

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

**November 30, 2017**

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

**Members not present:** Chairwoman MacKinnon

**Others present:** Town Administrator Julie Glover, Caren Rossi

1. Chairman LaCourse calls the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and turns the meeting over to Brian Burke.
2. Caren Rossi states that the budget she is submitting is basically the same as FY18. She would request to make the Building Inspector position a full-time position. They project to have 200 building permits issued by the end of this quarter. As of Monday they were 175 permits issued, 8 being for new homes. At this time last year they had 111 permits issued. Cheney Properties has sold their approved subdivision to Chinburg Builders which is for 36 lots. Chestnut still has 9 lots left to be built on and Kelsey has 5. There is another subdivision in a different part of town that still needs to be approved. Mr. Booth will no longer be working in Strafford as of 1/1/2018.

Chairman LaCourse asks about the legal expense line. Ms. Rossi states that this year that line has stayed within the \$30k limit. Last year this line went over to \$42k.

Selectman Bugbee asks Ms. Rossi to explain what has been done with Mr. Booth's benefits. Ms. Rossi explains that the Board adopted a policy that a regularly scheduled part-time employee of 32hrs or more can buy into the health insurance at a 50% cost and the Town pays the other 50%. The difference in salary to make this position full-time would be \$12,000. The retirement cost would be 11% of his salary. His full-time salary would be approximately \$48k. Selectman Bugbee asks for the TA to forward a more solid figure to the ABC with regards to making this position full-time. Chairman LaCourse points out that the police and the library are asking for a full-time position as well.

Caren Rossi informs the ABC that the Select Board adopted a fee schedule for Planning and Zoning Office and the Fire Department and since August 15<sup>th</sup> her office has collected \$500 additional fees.

According to Ms. Rossi, the cost of construction to date this FY is \$3,021,213.00. This is a 58% increase over last year.

Selectman Bugbee asks how much Ms. Rossi has spent in Legal so far this year against the \$30k. She does not have that data. The TA can get that information if he wants it.

TA Glover adds that \$90,455 is the tax revenue based on \$3,021,213.00.

There is a discussion surrounding the VRC case decision and attaching that property before it sells.

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Ms. Rossi moves onto the Lee Fair Budget and reminds everyone that the Warrant Article for fireworks in the amount of \$8k failed last year. As a Fair Committee Representative, Ms. Rossi asks if the Board would support fireworks in some fashion. Selectman Bugbee suggests putting it in the Operating Budget. Durham did not do fireworks last year. The Fair Committee is not asking for \$2500 this year. Selectman Bugbee points out that the Heritage Committee still has money that was originally the 250<sup>th</sup> Committee's. The Fair Committee could ask the Heritage Committee for a donation.

Selectman Bugbee states that the Fair Committee's balance is \$2200. Ms. Rossi believes that the balance should be higher than that because it does not show the revenue that was deposited in September.

3. Fire Chief Scott Nemet gives a brief overview of staffing. His full-time lieutenant works Monday – Friday 10-6pm. The rest of the shifts are filled in with part-timers. A part-timer works 2 days a week, 6am – 6pm. It is a rotating shift. Every fourth week they work 4 days in a row. In FY16 they had 26 on call firefighters / EMTs. Currently they have 15. The number keeps dwindling down every year. Surrounding towns are having the same issues. The towns are relying more on each other now for mutual aid. Just this week Lee had a rollover that one truck responded to with one person on it from Lee. Luckily the person was able to get out of the vehicle before the truck got there. Chief Nemet states that he tried to work with a zero budget this year, but last year the Board instructed him to look at the pay structure. In the last 2-3 years they have lost 3 or 4 to area departments for full-time positions (2 to Durham, 1 to Dover). It makes him proud that these departments want his people after he has trained them; however, he would obviously rather keep them. Chief Nemet did a pay study last year and was able to increase the pay rate and added pay for certifications. In towns with full-time positions, the schedules are better (i.e. 24hrs on/off) and there is overtime available. There are still issues that Chief Nemet is trying to fix such as one FF responding to a call. The busiest time of the week is 6am – 6pm 7 days a week, not just Thursdays and Fridays. The budget increase of 4.5% is from the wage increases and certifications. The part-time FF line would go up \$14k. There is a discussion surrounding getting paid back from an individual who goes to training but doesn't stay with the department for a specified period of time. The Fire Academy still does classes, but Seacoast Chiefs have taken over the training for this area, working with the Academy. Selectman Brown asks how Lee wages compare to other towns such as Nottingham. Chief Nemet states that Madbury does not have any part-time or full-time right now. They are all call members. Nottingham is about the same in pay. Newmarket is losing people as well. Chief Nemet thinks that Lee is the closest to Barrington in terms of staffing. Tom Murdoch asks if the Chief has thought about 24hr coverage. Chief Nemet states that he has but it would add approximately \$300k to the budget.

