

NEW DURHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Budget Meeting
New Durham Town Hall
October 8, 2014, 7:00 p.m.

Present:

Chairman David Swenson
Selectman David Bickford
Selectman Theresa Jarvis

Also Present:

Jeremy Bourgeois, Town Administrator
Corky Mork, Videographer
Judith Crouse, Finance Officer
Catherine Orlowicz, Town Historian & Boodey House Committee Chair
Cathy Allyn, 1772 Meetinghouse Committee Chair
Jennifer Bourassa, Cemetery Trustee
Dennis Martin, Cemetery Trustee
Dorothy Veisel, Ethics Committee Chair
Amy Smith, Land Use Clerk
Bob Craycraft, Planning Board Chair/Conservation Commission Member
Ron Gehl, Conservation Commission Chair
Joan Martin, Resident
Rudy Rosiello, Resident
Greg Anthes, Resident

Call to Order

Chair Swenson called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m. He stated the purpose of this meeting is for the 2015 budget review. The meetings will continue over the next eight to ten weeks for all the departments of the Town to be reviewed for the upcoming budget of 2015. Chair Swenson stated that as a result of the Town Meeting vote to convert to SB2, there would also be a concurrent review of the default budget. He explained that because of this there are two 2015 budget columns for each account to be reviewed.

Chair Swenson gave a brief overview of the budget process. He stated the Board of Selectmen would receive the budget from the Finance Officer per a schedule that was reviewed and approved by the Board of Selectmen. Each member of the Board of Selectmen reviews the 2014 budget notes and proposed 2015 budget and note their questions and requests for additional information that may be needed. The Board of Selectmen will submit those to the Town Administrator Bourgeois for each account per the schedule that was outlined. The Town Administrator Bourgeois would forward the questions to the department heads or responsible individual. The Department Head or responsible individual submits responses to the Board of Selectmen's questions to the Town Administrator Bourgeois by 9:00a.m. of the scheduled date and Town Administrator Bourgeois would distribute the responses to the Board of Selectmen upon

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receipt. The Board of Selectmen reviews all information and initiates all discussion per the schedule.

This meeting is part of that process for those departments or accounts outlined for today's schedule. The budget information sheet being looked at has six headings including the 2013 Budget, 2013 Actual Expenses, the 2014 Budget, 2014 Projected Expenses, the 2015 Budget and the 2015 Default Budget. Chair Swenson stated there are time limits set for meetings for each department or account to be reviewed and he will try to hold to that. He stated there are some accounts he doesn't anticipate to go the full time allotted and in future meetings he has asked the Town Administrator Bourgeois to notify all the Department Heads and individuals responsible to arrive at least 30 to 45 minutes ahead in case they are able to be ahead of the time originally allotted.

Account Review

Account 4195 – Cemeteries

Jennifer Bourassa, Cemetery Trustee, stated they are requesting a budget increase of \$1,000 for cemetery association dues, meetings, lawn fertilizer and mulch and other lawn needs from the Highway Department.

Selectman Jarvis noted that in line 610, almost double the budgeted amount was spent and asked if something unusual happened.

Dennis Martin, Cemetery Trustee, replied nothing unusual has happened. He stated he does have a question about the expenditures that are in the cemetery budget, for which he never sees any receipts. Mr. Martin stated the only real cost items they have are the electricity and cemetery association dues. He stated the money for opening the graves goes to the Town and supplies are purchased by Public Works. Mr. Martin stated he doesn't understand why those are in the cemetery budget.

Selectman Jarvis replied the costs of lawn maintenance supplies, provided by the Public Works Department goes to the respective budgets so they can see all the expenses for each department. Chair Swenson asked Town Administrator Bourgeois to be sure the cemetery trustees have a copy of the things the Highway Department is charging to their account.

Selectman Jarvis made a motion to approve the proposed 2015 Budget in the amount of \$2,615.00 with the 2015 Default Budget being \$2,865.00. Chair Swenson seconded the motion. Discussion: Selectman Bickford stated he would like to vote on all the accounts at a later date to give the public time to review them. Chair Swenson replied the objective is to review and make decisions on each account during the meeting. He stated he has no interest in cycling back and forth five or six times unless there is a significant issue that needs to be addressed. Selectman Bickford protested adding the default budget into the motion as it is unnecessary and problematic. He stated a mistake in the default budget would throw out the motion.

