

**Londonderry Budget Committee
Minutes
October 27, 2011**

The Budget Committee meeting was held in the Moose Hill Conference Room, Town Hall, 268 Mammoth Road, Londonderry, NH 03053.

Committee Members present: Todd Joncas (Chair), Rich Dillon (vice-chair), Lisa Whittemore (secretary), John Curran, Dan Lekas, Chris Melcher and Tom Dalton.

7:00 PM I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Chair Todd Joncas.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Marty Srugis informed the committee that he had been unable to see minutes of the meeting regarding the school district warrant article of \$1.1m (voted on at special SAU meeting of October 11, 2011). Lisa Whittemore noted that the minutes of July 21, 2011 would be reviewed this evening, and incorporated extensive q & a between the budget committee and school officials. Minutes as approved this evening will be available on the town website.

Former Town Councilor Mike Brown stated his belief that engaging with the process in person is the best way to influence the decisions being made.

He commented that the budget process last year was a defining moment, as Londonderry held its tax rate level in the face of negative economic pressures. The town council came to agreement regarding the goal of a flat rate before the process started; while adjustments were made in response to voter comments the ultimate objective was achieved. Brown recommended that attention be paid to distinguishing between essential and non-essential services as the committee moves through the budget cycle.

Paul DiMarco, former Town Council Chair, noted that incomes have decreased as expenses have increased. He considered a continued flat tax rate would be 'ideal', but noted that certain essential services should be addressed separately. It is possible that reduction in the level of service, such as hours open to the public could affect savings for the community.

He commented on the effectiveness of the Budget Committee's online tax calculator, and urged that it be updated for the current fiscal year. Chair Todd Joncas agreed to make this a priority.

Early Involvement in the process: Whittemore noted that the budget committee had made early public involvement a priority this year, and thanked the three speakers for their comments. John Curran noted that questions about the budget usually arise late in the budget process, and he expressed a hope that questions will come forward early, so that there is time for staff to research and respond in a timely fashion.

Chairman Joncas invited citizens to attend the meetings, email or call your budget committee members. He urged attendance at the budget hearings, meetings and workshops to provide guidance and information, and recommended November and December as the time to join the process with the most impact.

Curran recommended that the budget books become available to the committee, even in rough draft form, earlier in the process. Joncas has forwarded a request to both school and town officials for timely delivery of the extensive budget books.

IV. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

A. Approval of Minutes

1. Meeting of July 21, 2011:

Amendments by Whittemore:

Page 1, line 6: replace 'admin' with 'administrator'.

Page 3, line 7: Replace IV with V; sequencing to be consistent.

Page 8, line 24: Place VII. Adjournment.

On a motion by Whittemore, second by Chris Melcher, committee voted to adopt the minutes of July 21, 2011 as amended.

Member	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Todd Joncas	X			
Rich Dillon			X	
Lisa Whittemore	X			
John Curran			X	
Dan Lekas	X			
Chris Melcher	X			
Tom Dalton	X			

Motion passed 5-0-2.

2. Meeting of August 22, 2011

On a motion by Melcher, second by Rich Dillon, the committee voted to adopt the minutes of August 22, 2011 as submitted.

Member	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Todd Joncas	X			
Rich Dillon	X			
Lisa Whittemore	X			
John Curran			X	
Dan Lekas	X			
Chris Melcher	X			
Tom Dalton	X			

Motion passed 6-0-1.

3. Meeting of October 6, 2011

On a motion by Tom Dalton, second by Dillon, the committee voted to adopt the minutes of October 6, 2011 as submitted.

Member	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Todd Joncas	X			
Rich Dillon	X			
Lisa Whittemore	X			
John Curran			X	
Dan Lekas			X	
Chris Melcher	X			
Tom Dalton	X			

Motion passed 5-0-2.

B. LIAISON REPORTS

Public Safety Dispatch Services Committee:

Whittemore noted that the committee met on Monday at town hall and reviewed the functional aspects of the fire and emergency safety dispatch department in Londonderry. Following the meeting the committee visited the dispatch center at the David A Hicks Central Fire Station. Next meeting is scheduled for 7pm, Monday November 14th at the MHCR, town hall.

Master Plan Steering Committee:

Whittemore reported that the committee has selected the UNH Survey Center to provide the town with a 500 person/10-15 minute survey, estimated to occur late January or February after the primary election in early January. Survey subcommittee will meet the week of November 14.

