

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES
October 27th, 2008**

The Chairman called a meeting to order at 10:00 am on Monday, October 27th, 2008 in the Upper Conference Room at the Town Hall. The purpose of the meeting was to conduct a preliminary, basic review of a majority of the town budgets recognizing that some departments would need follow up and detail at a still to be determined date. Selectman Gehl asked for this purpose to be conveyed to all who would meet with the board.

Present: Chair Peter Rhoades, Selectman David Bickford, Selectman Ron Gehl, Town Administrator, April Whittaker and Financial Assistant, Vickie Blackden.

Acct 4312 Highways & Streets:

The Board met with Mark Fuller, Road Agent.

Discussion:

- ❑ **Part-time Clerical:** Proposed increase in hours from 12 hours per week to 16 hours per week for the part time assistant. Mr. Fuller advised that he would like to bring his computer database up to date and begin inventory on culverts, signs, road maintenance etc. This time would not be inclusive of data entry hours for the equipment mechanic re maintenance software program.
- ❑ **Equipment Rental:** Needs to bring in a gravel crusher again to process gravel (7000 tons) for the town, and also noted to board that he needs to start up with dead tree removal along the town's right of ways. Also needed to rent an excavator for one month, which greatly facilitates culvert replacement.
- ❑ **Uniforms:** Noted to board that approximate cost in total to "rig out" each highway employee was approximately \$500.
- ❑ **Radio Maintenance:** Needs a new mobile radio for new truck and a portable for the one of the one-ton trucks. Mr. Bickford questioned the need for radios when the town had cell phones. Mr. Fuller noted dead zones and the fact that in an emergency when many cell phones shut down due to overuse creating signal problems, the radios serve to maintain communications, citing an example of the July 24th tornado. The repeater on Ridge Road Top has not failed.
- ❑ **Gas & Diesel:** Discussed generally, Board citing that they agreed that the estimated \$4 per gallon was probably too much ~ agreed that a per gallon amount needed to be determined.
- ❑ **Kerosene/Propane: Action:** Agreed to reduce line 637 from \$200 request to \$100

- ❑ **Calcium Chloride:** Mr. Fuller advised that the department treats approximately 10 miles of road a year.
- ❑ **General discussion** that according to his log sheet activities, he now feels that the department as a whole spends the equivalent of one man's total annual hours i.e. 2080 hours on equipment maintenance.
- ❑ Noted on comparison sheet the price of products such as calcium chloride, chip seal, cold patch, hot mix, and salt re 2008 versus 2009 pricing.

Capital Requests

- ❑ **Account 4902:** Replacement of 1994 L8000 Ford Dump with plow and wing = \$118,000
- ❑ **Account 4901:** Road Paving monies ~ Ridge Road and South Shore Road 2009
- ❑ **General discussion on Davis Crossing culvert and the disposition of grant monies** ~ waiting to hear from Hazard Mitigation following up on CMA Engineer's revised simplified plan and questions as to whether or not the town can wait for Bridge Aid money slated for fiscal 2011/2012. Consensus was that time was getting to be of the essence ~ needs further discussion as to repair possibilities for 2009.
- ❑ **General Discussion on Building Maintenance:** Salt Building requires overhang to stop water accumulation on side of building ~ estimated costs \$10,250
- ❑ **Computerized system for the Fuel Pumps** ~ \$10,000 plus underground utilities. Mr. Fuller noted that the 2008 fuel pump upgrade came in at a lower cost than expected (\$8,000 appropriation) leaving a balance of \$6,350 remaining. He queried if the balance could be used towards the '09 building needs. Mrs. Whittaker advised that the article was a "special" warrant article therefore, money was solely dedicated to the project request, and balance would lapse to the general fund.

Acct 4210: Police Department:

The Board met with Chief Bernier and Assistant Woods.

The Chief presented his requests line by line.

- ❑ **Telephone** ~ main topics regarding the high cost of telephone charges noting the monopoly that Union Telephone has for in-state long distance charges. Mrs. Whittaker and Mrs. Woods to pursue information with Union Telephone. Chief advised that the officers currently have their own personal cell phones in which

the town currently pays \$10 per month as a stipend. He noted that the line indicates a stipend increase of \$5 to \$15 per month.