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Selectman Bickford stated this is the first time the public has had an opportunity to look at any of the accounts and feels it gives the impression that the public is not part of the process.

Selectman Jarvis stated they used this same process last year and part of it the year before. She stated that if someone wasn't able to make it to this meeting, they were invited to attend a Board of Selectmen meeting and/or a Budget Committee meeting. Selectman Jarvis explained the Board of Selectmen only make recommendations to the Budget Committee and they make the decisions. She stated she doesn't see a need to bring in the Department Heads and volunteers five or six times to review the accounts.

Chair Swenson reiterated the intent of the meeting is to take action on each of the accounts unless there is a significant issue or omission and they can certainly go back to something brought to their attention. **Motion passed, 3-0.**

Account 4290- Emergency Management

Selectman Jarvis stated the Emergency Management director contacted her and stated he has been temporarily reassigned to Virginia since last June. He did submit his budget to Town Administrator Bourgeois and there are no changes in the 2015 Budget from the 2014 Budget which is basically the same as the 2013 budget. She stated nothing other than the stipend has been used out of the emergency management budget, as there have been no declared disasters resulting in the EOC being activated. Mr. Anthes asked what is done with the surplus funds. It was explained those are returned to the General Fund.

Selectman Jarvis made a motion to approve the Emergency Management portion of account 4290 in the amount of \$3,700 for the 2015 Budget, with the 2015 Default Budget being the same. Selectman Bickford seconded the motion. Discussion:

Selectman Jarvis noted that for public information there are two sections of the account including Emergency Management and Forestry. Selectman Bickford asked to have these accounts separated. They are not allowed by the State to split the Forestry budget. It will be looked at separately. It was clarified there are two separate individuals responsible for each account. Chair Swenson asked Town Administrator Bourgeois to follow up with the State to see if it can be split. **Motion passed, 3-0.**

Boodey House / Meetinghouse – General

Chair Swenson stated there were discussions last year during the budget processes which were difficult for a variety of reasons. He stated it is his opinion there is at times some competitiveness between the Boodey House Committee and the Meetinghouse Committee and their objectives. They are separate and have separate objectives.

Chair Swenson stated that from a business perspective he would like to see the committees have a strategic plan, then implement their plan and accomplish it within a specified time. He stated they also need to make sure they are revenue-neutral as non-profits.

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Chair Swenson stated the Board of Selectmen have an unassigned fund guideline of 8% and they have defined how that is generated. The difference between the current unassigned fund balance and the 8% is about \$341,000 so the Board of Selectmen will have to deal with how best to take care of that. He stated it has been the general consensus that some of that should go to warrant articles. The Town has done that historically for some time. Chair Swenson stated it has also been discussed that some of it should also be returned to the taxpayer, but in a sustainable way. Chair Swenson suggested looking at that as way to disperse some of it.

Chair Swenson stated he is accustomed to how various federal and state agencies encourage economic development and research. Often times that is through giving grants and he stated both groups have received those and they are usually matching grants.

Chair Swenson stated he would like to suggest to both the Meetinghouse Committee and Boodey House Committee, that if the Board of Selectmen were to come to some sort of agreement of utilization of the unassigned fund balance that is not used for warrant articles or returned to the taxpayers, the Board of Selectmen may use \$150,000 (to pick a number) with a Committee if they could either jointly or competitively, raise a 1 to 1 match. That would provide a substantial amount to get the projects done. He stated he would ultimately like to see whichever project is completed first be utilized as a voting place for the Town of New Durham to relieve the Town of any issues with holding voting at the school. The Board of Selectmen would also have first dibs for their meetings.

Cathy Allyn, 1772 Meetinghouse Committee Chair, stated she would like the funding and it makes a lot of sense. She stated when committees have more money in their accounts, it indicates support within the town and are more likely to get grants. Ms. Allyn stated there are organizations and groups that want to see these resources preserved and stated all the grants awarded were huge amounts. She noted that based on the numbers, over the course of ten years, it is a cost of about \$85 per homeowners. Then, they would have a community center, something that would be helpful in Town.

Chair Swenson replied that from a business perspective there are a lot of advantages to competition and if that is the way the committees want to do it, there may be some incentive to go after the matching funds. The down side is that it can become political and that is not what he is after.

