

**Minutes**  
**Nottingham Budget Committee Meeting**  
**December 5, 2013**

**Members Present:** Chet Batchelder, Anthony Dumas, Korey Ferland, Michael Koester, Jason Marcotte, Jackie Snow, Jeff Wheeler, Mark Carpenter – BOS Representative, Peter Perron – School Board Representative

**Excused Absences:** Donna Danis, James O'Brien,

**Other in Attendance:** Secretary Dawn Wirkkala, Town Administrator Charlie Brown, Selectman Mary Bonser, Selectman Chair Hal Rafter, Jaye Vilchock, Sandra Vilchock

Chair Batchelder called the meeting to order and introductions were completed.

**Approval of Minutes**

**Motion:** by Mr. Perron, second by Mr. Dumas to approve the November 14, 2013 minutes as written.

**Vote:** 8 – 0 in favor

**Motion:** by Mr. Carpenter, second by Mr. Perron to approve the November 14, 2013 minutes as amended.

**Vote:** 8 – 0 in favor

**TOWN DEPARTMENT REVIEW:**

**7:15 pm Fire Department:** Chief Vilchock reviewed the Fire Department and Ambulance budget information on a line by line basis.

Salaries increased the 2% COLA and a 1% merit increase for Fire Fighter positions number one and two with an additional change for Fire Fighter number three who is moving from a probationary position to regular full time; the total amount has not been reviewed by the Selectmen and may change. The Part-time salary line was reduced.

Service Contracts are increased for the copier maintenance and a new reporting software allowing staff more options to enter information required for reporting purposes and prevent duplication of having to write information two times.

Chief Vilchock requested an increase in the stipend amount of \$5,000.00 and reviewed the process of how volunteers earn a stipend; a point system for providing different services and attending all required trainings and meetings. The annual total number of points earned by those eligible to receive them is added together at the end of the year. The total points are then divided by the total stipend amount to establish a per point dollar value, which is then multiplied to the total points earned by each person calculating how much of the stipend each will receive. The increase is to help provide further incentive to retain volunteers, which becomes harder and harder to do because of life and family circumstances.

Breathing Apparatus increased \$2,500.00 because of a change in the tax amount due on the Self-contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Tax, required five-year bottle testing and general bi-annual apparatus testing.

Dues increased by \$230.00 and include regular membership payments and a new membership to the International Assoc of Fire Chiefs, providing additional access to training information.

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Publications increased \$600.00 with a change in the amount due for some of the received publications and the annual purchase of NFPA Codes and NH EMS Protocol Books.

Vaccinations and Testing has increased by \$6,450.00 and will provide all full time and volunteer staff updated Hepatitis B, Tetanus, and tuberculosis vaccinations. Department vaccinations have not taken place since 1998 and all members are receiving them to eliminate picking and choosing who should; all members are equally important.

Vehicle Maintenance has increased \$1,000.00 to pay for complete testing of hoses, which hasn't always been completed in the past because of down time of the vehicles. Testing will be coordinated with other towns for better efficiency and a faster testing process.

Chief Vilchok stated he is not seeking replacement of a new passenger car, which is typically an exchange with an outgoing Police Department vehicle; he would like to receive the newer Explorer when it is replaced in approximately three years.

Hydrant Maintenance is increasing by an estimated \$8,100 to repair the PVC Deerfield Road hydrant which has had trouble with recent testing. The Highway Department will assist in the replacement to reduce the overall cost; which will cost about half the amount of a private company. Chair Batchelder asked about the Impact Fees being used to pay for the repairs and replacement and Mr. Brown agreed to check into the ability of using the fees.

Telephone expenses increased by \$550.00 and include a new smart phone for the Fire Chief which increases communication methods and pays for a total of four department phones.

There were decreases or level funding in the Full Time Overtime Salary, Part Time Salary, Chief's Salary, Postage, Medical Supplies, Training, Protective Gear, Uniforms/Cleaning, Office Supplies, Equipment/Office, Supplies/Equipment, Gasoline/Diesel, Lease/Purchase, Equipment Maintenance, Radio/Maintenance, Internet, Miscellaneous, Hazardous Material, and Forest Fire Grant accounts.

Mr. Ferland asked about the expense for vaccinations. Mr. Carpenter indicated the increase is a one time increase, which won't be seen again for many years.

Chief Vilchok reviewed the budget amounts for the Ambulance Account on a line by line basis. The account is managed carefully and occasionally requires general fund monies, but very rarely. Replacement of the ambulance takes place approximately every three to four years, a new ambulance is proposed for 2017 and the funds are raised by the annual \$50,000.00 capital reserve fund account. Ambulance billing increased by \$400.00 which is closer to the actual expenditures and there is a charge of an estimated 7% of the total amounts collected, and not the amount billed.

Chief Vilchok stated the Ambulance account is funded with off setting revenues earned from billing of ambulance related calls. The 2013 Ambulance and Defibrillator expenses came in below the proposed expenditures.

