

North Hampton Budget Committee  
MINUTES  
November 18, 2003

Chairman Robbie Robinson called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

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

1) Presentation of proposed municipal budget

Selectman Lloyd Sullivan introduced the new interim selectman Paul Cuetara and the new police lieutenant John Scippa then continued presentation of the proposed town budget for 2003-2004.

Road Agent Bob Strout assisted in presenting the Highway Department budget. The dept. is currently one employee short which has delayed road reclamation projects. HW salaries are up due to step increases and will increase more if the contract is voted in; health costs are projected to increase 16%. Recycling center salaries will increase from \$9.50 to \$10 per hour.

Other account increases include uniforms, physicals, equipment, gasoline, street signs (due to new federal requirements), recycling grant costs. The street light account was reduced. The contract for solid waste disposal extends to 2015; the account will remain the same at \$100,000 but costs may be reduced in the future if more recycling occurs. The town makes around \$8000 on recycling from the recycling center.

There will be a \$750,000 warrant article for a new highway dept. building at the town-owned Cherry Rd. site. A \$100,000 warrant article will fund removal of the old HW building behind town hall and reclaim the site.

Presentation of the proposed library budget was assisted by Director Pam Schwotzer, and Trustees of the Library Marcia Gagnon, Richard Goeselt and Linda Hillier. The main increase comes from one of the three full-time employees choosing the family medical plan. Salaries will increase 2.5% to be competitive with the local area; benefits are estimated to increase 20%. Program costs were cut 18%, maintenance is up 12%, media account was level funded, and there was an overall increase of 7.31%.

Police Chief Brian Page assisted in presenting the police department budget. Informed by an NHMA study on officer pay regionally and to aid retention, police salaries will increase. The dept. had been operating with 9 officers but with the hiring of Lt. Scippa is now fully staffed at the authorized 10 positions. There are also increases for equipment and weapons training. Police budget increases are the largest portion of the town's 11% proposed increase.

In other line items, it was suggested that the community newsletter be moved from the misc. account to the newsletter account. Software

support has been moved to the data processing account. The state mandated position of assistant assessor is being filled by a contracted company for roughly \$20,000 per year, but there is \$30,000 in the account in case a person must be hired. The planning board asked for \$10,000 in legal fees and it was added to the town attorney budget. Planning and zoning increases are due to the dues rider increase and increase in postage and newspaper advertisements; the costs are returned to the town as the applicants pay fees. Code enforcement costs increase with the addition of a part time enforcement officer and a car allowance for the building inspector.

The presentation of the municipal budget will conclude at the next meeting, Nov. 20.

## 2) Other

The chairman said he would meet with a representative from the Dept. of Revenue Administration concerning the school repurchase agreement and changing numbers in the budget column. He asked members to send him other questions for the DRA by email. Sharon Halle said school information that had been requested would be available by Dec. 2.

Larry Miller made a motion to readdress the vote of 9/11/03 in accordance with NHMA instructions he had received by email; Homer Johnson seconded. There was discussion about the propriety of the "secret ballot" method of voting to fill the budget committee position vacated by Trish Johnston. By a vote of 3-5 the motion failed; with HJ, LM, and CS voting FOR and LS, RR, PF, SH and PS voting AGAINST.

Peter Simmons made a motion that Susan Smith fill the position vacated by Trish Johnston until the next election, seconded by Sharon Halle. After discussion, Peter Simmons withdrew his motion.

Paul Fitzgibbons made a motion that committee members take their original ballots from 9/11 and ratify their selections by signing the ballots then turn them in to the chairman to be read aloud, seconded by Cynthia Swank. The motion passed 8-0. Results were: PF- Donohoe; HJ - Spencer; CS - Spencer; PS - Smith; SH - Thomas; LS - Smith; LM - Thomas; RR - Smith.

## 3) Consideration of minutes Nov. 12, Nov. 13

Motion to consider the Nov. 12 minutes by Sharon Halle, seconded by Homer Johnson; corrections were noted including attachment of school budget summary; minutes approved 7-0 with Larry Miller abstaining.

Motion to consider Nov. 13 minutes by Robbie Robinson, seconded by Lloyd Sullivan; corrections were noted; minutes approved 7-0 with Sharon Halle abstaining.

Motion to adjourn by Lloyd Sullivan, seconded by Homer Johnson. Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 20 at 7 p.m. The November 25 meeting has been canceled.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Kane  
Recorder  
(Approved 11/20/03)