The biggest problem that the Chief has with staffing right now is the 6am – 8am because there is only one person on at that time. The Chief goes through the response process. The Town of Lee has an automatic mutual aid agreement with Epping from 6am – 6pm. The most Lee does for mutual aid is for Durham Fire. Lee is not doing mutual aid for Madbury. Selectman Bugbee asks if the Chief anticipates any changes resulting from the McGregor relocation. He has not heard much about it and does not think it will affect Lee much.

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Chairman LaCourse asks about the holiday pay line. It does not look like it is being used. Chief Nemet will speak to the Finance Officer about this line item. He also asks about the night incentives. It may not be until the last minute but all the night shifts are being filled. Selectman Bugbee asks the Chief to fill in the ABC about the current state of the command vehicle. Chief Nemet gives a summary regarding the 2010 Ford F-150 that he received from the police department. It recently did not pass inspection due to rust. The Board agreed he should sell it. He is looking at a 2018 Chevy Tahoe at \$38k plus equipment. This item is included in the CIP.

Selectman Brown asks for an update on cisterns. Last year the WA passed for work to be done at Tamarack and James Farm. The Town Engineer, Jay Stevens, walked the properties over the summer. He is in the process of writing the documentation for Chief Nemet to issue the RFP for dredging. He does not know if they can do both of them this year. If they did a concrete cistern it would cost \$50-80k.

The EOC budget has not changed. This past year they have upgraded a lot of things such as added a SMART TV, whiteboards and residential flood plain maps. He is trying to work with the State in doing a table top exercise to see what more they need. Selectman Brown would like to do more training with the EOC.

4. Bill Cote, McGregor Ambulance, hands out material. He reviews 2016 changes, rates and purchases such as a new ambulance. They have discounted Lee's percent by 20-25% for the last 4-5 years which would be approximately \$36k. With this said, Mr. Cote indicates that there will be an increase in the cost of McGregor appropriations in the near future.

Selectman Bugbee asks about the plan for McGregor changing its location. Mr. Cote indicates that there has been a site carved out for McGregor where the existing UNH Police is located on the way to the waterworks plant. It is still in the early stages. Lee houses one of McGregor's ambulances here because they only have room for two. They are actually looking into a fourth ambulance.

NH is the #2 with the most elder population per capita in the country per Mr. Cote. The student population pick up is relatively quiet this year. Riverwoods in Durham will open in 2018. He believes that once the new facility is built, all the ambulances will be housed there.

Mr. Cote is retiring and he gave his Board a 3 month notice. The Board is looking for his replacement.

5. The Select Board waits for the CIP from the Planning Board from 7:24pm until 7:50pm.

Bob Smith hands out CIP documents. (PowerPoint presentation)

Mr. Smith gives a brief overview on the Highway Department trucks. Plow trucks are now being planned for new. Each truck would be used for 20 years and then replaced. They use 3 on the road with the 4<sup>th</sup> (the oldest) being a backup. The smaller trucks are being replaced every 10 years.

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The Road and Bridges is basically the same plan as last year. There are 7 bridges and culverts over 16 years. It used to be 10. The State funding has been shifting. This and the cistern plan do not repeat. Once the bridges are in shape they won't have to be looked at again for another 50 years. He assumes that the Town pays 20% and the State pays 80%.

Code Enforcement does not have a trust fund assigned to it.

Fire Equipment's plan is unchanged except for the command vehicle moving up from 2023 to this next year. In addition to that they have raised the deposit to \$5000 in this trust fund due to an engine replacement coming up right behind this.

Cisterns and Fire Ponds is a plan to bring the water distribution for the fire department around town up to a constant supply and distributed where they have the shortest of runs to pick it up. A study outlined where these cisterns should go for the best distribution and the town is slowly working towards that. The most recent one was the refurbishment of the fire pond. They are trying to get away from fire ponds due to the silt, but the one at James Farm is good so they want to keep using it. The CIP is capturing the information on the concrete cisterns that are currently going in. The Fire Department keeps the records of all cisterns.