Mr. Dumas asked about a possible maintenance plan for the Stryker Cot. Chief Vilchok stated the plan was offered but was expensive and the department did not purchase it. The cot has held up well and the restoration costs are actually less expensive than the plan.

Discussion took place about the proposed dry hydrant repairs in the regular Fire Department budget and the proposed Expendable Trust Fund for Cisterns and Dry Hydrants. The Selectmen indicated they remain a little undecided about keeping the account and the amount of funding for it.

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Chair Batchelder thanked Chief Vilchok for the information and attending.

**8:15 pm Recycle Department:** Mr. Cinfo reviewed his budget on a line by line basis.

Salaries increased by the 2% COLA for both the supervisor and additional part-time staff. Mr. Carpenter stated additional salary funds are being requested to give the Supervisor and one staff member an additional 4 hours per week for material processing time but the Selectmen have not decided how to precede with the request.

Safety Equipment is increased to purchase safety vests to more easily identify staff. Construction is increased to build 2 new pads for the dumpsters to prevent damage to the road. Education is also slightly increased.

Equipment is being increased by \$5,000.00 for the purchase of two new storage trailers, providing needed storage and the ability to further separate #2 plastics for a possible increase in revenue.

Supplies/Equipment/Stickers amount is being increased to provide annual dump stickers. Mr. Carpenter stated the new stickers will cost \$5.00 and provide off setting revenue for the purchase in addition to supporting materials about the Recycle Center. Mr. Brown stated the sticker will also be used for use at the Town Beach.

Mr. Brown reminded committee members building maintenance and utility services for all town buildings are included in the general town budget, in the Town Hall and Other Buildings (THOB) account. Mr. Carpenter stated the Selectmen requested two new lines in the CIP for possible replacement of the Recycle Center building and upgrading equipment.

**8:30 pm Recreation Department:** Ms. Horvath reviewed the Recreation budget on a line by line basis.

Salary has increased with the COLA, but the increase is also to raise the starting salary level for the Recreation Assistant hopefully providing a more experience pool of candidates.

The majority of the other recreation account lines were level funded and a decrease in the Equipment line, which included a new computer in 2013.

Mr. Carpenter stated there is a review of additional security measures that will take place at the beach. Ms. Horvath stated review also continues for available options for more consistent communication service with the Life Guards at the beach. There are more recent security issues at the beach; a port a potty was flipped for the first time ever and damage to beach equipment has also taken place. Ms. Horvath stated the gate is locked but there have been instances where the gate chain and/or lock have been cut; the lock is more expensive to replace as 10 keys are needed.

Chair Batchelder asked about the Recreation Revolving account. Ms. Horvath reviewed the three Recreation Revolving accounts with amounts from October. The regular Recreation Revolving fund has \$137, 227.00, the Playground Fund has \$11,418.00, and the Nottingham Theater Fund has \$4,875.00.

Ms. Horvath stated the fund should contain a balance that will allow Recreation to start new programs as needed and continue helping to pay for existing programs. Some people believe there is a lot of money in the account; it has taken several years to build that balance. Ms. Horvath stated the funds can be expended on Capital Improvements, which could help start work on some of the

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items from the previously established 10 year plan or help fund changes with the Marston Farm project.

Chair Batchelder asked about the possible improvements to the existing ball fields. Ms. Horvath stated some steps have been taken to improve the fields, including new top soil and a lot of grass seed. However, a determination has been made that the field has poor quality soil with the flooding and without a significant amount of funding an increase in quality isn't expected anytime soon.

Mr. Marcotte asked about the Selectmen philosophy of the funding for the revolving account. Mr. Carpenter stated the Selectmen feel the funds are being appropriately retained and spent. The Selectmen will discuss the possibility of using some of the funds to help with the Marston Farm and if the fields should be worked on here or planned for at Marston.

Mr. Marcotte asked if the Selectmen support work on the Marston Farm. Mr. Carpenter stated absolutely, building demolition is being recommended in the 2014 budget with a warrant article and action will continue in 2014 to move forward with planning development teams and proposing renovations between student groups and community citizens.

Ms. Snow stated some of the funds from the revolving account could be used to build new ball fields at Marston and there was general agreement. Ms. Horvath stated she would not want the revolving account to be any lower than \$30,000.00 to maintain current programming efforts.

Discussion took place about the Marston Farm property including a size of a little over 45 acres, no longer having a requirement for conservation easement despite a continued commitment by the Town to keep some lands, and the property remaining under Town ownership in perpetuity. Mr. Carpenter stated the hope for Marston Farm is to make it a community property that is significantly used.

Mr. Dumas asked about fire training by burning the buildings. It was stated the property can't be burned, must be torn down because of possible contamination; Mr. Brown stated DES requirements limit what can be done.

Mr. Marcotte asked if the revenue from the new Recycle Center stickers would be included in the 2015 budget. Mr. Carpenter stated revenues would be provided and Mr. Brown clarified revenues are tracked in a separate system but can be provided. Mr. Koester asked if there would be separation of identifying those who use the center sticker for the beach versus the Recycle Center. Mr. Carpenter stated the count will be to estimate the number of users, versus getting accurate counts and general discussion took place about the stickers, counts for use of the both the Recycle Center and Town Beach.

