

NEW DURHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Budget Meeting
Fire Station Community Room
October 21, 2014, 1:00 p.m.

DRAFT: These minutes are strictly a draft copy and are awaiting amendment or approval at a subsequent, duly noticed public meeting. Amendments to these minutes will be noted in the minutes of said meeting. The draft will be posted on the website as a draft copy for public informational use only.

Present:

Chairman David Swenson
Selectman David Bickford
Selectman Theresa Jarvis

Also Present:

Jeremy Bourgeois, Town Administrator
Corky Mork, Videographer
Judith Crouse, Finance Officer
Reggie Meattley, Police Sergeant
Shawn Bernier, Police Chief
Katie Woods, Police Executive Assistant
Rudy Rosiello, Resident
Greg Anthes, Resident

Call to Order

Chair Swenson called the meeting to order at 1:00p.m.

Account Review

Account 4210 – Police Department

Police Chief Bernier stated he prepared two budgets to present. One includes a \$1,200 pay increase for an officer that he wants to discuss this with the Board of Selectmen. He stated if that is declined, he has another budget. It was clarified the budget presented to the Board of Selectmen prior to the meeting does not include the raise. Chair Swenson stated this is appropriate as raises come from another account. Police Chief Bernier asked if he can ask for a pay raise where he thinks is appropriate. He stated he thinks the raise included is warranted based on the individual's performance and the pay of other officers. Chair Swenson replied it would be addressed during a performance review process and it would come from the salary raise pool.

Selectman Jarvis asked if this is part of the request from the Board of Selectmen to Police Chief Bernier to start doing comparative analysis with other departments. Police Chief Bernier stated it is and clarified that when he went through this process with Farmington, he one officer who had two years of experience and that individual made the same as another uncertified officer newly hired. Police Chief Bernier stated he started looking at other departments to see what they were being paid. He stated this was done in 2009 but

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since then they have fallen behind other departments. He stated it something being discussed with retention of police officers and one of the biggest issues is pay.

Chair Swenson stated it might be appropriate to add an agenda item to the regularly scheduled Board of Selectmen meeting to address the market study rates and comparative analysis Police Chief Bernier has completed so far. He stated Police Chief Bernier was also asked to look at retention and a part time pool and suggested they focus on the budget now and have it as a discussion topic at a later time. Selectman Jarvis stated they could always amend the budget if they agree with some changes Police Chief Bernier suggests.

The individual budget lines were reviewed and Police Chief Bernier explained their uses. Police Chief Bernier stated that if they retain officers, he is looking to reduce the amounts in some of the other lines.

Selectman Jarvis stated she had presented some questions to Police Chief Bernier since they are asking him to increase the number of part time officers. She stated she wanted to know the costs that would be added to the budget and stated she didn't see any of this in the budget presented. Selectman Jarvis stated Police Chief Bernier estimated the cost of a single new part time officer who is currently certified, the start up cost is \$5,685 per person. For an uncertified person, the estimate is \$11,445. She stated that even if they get a certified officer, that \$5,000 is not in the budget being discussed. It was clarified the costs are not included because part time officers have not been replaced over the years and it was just recently that Police Chief Bernier was asked to increase the part time pool. Chair Swenson suggested looking at increasing the budget to do that. Selectman Bickford and Selectman Jarvis concurred.

Selectman Jarvis stated she would like to see at least four additional potential candidates that are certified but she would hate to turn away a potential good part time officer because the funding is not available. Selectman Bickford stated it needs to be budgeted in. Chair Swenson clarified the pay is already covered.

Selectman Jarvis asked if there could be a line in the account that could be designated for the costs of hiring and training new part time officers. It was clarified that all the applications received so far are from uncertified individuals. It was agreed to add a line for this purpose and Selectman Jarvis suggested creating the line in the amount of \$23,000.

Chair Swenson stated the encouragement has been to increase the part time pool but what is missing in this discussion is does that allow there to be money saved elsewhere. Selectman Jarvis stated they could use them to cover voting and other additional times when overtime would be used so it should save in the overtime line.

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Police Chief Bernier stated the ideal thing is going to be if they can find someone who is already certified, wants to work part time but from what is seen, they aren't getting those candidates.

Selectman Bickford stated he knows it isn't as convenient to have part time officers but it can hurt the budget to try and cover everything with full time officers. He stated other towns have four full time officers with part timers to fill in, and these towns' budgets are less.

After discussion, it was agreed to add a line for Part Time Initial Hire and Equipment, in the amount of \$22,500, which is the cost for two uncertified individuals, less the current inventory of firearms.

Selectman Jarvis noted that prior to this line being added, including raises that were given, the 2015 budget is up \$1,088.

