

B U D G E T C O M M I T T E E
P U B L I C M E E T I N G M I N U T E S
April 30th, 2008

A business meeting of the New Durham Budget Committee was called to order at 6:31 PM in the Town Hall located off Main Street.

Present:

Cecile Chase, Chairman Budget Committee
Ann Brady, Budget Committee member
David Curry, Budget Committee member
Cathy Orlowicz, Budget Committee member
Lois Parker, Budget Committee member
Dean Stimpson, Budget Committee Member
Peter Rhoades. Selectmen's Representative

Also Present:

April Whittaker, Town Administrator
Vickie Blackden, Financial Assistant

Approval of Minutes:

The Committee reviewed the minutes of the February 11th, 2008. **Motion Dean Stimpson, second Ann Brady to approve the minutes as amended, vote unanimous.**

Election of Officers:

Motion by Cathy Orlowicz, second Dean Stimpson, to accept Cecile Chase as Chairman, vote unanimous.

Motion Cathy Orlowicz, second Ann Brady, to accept David Curry as Vice Chairman, vote unanimous.

Motion David Curry, second Ann Brady, to accept Lois Parker as Budget Committee Representative to the CIP(Capital Improvement Plan) committee, vote unanimous.

Ethics Ordinance:

All committee members present received and acknowledged the Ethics Ordinance.

First Quarter Review ~ January 1 to March 31st, 2008:

April Whitaker stated that the price of gas is affecting the budget. The cost for gas was budgeted at \$2.75 a gallon and now we are looking at paying \$4.00 gallon. April is

meeting with department heads to review and receive their feedback as to areas where they might be able to cut back or put items off until a later date or time.

- ❑ White paper recycling revenue is at a premium high and that all departments are being encouraged to recycle, which again will be a topic of discussion at a Department Head meeting.
- ❑ Budget is over on the web site because there was a payment left over from last year.
- ❑ Town Report was 200 pages instead of the estimated 150 pages bid quote. Discussion ensued re what should be in such a report and TA Whittaker advised that guidelines are in place for what needs to be in a Town Report.
- ❑ Advertisement costs for Planning Board were increased due to the number and length of ordinances to be voted on at Town Meeting.
- ❑ Division of the Town Meeting Amendment to increase operating budget by \$40,000 in the Highway Department Budget – salt / sand, rental equipment, overtime, and fuel. Budget Committee were concerned that historical numbers would simply keep rolling; noted that \$40,000 was a special circumstance increase due to the harshness of this past winter. Financial Assistant Vickie Blackden advised of the computer coding system; and it's link to the general ledger as to why the \$40,000 could not be held as a separate account. Under the State's accounting system it must be placed against the line that will be debited, and that historical costs can be tracked using the existing coding system.
- ❑ Solid Waste fuel line is over ; concern noted that only 4 months into the new year and line depleted
- ❑ Again, noted that Library heating oil usage needs to be watched.
- ❑ TA Whittaker advised that the revenues appeared to be performing well and only noted that the Building permit revenue appeared low ~ FA Blackden advised that even though the print out was dated April 21; the building department had not yet submitted April's receipts.

Audit Review:

Close to DRA standards for reserving money.

Selectman and Board of Trustees have reviewed and updated their investment policies.

Ambulance runs are no longer an issue. Run sheets are now available for the Finance office to keep an audit trail against the billing service sheets. Also hardship applications need to meet the Town's welfare guidelines, and are not being written off as in the past.

Selectmen's Review: The following items were addressed:

- ❑ Town Audit has been rescheduled to June. Greater demands now being placed on communities in terms of internal controls. A full day and a half over and above our normal audit time will be dedicated to reviewing ND's internal controls that we must now comply with. We have managed to take away any cash transactions at the Transfer Station. Obviously in an ideal situation, we would like to see no cash handling at all, but we do recognize the need to centralize one cash handling station. The challenges are obvious from the perspective of change and convincing the employee that this is not an accusation, but compliance issue.