- ❑ **Dues & Fees:** Added in \$100 to cover dues payable for Chief of Police Association
- ❑ **Radios** ~ 10 portables in the department, and battery back up cost \$90 per unit.
- ❑ **Cameras / Film Processing:** Still have to use the Polaroid photographs for domestic violence issues. Request to update video camera so that DVD copy can be made ~ Prosecutor's preference. Also requesting acquisition of a tripod for interview situations.
- ❑ **Uniforms:** Chief noted that he tries an annual rotation system for clothing acquisitions especially for items such as winter coats, but "wear out" often occurs prior to year-end.
- ❑ **Computers/ Office Machines:** Following discussion re Laptop police processing software upgrades, this line was reduced from \$1000 to \$500. Mrs. Whittaker and Mrs. Woods will collaborate to fund the 3 needed upgrades for 2008.
- ❑ **Gasoline:** Again, the board advised that a price determination was still on going so that there may be a deduction to this line. More important to know annual gallon usage. Commended Chief for due diligence in savings in 2008 re gasoline.

Capital:

Noted that 2009 was not a year for cruiser replacement therefore there would be just the Capital Reserve request.

Building: Noted request to fund small addition to PD building over a two-year timeline. General talk regarding relocation of the dog kennel. Carpet replacement request in Acct 4194 General Government Buildings.

Acct 4414: Animal Control Officer

Mrs. Whittaker advised the Chief and Board that she had deducted \$250 from the Chief's original wage request for an ACO in view of the hiring of a new ACO ~ noted that the former ACO usually required overtime pay due to being a fulltime employee in the Highway Department.

The second largest cost in this account is incurred re fees for Cocheco Valley ~ town now on a per dog/animal fee basis therefore hard to calculate. Request based approximately on 2008 usage.

The board felt this account could now be forwarded for vote at the next business meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

The Board took a lunch break and met with the Employee Benefits Committee who submitted requests for consideration of increase in bereavement days, vacation accumulation, higher "buy out" monies for those employees who may be able to opt out of the town's current health insurance plan, maintaining the current 50% payout for sick days for those employees who remain in service beyond 10 years, and a request to update the Personnel policy to reflect co-payment of health insurance. The board will take the requests under consideration.

The group was advised that Barry Cox, Personnel Consultant from the Local Government Center would be attending the board meeting of November 3rd, 2008 to review the draft "Pay and Classification" plan.

Acct 4319 Equipment Mechanic

The Board met with David Valladares who presented his budget line by line.

- ❑ **Contracted Services:** Request indicative of aging heavy equipment such as grader, loader, backhoe. Noted problems with computerization of the models hence the greater need for specialized servicing. Of the total requested the Grader and the loader will require approximately \$10,000.
- ❑ **Highway Vehicles:** Mrs. Whittaker discussed with the Board and Mr. Valladares that tire acquisitions, especially for large equipment, spike the operational costs ~ it appeared that it was feast or famine on an annual basis. She suggested to the board that this may well be a case for having a Capital Reserve formed for large equipment maintenance items. It was noted that tires for the loader were \$17,000.
- ❑ **Fire Vehicles:** Mr. Valladares expressed his frustration in not having sufficient knowledge regarding the disposition of the old tanker and forestry truck in terms of whether or not he should be budgeting money for repairs. Mrs. Whittaker indicated that the grant that the FD applied for from Homeland Security for a new truck would be the "driving" factor as to future budgeting. The Board confirmed that they would bring up the subject when they met with the fire chief.

Acct 4140 & 4150 Town Clerk & Tax Collector (Financial Administration)

The Board met with Carole Ingham who presented both her budgets.

Noted by board that the town clerk's budget (Acct 4140) was reduced in large part because the 2008 budget had 4 elections to be accounted for.

Mrs. Ingham noted for the board that with the new State's computer system and additional printers that she anticipated greater use of ink cartridges, which would impact office supplies in account 4130. Therefore she asked the Board to consider increasing the municipal agent's fee from \$2.50 to \$3.00 (new 2008 legislation enabled this increase) and if supported, she felt it prudent therefore to not charge the additional 50 cents admin fee on mail-in renewals.

The board reviewed the Tax Collector's requests in account 4150, and at Mrs. Blackden's suggestion felt that the Deputy Town Clerk & Deputy Tax Collector line should be moved to account 4140, as the majority of the deputy's work was truly indicative of town clerk work.

Acct 4550: Library

The Board met with Max Crowe, Library Director.

As heating fuel costs had been problematic in 2008, the board reviewed with Mr. Crowe, the library heating oil usage and felt that under-budgeting would occur again. **Action:** Line 411 was increased from \$3000 to \$3750.

Mr. Crowe reviewed the operating funds exclusive of wages and benefits noting that many of the lines were either level funded or decreased with the exception of the heating fuel line.

Building: Mr. Crowe advised the board that the Trustees may be bringing in a request for a warrant article to vinyl side the building. After a great deal of discussion regarding pros and cons and alternatives, it was noted by all that a plan was still to be determined.

Acct 4520 Parks & Recreation

Mrs. Whittaker advised of Mrs. Bailey's apologies for being absent ~ she was on vacation, which had been booked, 6 months earlier.