The RFP subcommittee will review proposals due to arrive on next Friday, November 4. The RFP subcommittee will meet on Wed, Nov 30; the MPSC will meet on Wed Dec 28, 7pm, LACTV Cable Studio.

Dog Park Study Committee:

Curran noted that Tuesday's meeting divided responsibilities; he will be reviewing relevant statutes for liability and safety issues. The goal of the group is to have no impact on taxes at all – donated land, contributions or memberships will cover the expenses to the town. Various publicly-owned parcels are being investigated for use; next meeting is Wednesday, November 30.

CIP:

Chris Melcher noted that the CIP process is complete and both he and Whittemore voted on the outcomes. CIP recommendations were accepted by the planning board and reviewed by town council. There is talk of trying to get the Pettengill project on the warrant as a bond, particularly in light of favorable interest rates on bonds at present. Highway funding may also be placed before the voters.

Chairman Joncas noted the circumstance of difficult economic times as well as historically low bond rates; construction rates are also favorable. It would be easier to make this move if we had bonds coming to maturity so that expenses would be more or less level-funded.

The loss of federal grant money for these and other local projects is creating problems for many communities. Curran noted it is an ideal time in many respects, but the lack of federal funds may prove pivotal regarding the voters' will to proceed.

School District Board Meeting:

Joncas reported on the meeting of Tuesday, October 25; buildings and grounds operations were reviewed as part of its work. Since the year 2000 there has been a 31.2% energy cost savings; this effort has saved the taxpayers in Londonderry \$3.9m in energy costs. Director of buildings and grounds, Chuck Zappala, was recognized with a national achievement award for his success at the meeting. This effort is a significant savings for our town.

V. OLD BUSINESS

None scheduled.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. FY 2012 – 2013 Budget Committee Schedule
- B. Overview of Budget Process

Chairman Joncas presented the schedule for the budget season; the version for October 27, 2011 is attached to these minutes.

The public is invited to attend all budget meetings, workshops and hearings.

Joncas outlined the importance of having people from the community present at the public sessions to engage with the process and present their ideas to the committees, departments and boards.

The November meetings provide an ideal opportunity for local people to make a real impact on the process. Changes which the public might like to see require sufficient time for staff to make alterations.

Town Budget: General Overview – Monday, November 7, 7pm, Moose Hill Conference Room, Town Hall. Town council will present an overview of the budget to the community.

All-Day Town Budget Workshop: Saturday, November 19, 8am, MHCR, Town Hall. The budget committee will work all day on Saturday, November 19, as the town departments present their budgets in some detail.

The first budget hearing with the town council will be held on Monday, December 19, 7pm, Moose Hill Conference Room. This is a critical time for folks to have their say regarding the budget.

Public is advised that there are scheduling conflicts between school and town boards which will need to be addressed. Keep alert for possible changes to the meeting schedule for the following dates: December 01, December 15, 2011; January 12, 2012.

Meetings designated as ‘open budget date’ or ‘if necessary’ are place holders; it is not yet known whether these meetings will be required. Updates will be provided on the meeting calendar at londonderrynh.org as information becomes available.

Town Deliberative Session: Monday, February 06, 2012.

SAU Deliberative Session: Friday, February 10, 2012.

Town Meeting/Election Day: Tuesday, March 13, 2012.

John Curran noted that during last year’s budget process public input changed decisions in relation to the school safety officers, and he encouraged voters to get involved. He also questioned whether clauses could be added to contractual agreements to protect the taxpayer from unexpected impacts in the economic downturn.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Dillon/Curran the committee voted to adjourn.

Member	For	Against	Abstain	Absent
Todd Joncas	X			
Rich Dillon	X			
Lisa Whittemore	X			
John Curran	X			
Dan Lekas	X			
Chris Melcher	X			
Tom Dalton	X			

The committee adjourned at 8:25pm.

RSA: 91-A: 2 Meetings Open to Public. – II. All public proceedings shall be open to the public, and all persons shall be permitted to attend any meetings of those bodies or agencies. Except for town meetings, school district meetings and elections, no vote while in open session may be taken by secret ballot. Any person shall be permitted to use recording devices, including, but not limited to, tape recorders, cameras and videotape equipment, at such meetings. Minutes of all such meetings, including names of members, persons

appearing before the bodies or agencies, and a brief description of the subject matter discussed and final decisions, shall be promptly recorded and open to public inspection within 144 hours of the public meeting, except as provided in RSA 91-A: 6, and shall be treated as permanent records of any body or agency, or any subordinate body thereof, without exception.