Ms. Allyn stated she agrees it is not the way to go. She stated that the meetinghouse was started first and then the Boodey House came along. At the time, a member of the Board of Selectmen said no taxpayer money would be spent on that. She stated she doesn't think it would be a good environment to pin the two against each other. The Meetinghouse is already constructed with plans in place and the Boodey House could come after. A lot of Town money has already gone towards the Meetinghouse. Chair Swenson stated his intent is not to put one project over the other but rather raise these ideas as a point of discussion.

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Catherine Orlowicz, Town Historian & Boodey House Committee Chair, stated she likes the idea and creative thoughts but thinks it is going to be hard to sell. She agreed that a lot of work has been done by dedicated individuals on the Meetinghouse over twenty years and understands what it takes to bring a building to a certain level but she is not looking at pitting one against the other and has always felt there is room for both. The projects are at different stages and should there ever be an agreement to use unassigned fund balances for either of these projects, there should be a caveat that whichever project can come up with the matching funds or is more prepared would receive the funds.

Chair Swenson replied that the worst case would be to go ahead with something like this and then not have a completed project. He would not be in favor of any plan that does not show a completion date, a reasonable way to do it both financially and an implementation of the plan for use after completion.

Selectman Jarvis stated she also doesn't want to see the Meetinghouse competing with the Boodey House and as she stated at the last Board of Selectmen meeting, she is in favor of a sustainable tax rate reduction. She stated the Boodey House needs more money before they have enough for stage 1. She stated they have already raised a significant amount of money to get to this point and suggested using \$5,000 to get that stage completed. Selectman Jarvis stated that by the same token, the Meetinghouse is short about the same amount to complete their stage 1. She stated they are both valuable projects and it is an out of the box idea she would like to look at without pitting one against the other.

Selectman Bickford stated he is hesitant of using the unassigned fund balance for these things but wants to give it back to the public through other things like roads to offset the next year. He stated he is willing to put money towards these projects but he is not in a hurry to get them done. Selectman Bickford stated that to use the buildings for voting would take a lot of money because they will have to be ADA accessible, have plenty of parking, etc. Selectman Jarvis stated that to utilize either building for voting, there are minimum space requirements, minimum booth requirements and she doesn't think the Meetinghouse would ever meet those.

Account 4130 – 1772 Meetinghouse

Selectman Jarvis stated that mid-cycle last year, they changed the Meetinghouse account, taking it out of the Executive Budget. The account for the Meetinghouse is now 4589 and the Boodey House is now 4130.

Cathy Allyn, 1772 Meetinghouse Committee Chair stated there are some incorrect numbers in the proposed budget. The grant application is supposed to be \$150. Selectman Jarvis noted five of the seven accounts haven't been spent yet. Ms. Allyn replied that is correct as their big event is usually for Halloween, which may not happen this year.

Selectman Jarvis asked if the RFP for stage 1 would be going out in 2015. Ms. Allyn replied yes. Selectman Jarvis asked if when she met with CIP, did they request an amount to go into the Capital Reserve Fund this year. Ms. Allyn replied they requested \$20,000.

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Chair Swenson made a motion to approve account 4589, 1772 Meetinghouse for the 2015 Budget in the amount of \$465.00 and the 2015 Default Budget of \$705.00. Selectman Jarvis seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.

Account 4130-50 – Boodey House

Selectman Jarvis noted they are proposing some advertising and mailings. Catherine Orlowicz, Town Historian & Boodey House Committee Chair, replied they will probably not do any mailings before the end of the year and are not ready to go out and request any money.

Selectman Jarvis made a motion to approve account 4130, Boodey House for the 2015 Budget in the amount of \$201.00 and the 2015 Default Budget in the amount of \$201.00. Motion passed, 3-0.

Account 4583 – Town Historian

Catherine Orlowicz, Town Historian & Boodey House Committee Chair noted she does have some expenses she needs reimbursement for that are not reflected in the amount of about \$220.

Selectman Jarvis stated that in 2013 there was a large purchase of flags and standards and asked if they would be purchasing more with what is left in the 2014 budget. Ms. Orlowicz replied she would be deferring purchasing more flags until 2016 as she has enough remaining.

Selectman Jarvis made a motion to approve account 4583, Town Historian, for the 2015 Budget in the amount of \$350.00 and the 2015 Default Budget in the amount of \$450.00. Selectman Bickford seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.