The Board reviewed the budget as presented in note form, and Mrs. Whittaker will discontinue the roll over line of 859-5666 at the school.

The only question outstanding on the budget was the \$10,000 request for ball field maintenance noting the fertilizer costs required to be broken out as the other items as outlined would fall under the Capital Reserve fund with a proposed funding of \$10,000. Once the information is to hand, then it was felt that this line would be reduced given the other proposed funding in the Capital Reserve.

Acct 4324 Solid Waste

The Board passed their condolences to Mr. Bloskey who was absent due to a family death.

The following lines were corrected:~

- ❑ **Line 420 Demolition Debris Removal** ~ should be 400 tons x \$80.12 = \$32,048; total to now read \$41,548 without freeon removal. Need decision to support annual charge by private contractor @ \$500 or purchase freeon removal unit and do it in-house @ a one time purchase price of \$1245
- ❑ **Line 421 Solid Waste Disposal** ~ should read 1200 tons x 73.86 = \$88,632; total to now read \$89,574.

Mrs. Whittaker to clarify with Mr. Bloskey the leased compactor and the rental compactor.

Discussion re oil tanks (2) proposed acquisitions for excess used oil in Account 4194 General Government Buildings @ \$5000 ~ possibility of grant money to defray acquisition costs to be questioned.

Accts 4191, 4192, & 4612 ~ Planning, Zoning and Conservation

The Board met with David Allen, Land Use Administrator

- ❑ **Acct 4191** ~ The board agreed that the main item of discussion should focus on line 330 Contracted Services. Following review it was noted that a current contract exists for Mr. Mayberry's services re impact fees therefore this money could be legally encumbered and that the contract with Strafford Regional Planning Commission for planning assistance in 2008 could be encumbered
- ❑ Therefore, breakdown of numbers discussed as follows:

Engineer Analysis of the Suitability of Mill Road Area as a Commercial/Industrial pad site	\$2,000
Ordinance Writing for above, if suitable	\$1,500
Ordinance Writing re Affordable Housing (state statute)	\$1,000

- ❑ Discussion re Master Plan Chapter Updates: Recommendation to set up a Capital Reserve Fund @ \$2000 annually so as to provide flexibility to the planners in review of the various Chapters rather than a one-time large appropriation every 10 plus years.

Motion Rhoades to support the CRF mechanism for 2009 to set up a Master Plan reserve, second Gehl, vote 3-0.

Action: Line 330 to be reduced from \$8,000 to \$4,500 and new reserve for Master Plan to be set up in Acct 4915 for \$2,000

- Mr. Allen advised the board that he would like to acquire software to begin the first phase of GIS mapping ability.

Action: \$750 to be added to Line 622

Acct 4192 Zoning Board of Adjustment

Mrs. Whittaker advised that she had received an e-mail from Terry Jarvis who agreed with the current figures as presented but requested another \$25 in the mileage line in case there are two members of the board who might wish to attend seminars or law lectures.

Action: Line 820 to be increased by \$25 to read \$125.

Acct. 4612 Conservation

The budget, as proposed, still requires Conservation Commission approval but basically identical to last year with the exception of a deduction to the mileage line of \$50 and a deduction of \$200 to the postage line.

Acct 4220 Fire and Acct 4290 Forest Fire

The Board met with Chief Varney and Captain Stuart.

Acct. 4290: Captain Stuart presented his forest fire budget.

- Line 180: Fire Suppression Costs: based on history Mr. Stuart was agreeable to a \$500 deduction.

Action: Line 180 to be reduced from \$3,500 to \$3,000

Would like an increase of \$1000 in training in anticipation that the forestry truck will be replaced in some manner and thus will require extra training re upgraded equipment.

Noted reductions in lines 740 and 741 due to 2008 acquisitions and replacements, remaining lines level funded.

Acct 4220 Fire Department

Fire Chief Varney presented the Department's budget.

- Based on history, the board felt that the telephone costs could be reasonably reduced from \$3180 to \$2500. Chief agreed.

Action: Line 341 to be reduced from \$3180 to \$2500.

- Hazardous material: Although it was noted that there had been no expenditures from the line all agreed that it could be reduced and that it is a line that we all hope is never expended from given the nature of the title.

Action: Line 365 to be reduced from \$750 to \$500.

- ❑ The board questioned the jump in software support. Chief Varney advised that the additional cost was indicative of 2 years worth of licensing ~ 2008 & 2009 @ \$750 per year.
- ❑ **Radios and Pagers:** Annual replacement of 5 pagers per year. Maintenance is an educated guess at this stage.
- ❑ **Compensation:** The board agreed that this would need another meeting as there were issues with officer's compensation per the trial year of the 2008 FD Payroll policy.

