bugbee asks if there is any information on how many people are using the online payments. Ms. Reinhold estimates 5 per day during the busy days. More people are using their card to pay when they come inside. People appreciate this option but not the fee. The fee charged by the credit company is 2.79% of the total. The Town does not make money on this.
4. Julie Glover handed out updates to the Selectmen's budget which include the guaranteed maximum rates from the HealthTrust and rates from Primex whereas before they were estimates. The new Primex rates are less than the estimates. The health insurance is increasing .6%. The dental went up 2.3% but there had not been an increase in a couple of years. The worker's compensation rate went down because the Town has continued to have a very good experience modification factor. Last year the Town was at .96%, this year the Town is at .86%. The property and liability rate went up, but not as much as anticipated.

The office plans on beginning the scanning project in January with sending out RFP's. The MRI contract has increased slightly. The legal expenses haven't changed overall. TA Glover points out that there are 4 employees using the health insurance buyout option. This is a big cost savings for the Town. Retirement rates have gone up. The retirement system increases the rates every two years. Group I did not go up too much, but Group II (Police & Fire) went up 2-4%. Fire is at 31.89%. Police is now 29.43%. Municipal is now 11.38%. Government Buildings changed from 1 full-time and 1 part-time to 2 part-time people. The Energy Committee has agreed to take out of the operating budget items that were actually capital expenses. This will show an \$8400 savings in the operating budget. The heat line has been increased for the Town Hall complex because propane prices have increased over the last year. Other General Government has been used by the Board as a wage pool. TA Glover has seen in her research that the CPI is up between 2-2.7%. General Assistance for this year is the same; however, there was a large increase in rent assistance over FY17 due to the lack of places to put people. Most of the electrical and fuel assistance is handled by CAP, but the Town does occasionally help out with this.

Revenues have been going up slightly over the last few years. There has been an uptick in motor vehicle registrations, building permits, and back taxes. The other revenue source that the Town could tap into would require a Warrant Article and that is a Municipal and Transportation Improvement Fund (RSA 261:153-6). This would allow collecting \$5 on the motor vehicle registrations, except for trailers, motorcycles, and antique cars. This would collect approximately \$20k each year and could be used towards paving and road maintenance.

TA Glover follows up with the answer to a previous question with regards to funding a social service that is also funded by the county. She says that there is nothing in the guidelines that talks about this, meaning there is no prohibition that she is aware of. There are 2 agencies that also get funding from the county.

Selectman Bugbee asks about the cost of the Audit. He thought it increased this year. TA Glover will check the contract. Selectman Bugbee asks TA Glover to talk about putting salaries into the budget. TA Glover has requested that the Select Board, since they adopted a performance evaluation merit policy, shift the timing of when they do performance evaluations and when pay increases are implemented to coincide with the budget. She would like the Select Board to, as part of their deliberations after all of the budget presentations, make a decision relative to any merit raises or COLAS so that the budget that gets presented at the deliberative session already has all of the wages distributed in lieu of using the money in the general government line. This would make it more transparent and easier going forward.

After the last budget presentation on Nov. 30th, TA Glover is going to make all the updates and changes and distribute them to the Board for them to have for their deliberations.

5. Chairwoman MacKinnon makes motion to accept the Minutes from October 19, 2017. Selectman Bugbee, seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

6. Chairwoman MacKinnon asks for a motion to adjourn at 7:52pm. Brian Burkes, so moves. Chairwoman MacKinnon, seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

Minutes transcribed by:


Denise Duval, Town Secretary

Date

11/30/17

Minutes accepted by The Lee Select Board and the Advisory Budget Committee:


John LaCourse, Chairman


Alice MacKinnon, Chairwoman


BRIAN BURKES