

**North Hampton Budget Committee
MINUTES
September 11, 2003**

Chairman Robbie Robinson called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and requested a moment of silence for all who suffered on this day two years ago.

Present: Paul Fitzgibbons, Sharon Halle, Homer Johnson, Larry Miller, Robbie Robinson, Peter Simmons, Lloyd Sullivan and Cynthia Swank

Mr. Robinson introduced the new recorder/administrator, Amy Kane.

1) Four candidates were introduced for the open position

Each candidate was given 5 minutes to describe background, experience and reasons for interest

Paul Thomas of Post Rd. presented a resume detailing his qualifications. He distributed graphs and spreadsheets on North Hampton School spending, enrollment and employee benefits. He emphasized his accounting and management skills.

Barry Donohoe of Walnut Rd. emphasized his tradition of civic involvement. He is a self-employed project manager in the construction industry with budget experience. He felt the budget committee should focus on line items.

Susan Halliday Smith of Woodland Rd. has been an estate executor, trust manager, and stock market investor. She is a nurse, has served on hospital boards and has her own consulting business. She said she was fiscally conservative.

Susan Spencer of Chapel Rd. has experience in retailing, wholesaling, and charity events. She recently completed a term as LBH commissioner and budget committee representative and said she would offer the board continuity.

Committee members asked questions to further determine candidate views of their roles, their interest in running for the position in March, and their experience on other committees.

A secret ballot was taken and the votes were as follows:
Smith, 3; Thomas, 2; Spencer, 2; Donohoe, 1

Susan Halliday Smith joined the members at the table. She will be a voting member when she is sworn in.

2) Consideration of August 5 minutes; changes were recorded; vote to accept the amended minutes passed 6-0, with Homer Johnson and Peter Simmons abstaining.

3) Discussion of fall meeting schedule, summary of main points

The 1st quarter budgets will be reviewed when the numbers are available, around the third week in October.

The committee will review the school budget and communicate expectations earlier this year.

The committee would like school enrollment and class-by-class student-teacher ratios.

Selectmen are requesting close to level funding from department heads this year, though this will be a challenge as employee benefits are showing double-digit increases.

Due to a continued poor economy, the committee supports this approach of minimal increase for the budgets of the town departments and the school, with justifications of line item expenses and any increase in discretionary accts. This will be communicated through the selectman representative to the town departments and the school board chair to the school.

Sharon Halle, School Board Chair, said she was concerned with the school's recent purchase of \$14,000 - \$16,000 worth of computer furniture. There was discussion of accountability.

Tentative meeting schedule:

Nov. 6 and 12: School Board budget

Nov. 13: Selectmen town budget (recreation, treasurer, tax collector, town clerk)

Nov. 18: Selectmen town budget (library, planning board, conservation commission)

Nov. 20: Selectmen town budget (fire dept)

Nov. 25: Selectmen town budget (police dept, highway dept)

Dec. 2 & 4: Open

At 9 p.m. Paul Fitzgibbons made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Lloyd Sullivan. The next meeting will be announced in October.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Kane
Recorder