Transfer Station CIP has been modified since Toby Van Aken has taken over and will be modified again next year. They will be working on standardizing the open and closed containers. Mr. Smith is asking Mr. Van Aken to work on a plan to replace these containers every so many years. The deposit into the trust fund can remain the same this year, but may have to increase next year. Mr. Van Aken does not know what he will need to replace come next year. The front end loader will hopefully be replaced with the Highway Dept.'s front end loader.

The Library Director had furniture listed in her CIP for when a future renovation is completed. Mr. Smith told her to take this out of the CIP because it does not belong there if it goes with a new building or renovation.

Mr. Smith wants to make sure that the Board does not think that the CIP is setting aside any monies for a future building or renovations of any existing buildings.

Conservation Commission has a place holder out there for \$200k for buying conservation easements. The CIP has not for several years deposited anything into this fund. The \$200k just keeps getting moved out from year to year.

Last year the CIP suggested setting up an Equipment Trust Fund for the Police Department. The CIP is averaging over \$11k per year in addition to a cruiser. The CIP could help flatten out the cruiser cost with this fund. It is not going away. He suggests starting with \$15k plus the cruiser cost. The only change to the Police plan is the tasers were moved out one year from last year.

Recreation Commission has no change. The CIP is recommending a \$6k deposit as last year. The CIP has not received any request or plan with regards to the Rec Commission. Bob Smith

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indicates that the tennis court is not a full size court and if one were to make one there they would have to turn it and reconstruct it.

Bob Smith states that they do not know what to do with the Annex furnace if there is a possibility that the building is going to be torn down.

TA Glover asks why isn't painting the Library in the Library Capital Building Plan? There is no answer. Selectman Bugbee asks where the new furnace is for the Library. TA Glover says it is probably under Town Buildings.

Selectman Bugbee points that the CIP has two extra bond payments listed for the Transfer Station and the PSC. Bob Smith will take a look at it.

The total for the CIP is \$421,000; however, Selectman Bugbee has pointed out several errors in the existing CIP that would change this total.

Selectman Bugbee asks Mr. Smith what he would suggest for starting up a trust fund for the PD. He suggests the first year be \$50k and then taper down after that.

Selectman Brown asks how the CIP is reflected in the Master Plan. One of the problems with the Master Plan is that there are no names attached to the action items or there's no responsibility within the action items that says so and so is going to take this action item and do this with it. Bob Smith states that there is only one function for the Master Plan and that is for the Planning Board to be able to plan. It is a tool for the Planning Board. According to Mr. Smith the Planning Board owns it and has it written. Mr. Smith states that whoever has the section in question needs to meet with the Board to discuss a plan. The Planning Board does not manage it per Mr. Smith. The Planning Board does not call everyone together over the next 10 years and follow up. Selectman Brown is looking for a way to status the Master Plan across the 10 years to see if we are accomplishing anything until we get to the next version. Mr. Smith does not know if that is necessary. It is a tool to help the Planning Board write regulations and look at future plans from a developer per Mr. Smith.

Dave Cedarholm, Planning Board member, asks that the Select Board take this bar chart and work forward with the Town Center Vision Committee to come up with some CIP worthy numbers to craft a WA so that between now and the deliberative session we can come up with what the bond payment would be and how would this fit into the bar chart. It will be valuable to show the low impact that the Town Center Plan will have on the CIP. They need to convince the voters that the town needs to do something. It's been 10+ years in discussion.

6. Brian Burke makes a motion to accept the Minutes from November 16, 2017. Tom Murdoch, seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

This is the last meeting with the Select Board. The next ABC meetings are on December 5<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>.

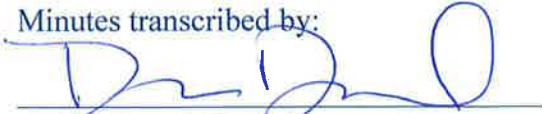
7. Brian Burkes makes a motion to adjourn at 9:00pm. Chairman LaCourse, so moves. Pat Barbour, seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

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Minutes transcribed by:



Denise Duval, Town Secretary

1/16/18

Date

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



John LaCourse, Chairman

Alice MacKinnon, Chairwoman