

North Hampton Budget Committee
MINUTES
November 18, 2004

Chairman Robbie Robinson called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. in the M.H. conference room

Present: Terry Conklin, Paul Fitzgibbons, Don Gould, Larry Miller, Robbie Robinson, Peter Simmons, Sue Spencer

Absent: Mary Pat Dolan, Henry Marsh

1. Review proposed Town Clerk budget for FY 2005-06

Town Clerk Delores Chase presented the proposed town clerk and elections budget. Town clerk salary will increase \$600; deputy town clerk will receive an hourly pay increase of 50 cents, to \$17. Computer support line item (\$400) is new this year. Supplies line item of \$1000 will go in part for a new work station. Town clerk hours are 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Mon. through Fri. plus 6:30-8 p.m. Monday.

In elections, a laptop has been added to supervisors of the checklist. (Sue Spencer arrived at this point in the review.) Town clerk revenue last year was \$1,168,236.62, which goes into the town's general fund and cannot be spent without a vote on appropriations. As per state law, the town clerk keeps a portion of registrations - roughly \$30,000 in fees last year.

Don Gould said there is over \$2.5 million in the general fund currently. The fund is kept in reserve for emergencies, large capital investments and stabilizing the tax rate. North Hampton's general fund is the largest in the state and roughly 10% of the appraised valuation. (Larry Miller arrived at this time.) The committee requested a report on town clerk revenue.

2. Review proposed Tax Collector budget for FY 2005-06

Tax Collector Peggy Neves presented the budget for tax collector. Her salary will increase 5%; her deputy will get a raise from \$15 to \$15.50 per hour. Tax bills totaled \$11 million last year and there is a 90% collection rate, said Ms. Neves.

3. Review proposed Planning Board budget for FY 2005-06

Planning Board Chairman Phil Wilson presented the proposed budget for Planning and Zoning. Significant line item increases in postage and newspapers will be offset by fees, which do not show in the budget. Master Plan increased from \$1000 to \$8000 to pay the circuit rider to draft a new chapter required by a new state law and update 2 other municipal facilities chapters. The CIP will also be updated. Administrative support line item will add contract secretarial help as needed.

Don Gould suggested that backing out items that will be covered by fees would allow a more realistic look at the budget. Filing costs will increase. Space is running out and a records committee is exploring storage options.

4. Review proposed Recreation Department budget for FY 2005-06

Rec Dept. Program Coordinator Diane Wheeler and Rec Commission member Seth Hickey presented the proposed Rec. Dept. budget. Rec would like to add a second full-time position in order to expand current programs. Revenues would eventually increase to offset costs, and perhaps be self-sustaining based on fees in a couple of years. A rec survey has indicated residents would like more programs and extended summer rec camp. Summer rec brings in \$20,000 in offsetting revenue. Beach parking adds roughly \$11,000 per year to rec. Rec is working with NHS and may take over after school programs eventually.

There was discussion of cost per child of attending summer rec camp and a possible increase in fees. Peter Simmons expressed strong opposition to increasing costs in order to keep rec programs affordable for as many families as possible. Diane Wheeler noted that scholarships were available confidentially and no child was ever turned away. There was discussion of that process.

The rec dept is working with selectmen to relocate to Old Town Hall. It will become a community center where programs are offered. Renovation will be via grants and volunteer work.

5. Review draft minutes from 11/17/04 budget committee meeting

Don Gould made a motion to accept the minutes as written; second by Paul Fitzgibbons. Unanimous by those present; Larry Miller and Sue Spencer abstained as they had been absent.

Motion to adjourn by Don Gould, seconded by Sue Spencer. Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Kane
Recording Secretary

(Minutes were approved by the budget committee 12-01-04.)