At this time, there was discussion regarding the "*Ambulance Revolving Fund*" noting that the language of the warrant article establishing the fund stated that the billing fees placed in the fund could only be used for ambulance replacement and repairs to the ambulance. Chief Varney suggested to the board that consideration should be given to changing the language of the article at town meeting to include having the billing fees cover, not only the ambulance replacement, but compensation and supplies, thereby taking the ambulance compensation and supply costs from the tax rate. This would make the ambulance and its operational costs as a self-sustaining entity supported solely by billing fees. Mrs. Whittaker advised that a financial analysis would need to be put together to see if, in fact, the fund could be self-sustaining. She and Mrs. Blackden will work on the same. It was noted that if the above should be supportable that this would have a dramatic decrease on the compensation line. Mr. Bickford advised that he was also not adverse to the dissolution of the revolving fund and having billing fees go into the general fund thereby producing revenue defrayment against the expense appropriation.

Action: A financial analysis to be produced for consideration of the above.

- ❑ **Line 740: Equipment:** Proposed acquisition of a "Master Stream" which is a super hose that can be set up remotely to attack large buildings. Questions raised as to need and value for the dollar.

Chief Varney also advised that in order for the ambulance to sustain paramedic level application, there was a regulatory need for the acquisition of a complete monitor defibrillator & EKG System at \$30,000 for the ambulance. He recognized that this should have been placed in the Capital Improvement Plan. The Board asked for further information re this item.

The Fire Chief advised that many of his 2008 appropriations were now being saved to cover the costs of repairs to the Ladder Truck now accumulative to \$31,000. It was noted by all that what was not purchased in 2008 has an impact on the 2009 budget.

Acct 4290: Emergency Management Director

The Board met with Dwight Jones who presented his budget requests.

He reported to the board that he had been unable to locate radios bought previously for emergency management purposes since his appointment in June 2008.

He proposed a modest budget and asked that mileage be included in the budget for 2009 given the distances that he has to travel in a town emergency.

He again advised the board that the FD addition required to be finished before he could apply for Emergency Operations Center Grant funding.

Acct 4583 Town Historian

The Board met with Town History Cathy Orlowicz.

The board noted the modest budget and asked if the supplies request was sufficient. Mrs. Orlowicz affirmed the same.

She asked the board if they would approve use of \$1200 of her 2008 unexpended funds to support the final funding portion for the dismantling and removal of the Boodey House. Chair Rhoades advised that he thought the Boodey House Agreement was indicative that no taxpayer's dollars would be used for the project. Mrs. Orlowicz disagreed. Mrs. Whittaker will have copies of the Boodey House Agreement for the board's next business meeting scheduled for November 3, 2008.

Acct: 4195 Cemetery Trustees

The Board met with Cemetery Trustees Michele Kendrick, Tom Mason, and Mike Clarke.

The Trustees advised that the budget the same as prior years' budget but with a \$50 reduction to electricity costs, although noting the 2008 summer season was very wet, and hence the need to not turn on the watering system.

Discussion ensued regarding the costs of cemetery lots, and the grave opening costs, but with current interest rates, the question was raised whether it was worth raising the price of a lot in order to gain an approximate \$1.50 per lot annual interest especially when an additional \$200 could be burdensome on a New Durham family at the time of bereavement.

The Trustees asked the board to support a Cy Pres petition to the courts for the Perpetual care lots in Section A of the Shirley Cemetery and in the "Old Cemetery". Interest is only accruable on the single individual lots, and work must be defined per each individual lot to receive interest back into the general fund. Mrs. Whittaker asked if this could wait until 2009, as the town's legal account was already well over-budget. The Trustees affirmed the same.

Request from the Trustees for the Board to consider placing funding into the Shirley Cemetery Expendable Fund Trust for an extension and improvements to the irrigation system. Approximate cost \$10,500 with savings being appropriated over a 3 to 5 year timeline.

Acct: 4240 Building Inspector

The Board met with Building Inspector, Health Officer, and Code Enforcement Officer Arthur Capello.

Mr. Capello is asking for \$300 in his printing line as he documents every visit with Field Inspection Reports. This ensures appropriate lines of communication.

He proposed to decrease by \$300 the books and subscriptions as he noted to the board that there are no new codes anticipated in 2009.

He requested that the mileage be increased as he is following up on a lot of work from the prior two years thus requiring more site inspections etc. He noted that he is averaging about 300 miles a month.

In an ideal situation, he would like to have GIS capability that might interact with the appraisal software for property identification and topo etc. This will be looked into for future planning.

The board closed the work session down at 8:30 PM; noting that the administrative budgets still needed review together with capital budgets.

*Respectfully submitted
April Whittaker.*