Chair Swenson stated the 2015 budget would be \$535,813 and the 2015 default budget would be \$513,802.

Selectman Jarvis made a motion to approve account 4210, Public Safety - Police Department, the budget proposal for 2015 is \$535,813 and the default budget \$513,802. Chair Swenson seconded the motion for discussion. Discussion: Chair Swenson stated he recognizes the proposed budget will be the budget if it is approved, however, he will put on pressure to have an offset of the overtime. Police Chief Bernier replied he would do everything in his power to try and bring that line down. Selectman Jarvis asked how often the Academy offers part time police training. Police Chief Bernier replied it is usually four times per year. Selectman Jarvis suggesting finding out the dates so they can move forward with trying to fill the positions. Selectman Bickford stated he would be opposed due to the reasons he stated earlier that he wants to go down to four full time officers instead of five. He stated they could get the budget down more if they did that. Chair Swenson replied he didn't recall those points being made. **Motion passed, 2-1. Selectman Bickford opposed.**

Account 4299 – Other Public Safety

Police Chief Bernier explained the uses of the lines. Selectman Jarvis asked where the costs for the Fire/EMS dispatch costs are reflected. It was noted these costs should be in the Fire Department budget but Mrs. Crouse stated she did not see them there.

Selectman Bickford stated there should be two separate bills from Strafford County Dispatch and recommended separating it out in the accounts. Chair Swenson and Selectman Jarvis concurred. It was agreed to get this done for the 2015 budget. It was clarified both the Police and Fire Department lines need to be adjusted. Mrs. Crouse agreed and stated she would prefer to get this corrected sooner than later.

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Lines 145 and 146 were discussed. It was agreed to keep the lines open with the amount of \$1 as these lines offset revenue collected through grants and police details.

The transfer of line 306, Dispatch Services was discussed and it was noted the adjusted 2015 budget for the Police Department would be \$540,196. The new total for account 4299, line 306 would be \$0.00 after the remainder of \$4,381 has been moved to the Fire Department.

Chair Swenson asked why the Animal Control Officer/Pest Control is not part of the Police Department Budget. It was noted the individual in the position has typically been a police officer but is not part of the Police Department. Selectman Bickford stated most towns do include it in the Police Department budget. Selectman Jarvis stated she is not in favor of moving it over as the Police Chief has no control over the contract money with Cocheco Valley Humane Society. She doesn't see it as a police duty. Police Chief Bernier stated the reason some towns have it in the police department budget is because they have an animal control officer but New Durham contracts with an individual for the services.

Chair Swenson stated that if the Police Department has been assigned the duty, it should be moved over to the Police Department budget. With that, it makes the total Police Department 2015 budget \$541,796 and a default budget of \$539,333. Account 4414 would be zeroed out. Chair Swenson clarified the 2015 proposed amount includes the original number presented, plus the part time initial hiring and equipment line that was added, the dispatch line from account 4299, plus \$1 for outside/grant details and account 4414, ACO/Pest Control in the amount of \$1,600. The 2015 default budget has all the same lines except for the part time hiring and equipment line.

Chair Swenson made a motion to move the Police Department dispatch part of 4299 and all other parts of account 4299 to account 4210. Selectman Jarvis seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.

Chair Swenson made a motion to move the Fire Department part of the dispatch line from account 4299 to the Fire Department account 4220. Selectman Jarvis seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.

Chair Swenson made a motion to zero out both the 2015 Proposed Budget and the 2015 Default Budget for account 4299, having transferred the accounts to the accounts previously discussed. Selectman Jarvis seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.

Chair Swenson made a motion to transfer all of account 4414 into account 4210 and zero out account 4414 for both the 2015 Proposed Budget and 2015 Default Budget. Selectman Bickford seconded the motion. Motion passed, 2-1. Selectman Jarvis opposed.

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It was clarified the 2015 proposed budget for account 4210 is now \$541,796 with a 2015 default budget \$539,333.

Chair Swenson made a motion to approve account 4210, Public Safety – Police Department, the 2015 Proposed Budget in the amount of \$541,796 and the 2015 Default Budget of \$539,333. Selectman Jarvis seconded the motion. Motion passed, 2-1. Selectman Bickford opposed.

Account 4140 – Election and Registration

Carole Ingham, Town Clerk/Tax Collector explained the uses of each line. She explained the changes to the elections due to SB2 and the costs associated are somewhat unknown at this point. Ms. Ingham recommended adding an additional voting booth due to changes in SB2.

It was noted that after the budget is reviewed and approved, the Finance Officer goes over the numbers to be sure everything is totaled correctly.