**CIP Committee Update:** Mr. Perron reviewed the changes to the Capital Improvement Plan; which includes more changes to existing items than new additions. Bonded items include further clarification regarding the amounts proposed, the Recycle Center has two new lines, the Community Center has a new line for renovation/repair of the back portion of the building, lines for the Fire Department includes level funding of the capital reserve fund and the requested new boat.

Mr. Perron stated the beginning years in the report provide more accurate information; information in the ending years are, in most cases, is complete estimates.

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Mr. Perron reviewed information from the Highway Department changes annually, is an estimate because different roads may need repairs faster than expected and other might not need repairs as quickly, the estimate for shim and seal coat supplies can change but is often increased or scaled back depending on the estimated expenses. The school includes athletic fields redesign continues to be reviewed, sprinkler system expense reduced and construction/renovation remains at 2019 with the expectation of bonding the total amount. Mr. Carpenter asked about the two separate lines for roof repairs and Mr. Perron stated one is for the gym roof and the other for the main school roof.

A big change to the report was to include possible bond amounts for plans to differentiate between bonding versus the funds being raised by taxation, to provide an overall goal of what will be needed for capital improvements. The list divides out the needs over several years instead of lumping everything all together in one year; making it more financially feasible.

Mr. Wheeler asked about the softball/tee ball fields listing for Recreation and Mr. Perron stated the Recreation items come directly from the proposed 10 Year Recreation Plan. Ms. Bonser stated the CIP committee only documents and calculates what is being requested. Mr. Carpenter stated the Recreation 10 Year Plan was established prior to acquisition of the Marston Farm property which will mean changes.

Chair Batchelder asked if the amounts in the 2014 CIP lines were reflected in the applicable lines of the 2014 proposed budget. Mr. Carpenter stated he believes the Highway information is correct and Ms. Bonser stated some items are and some are estimates. Mr. Perron stated the school items are, except for the new computer equipment which is still under discussion. Mr. Perron stated it would be an interesting project to complete a historical comparison review of CIP projects to the actual budget.

Mr. Dumas asked about renovation of the school. Mr. Perron stated it was moved to 2019. Mr. Dumas asked about how many years the renovation has been classed as a category 3. Mr. Perron stated it is a determination from the CIP committee. Ms. Bonser stated a category 3 is an idea without concrete plan set.

Mr. Dumas asked about the school renovation plans and the current space needs. Mr. Perron stated the CIP Committee does not determine the importance of each individual project, information is provided by the people providing the requested information; the school renovation plan vote failed by a 2/3 vote when it needed a 2/3 vote to pass. Mr. Carpenter stated discussion should include realistic and less expensive alternatives to provide the requested additional space. Mr. Perron stated the school board is considering many space alternatives, including the possibility of tuitioning middle school students to the new Barrington school.

There was agreement that discussion about school space issues would be better held with the school board.

**SCHOOL BUDGET REVIEW:** Mr. Perron stated the School Board finalized some budget decisions, continued cleaning up and clarifying ed up some lines, and decided to add the curriculum coordinator position, as there is the appearance that the schools that do well have a curriculum coordinator and those that don't won't do as well. This position will also help to manage the high school student population, when it hasn't been before. This position eliminates the requested third reading specialist, based on a review of surrounding school and their number of specialist and testing results.

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Mr. Perron stated the school board decided to add additional funds to the food services account to prevent a negative balance and the need for a special meeting to transfer funds. The Business Administrator will review the total amount actually expended over the prior three years to determine the actual amount that should be funded. Discussion took place about possible food service options the School Board is considering, revenue funding, subsidies and alternatives to fund the program.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** Chair Batchelder asked about the Moderator budget and if the Selectmen have been able to discuss it in detail. Mr. Carpenter and Mr. Brown indicated limited discussion has been held. Mr. Ferland asked how the salary change is being calculated. Mr. Brown stated it is changing from an annual stipend to an hourly wage. Mr. Carpenter stated part of the argument is that the Moderator didn't know how much time was required before she ran for the position; however not many people know how much time is going to be needed when they run for a Town Board.

Mr. Perron stated he had an interest in understanding how long it takes to become certified as a Moderator, and as of today he is now trained as a moderator. Training did discuss the use of a Deputy Moderator but all references indicate the position is needed when a municipality has multiple polling places, which Nottingham does not. The Moderator can also can elect a Moderator Pro-tem if they need a break.

Chair Batchelder stated the Town will review their budget at the January 23, 2014 meeting and requested a decision regarding the Moderator salary, in addition finalizing other budget information.

The next meeting is December 12. Ms. Wirkkala requested confirmation of the school budget public hearing dates.

**ROUNDTABLE:** There was no discussion during roundtable.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Having no further business,

9:48 PM **Motion:** by Mr. Dumas, second by Mr. Marcotte.

**Vote:** 9 – 0 in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Wirkkala