Account 4130-30 – Ethics Committee

Dorothy Veisel, Ethics Committee Chair, confirmed that to date there have been no expenses. She stated that since they are a rotating committee and expected a new member, they had planned for materials and a training session. Ms. Veisel stated she is fairly certain they will need it next year. Selectman Jarvis confirmed they no longer do mailings and suggested deleting line 4130-30-625. Chair Swenson noted there were expenses for that line in 2013.

Chair Swenson made a motion to approve account 4130-30, the Ethics Committee, the 2015 Budget in the amount of \$200.00 and the 2015 Default Budget in the amount of \$200.00. Selectman Jarvis seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.

Account 4520 – Parks and Recreation

Chair Swenson noted the budget for 2014 is \$61,733, the balance year-to-date as of 10/8/14 is \$37,116 and stated the projection is to be well under budget. Chair Swenson noted where a significant reduction occurs is in the salary and dues lines.

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Selectman Jarvis asked whether the special event hours are preapproved by the full commission. Ms. Veisel replied yes and usually applies to New Durham Day.

The social programs and benefits of the Parks and Recreation programs were discussed. It was clarified the programs are not just for sports but for individuals of all ages.

Chair Swenson asked the Finance Officer to work on the calculations for the salary line to accurately reflect the current costs.

Chair Swenson stated that in response to Selectman Bickford's question about the sports equipment, historically this has been included in the budget. Chair Swenson agreed they many want to ask the Commission to look at opportunities to covering this expense with fees.

Chair Swenson made a motion to approve account 4520, Parks and Recreation, for the 2015 Budget in the amount of \$53,537.00 with a 2015 Default Budget in the amount of \$61,733.00. Selectman Jarvis seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.

Account 4191 – Planning Board

Bob Craycraft, Planning Board Chair/Conservation Commission Member, stated they don't expect any additional expenses before the end of December. It was noted they are requesting a \$2,500 decrease for 2015. It was confirmed the contracted services line needs to remain even though it was not used this year as each year the focus is different.

Mr. Craycraft stated the contract services in the current year had two major initiatives. The first was the rewriting and editing of the Zoning Board ordinances. The second was a contract with Bruce Mayberry to provide updated impact fee information to the Planning Board. He stated something they are proposing for the 2015 is updating maps that were originally produced in 1979. Mr. Craycraft stated they do have fees for recording and are able to recuperate those fees.

Selectman Jarvis made a motion to approve account 4191, the Planning Board, in the amount of \$10,286.00 for the 2015 Budget, which reflects a change in line 4191-10-560. The 2015 Default Budget is \$12,756.00. Chair Swenson seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.

Account 4192 – Zoning Board of Adjustment

Chair Swenson stated the 2014 Budget was \$952, the actual year-to-date expenses as of 9/24/14 are about \$169. The 2015 Proposed Budget and Default Budget are the same as 2014 Budget. Amy Smith, Land Use Clerk, stated there have been some expenditures since 9/24/14 and the actual expenses year-to-date as of October 8 is \$393.99.

The salary expenses of the Land Use Assistant were discussed and it was agreed to leave it in the budget at this point.

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Selectman Jarvis made a motion to approve account 4192, the Zoning Board of Adjustment, the 2015 Budget in the amount of \$952.00 and the 2015 Default Budget in the amount of \$952.00. Chair Swenson seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.

Account 4612 – Conservation Commission

Ron Gehl, Conservation Commission Chair, stated the Conservation Commission is proposing a 2015 budget identical to what he would consider the barebones budget they have been operating under in 2014. He stated there is one item that was reduced last year and they want to maintain it this year. Mr. Gehl explained some of the items are expended fairly late in the year. Mr. Gehl explained the six lines of the budget and how the funds are used.

Selectman Jarvis made a motion to approve account 4612, the Conservation Commission in the amount \$1,850.00 for the 2015 Budget with the 2015 Default Budget being the same. Chair Swenson seconded the motion.

Chair Swenson stated the next Board of Selectmen Budget Meeting is October 15, 2014 at 9:00a.m. in the Fire Department Community Room.

Chair Swenson stated the Board of Selectmen also need to reschedule their meetings for November 4 and 11 and asked the members to be prepared at the next meeting with available dates.

Selectman Jarvis made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chair Swenson seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:09p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Riel, Recording Secretary