Selectman Jarvis made a motion to approve account 4140, Elections and Registrations, for the 2015 Proposed Budget of \$128,696 and the 2015 Default Budget of \$132,431. Selectman Bickford seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.

Account 4150 – Financial Administration

Ms. Ingham explained the line item expenses. It was noted the amount for line 622 in the default budget was incorrect.

Chair Swenson stated the default amount for line 211 should be zero. Selectman Jarvis replied dental benefits are required to be paid, and are not something that can be taken away as it is a previously incurred obligation. Chair Swenson concurred.

Chair Swenson stated no changes have been made to the 2015 Proposed Budget which is in the amount of \$110,229 and the adjusted 2015 Default Budget is \$108,026. He explained this reflects a reduction of \$1535 from line 40-622, \$833 from line 10-140 and \$165 from line 10-622.

Selectman Jarvis made a motion to approve account 4150, Financial Administration with a 2015 Proposed budget of \$110,229 and a 2015 Default Budget of \$108,026. Selectman Bickford seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.

Account 4153 – Legal Expenses

Chair Swenson stated the 2014 Budget was \$20,000. The 2015 Proposed Budget is \$20,000 and the 2015 Default Budget is \$20,000.

Selectman Jarvis proposed that line 320 be increased to \$30,000 as they don't know where things will be going with the lawsuit against the Town. She stated the Planning Board and or the Zoning Board may be requested for rehearing on a case that previously

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had a fair amount of legal expenses associated with it. Selectman Jarvis stated that since she has been on the Board of Selectmen, they have been putting in this account anywhere from \$20,000 to \$40,000. The actual year-to-date expenses were reviewed and Ms. Crouse noted it be \$20,292 but she has another bill of less than \$1,000 that has not been included.

Chair Swenson stated he is aware of an issue with the ZBA that may come up but the cost is unknown. Selectman Jarvis stated that they need to continue to utilize the legal advice of New Hampshire Municipal Association as much as possible as the membership fee covers it.

Selectman Jarvis made a motion to approve account 4153, Legal Expenses, the 2015 Proposed Budget in the amount of \$30,000 and the 2015 Default Budget in the amount of \$20,000. Selectman Bickford seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.

Account 4152 – Assessing

Chair Swenson stated the 2015 Proposed Budget is \$42,299 and the 2015 Default Budget is \$44,179.

Town Administrator Bourgeois went through the lines and explained the increases noted in the salary line. He stated the total amount of hours for the assessing clerk has been reduced but the wage was adjusted. Selectman Jarvis stated the workload increases every five years due to reevaluation, and suggested increasing the 2015 proposed amount by \$1,000. Selectman Bickford suggesting finding out from the assessor how much work is going to be expected to be turned over to the Town.

Selectman Jarvis noted they are going to have to revisit this budget after they decide what they are going to do with the assessing contractor. Chair Swenson suggested putting at least \$1 in line 340 for contracted services. After discussion, it was agreed to do so after meeting with the assessing contractors and this account budget will be reviewed again at a later date. It was also agreed more information is needed for the workload of line 115.

Town Administrator Bourgeois explained line 390 reflects the tax maps being updated every other year.

Chair Swenson stated the software upgrade was supposed to be part of the contract with Vision. He asked Town Administrator Bourgeois to check the minutes to be sure this is covered.

Chair Swenson summarized they will postpone making a decision on account 4152 until a decision is made on the assessing contract.

Account 4550 – Library

Chair Swenson stated this account is being revisited because of a change that needs to be made to the salary lines of the 2015 Default Budget. He stated the default numbers that

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were reviewed did not have the increases that were obligated in 2014. Line 110 should be \$41,932 ; line 115 should be \$20,824; line 231 should be \$4,516; line 290 should be \$600 instead of \$300 as it is a known obligation; line 320 should go to \$4,084 and line 225 should be \$955. This gives a total of \$131,523 for the 2015 Default Budget. Chair Swenson stated the Default Budget initially approved was \$135,552.

Chair Swenson made a motion that the 2015 Default Budget for account 4550 be \$131,532. Selectman Bickford seconded the motion. Chair Swenson confirmed Ms. Crouse has verified these numbers. **Motion passed, 3-0.**

Mrs. Crouse noted that after she reviewed the numbers, there is a \$3,000 reduction in account 4140. After discussion, it was agreed the account would be adjusted.

Selectman Jarvis made a motion to supersede the previous motion for account 4140, Elections and Registrations, the 2015 Proposed Budget of \$125,346 with a 2015 Default Budget of \$132,431. Selectman Bickford seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.

Approval of Minutes

Postponed to the October 28, 2014 meeting.

Adjourn

Selectman Bickford made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Selectman Jarvis seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0. The meeting was adjourned at 3:58p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Riel, Recording Secretary