Marchs Pond Dam:

- ❑ On April 22nd 3 sets of construction drawings and contract documents for the Dam Improvements were forwarded to Bob Gates of DBU Construction, North Hampton, successful qualified bidder.
- ❑ During April, Bond Counsel has been contacted (David Barnes of Devine Millimet) and bond package materials prepared and sent out. Bond counsel is necessary irrespective of where the loan "lands" At this juncture the bond bank has the lowest rate of interest ~ banks are quoting 4.9% and 5.25% ~ last bond sale quoted at 4.2% and 4.55%

Fire House Addition:

- ❑ Draft Bid specs are drawn up together with detail drawings for a 1624 sq ft addition encompassing a training room, kitchen, 2 bathrooms with an unfinished attic for storage. Also included will be the generator hook up pad site ~ see attached plans.

Highway Department Truck

- ❑ Has been ordered with expected delivery of July 2008. The replaced vehicle will be sold as surplus equipment.

Highway Department External Fuel Pump Lines:

- ❑ Work has commenced re planning for compliance re our fuel pump lines at the highway department. Ron Gehl has secured more information as to

compliance standards from DES and he believes and is hopeful that compliance can be accomplished with less \$\$\$'s than originally thought.

Police Department

- ❑ New Cruiser has been ordered and expected date for delivery ~ mid May.
- ❑ Interviews scheduled for hiring of replacement officer on May 7th, 2008 ~ budget cut back to only have officer budgeted for 6 months -v- 12 months.

General Administration

- ❑ New Web Site up and running
- ❑ Job Descriptions on-going for salary review
- ❑ Alternate pricing sought for Property Liability Insurance
- ❑ Welfare Administration not as busy as expected given the economic downturn and fuel pricing. The policy of making folks sign up with the State first continues to make a difference.
- ❑ BOS has been approached about Senate Bill 2 Australian Ballot vote ~ if signatures mustered and passed, the budget cycle for 2010 would have to begin probably in July or August to make the new deadlines.
- ❑ Tax Billing now being prepared. Tax billing receipts from 2nd billing 2007 a little down, 1st billing 2008 will probably be a better indicator of financial distress.
- ❑ EMT classes now being undertaken at the Fire Station. ND has the potential of 6 new trained EMT's. Our current EMT pool is being called out to other communities ~ recognition of their expertise and professionalism.
- ❑ Street lighting being reviewed by PD for any redundancies
- ❑ New contract to be signed with Cocheco re stray dogs ~ not certain as to what \$\$\$'s will be involved as we have no past audit trail for review with the new level of fees.
- ❑ Paper and cardboard recycling reimbursements at all time high ~ need to maximize on this recycling. Another brainstorming session for town departments.

Budget Committee Review ~ Improvements to 2009 Budget Cycle:

Cecile Chase suggested that the reviews with the department heads start earlier to allow time for the Budget Committee and the BOS to meet with each department head. She also suggested that maybe the Budget Committee could meet with the department heads first. Peter Rhoades stated that he felt it was easier to get three people together to do a marathon session than it would be to get all the Budget Committee members together for longer sessions so he was understanding as to why the budget committee would like more timelines. Dean Stimpson stated that he felt the process should start earlier to allow more time, although stated that he felt the Budget Committee and Board do work well in recognizing the needs of each other during the time crunch for review.

David Curry requested that the department heads write up an executive summary formalizing success's/accomplishments from the prior year's budgets, and goals for their current year's budget presentations, and what they would like to be able to do in the following year.

April Whitaker asked if the Budget Committee would consider changing their meeting nights from Mondays because that is the same night as the BOS meeting, and she would like to afford the scheduling conflict. The committee will be meeting on Wednesday nights at 6:30 PM.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be held on July 16th at 6:30 PM.

Adjournment:

Motion by Lois Parker, second by Dean Stimpson, to adjourn, vote unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

*Respectfully submitted,
Laura Zuzgo*

***Next Meeting: 6:30 PM Wednesday, July 16th, 2008
at the Town Hall***