



***Town of Plaistow ♦ Budget Committee***  
*145 Main Street ♦ Plaistow ♦ NH ♦ 03865*

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**DRAFT MINUTES:**

**DATE:** Tuesday, September 22, 2009

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:** 6:37 pm

**PRESENT:** Kristin Lewis Savage – Chair  
Normand Bouchard, Michele Conte, Gayle Hamel,  
Tricia Holt, Dan Hooper, Joyce Ingerson, Neal Morin,  
Ben Sadewicz, John Sherman, Catherine Willis

**EXCUSED:** Ron Hayes, Martha Sumner – Vice Chair

Additional Attendees: Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager; Lori Sadewicz, Finance Director;  
Rosemarie Bayek, Tax Collector; Nancy Bolduc, Deputy Town Clerk; Selwa Moured, Assessing  
Clerk.

**AGENDA:**

**BUDGET PRESENTATIONS**

**4550 - Library**

C. Willis stepped down as Member of the Budget Committee to be presenter of the Library Budget.

Jenifer Kiarsis, Trustee, Cathy Willis, Treasurer and Laurie Houlihan, Library Director were present for the Library Budget presentation.

J. Kiarsis discussed Library updates regarding program participation, face book, twitter, computer usage, online services, and increasing items. She publicly thanked Laurie Houlihan and her staff for their hard work.

C. Willis presented Library Budget. She stated the gross amount is \$474,494; net from taxation is \$437,094 and estimated expenditures from library trust funds is \$37,500. Library budget is level funded other than the Landscaping line which has an increase of \$91 and the Repairs/Maintenance line which is increased by \$5,000. The Salary Schedule for 2010 is the same salary schedule presented for 2009. Library salaries and wages were held at the 2008 level. No wage increases were given in 2009. The Social Security/Medicare and Retirement is decreased based on the actual salaries. Workers Comp/Unemployment, Materials, Supplies for

operations and janitorial use, Continuing Education, Public Activities which includes Museum Passes to 9 Museums, Professional Dues, Telephone, Postage, Technology, Bookkeeping, Legal and Liability are level funded. Miscellaneous is zero. Lines needing to be adjusted as information is received include health benefits, electric, gas, building insurance and janitor service. Library Trust Funds will assist the Materials and Technology line.

Repairs/Maintenance asking for increase based on what has been spent in the past. This year is budgeted for \$12,000 but spent \$26,000 last year and \$15,370 in 2007; not expecting any repeat expenditures just preparing for upcoming expenses due to the aging building. Landscaping is increased by \$91 due to current pricing.

K. Lewis Savage inquired if there was a contract with Lavalley/Greenworld.

C. Willis noted there was a contract with Lavalley for 3 years (2009-2011) however there is no contract with Greenworld.

J. Sherman inquired about page 2 not showing 2009 budgeted amount.

C. Willis discussed it not showing because it is not there.

J. Sherman requested a revised sheet to be supplied to all members.

L. Houlihan verbally explained breakdown: Fines \$15,000; Memorial \$500; Special Projects \$20,000; and Interest \$2,800 for a Total of \$38,300.

J. Sherman inquired if there was anything the Town could do jointly to help save on the Library Budget for example: landscaping.

C. Willis noted that she hadn't thought about it. She discussed HVAC system and noted she spoke to the HVAC person who did the Town but he wasn't interested. If there is something that the Library could do to reduce costs, they would be willing to combine with the Town.

K. Lewis Savage discussed combining IT issues.

***Motion by D. Hooper to take the Plaistow Library Budget under consideration for a Total Gross Amount of \$474,594 and a Net of \$437,094.***

***2nd by J. Ingerson.***

***Vote: 9-0-2.***

***Abstain: C. Willis and K. Lewis Savage.***

K. Lewis Savage noted the upcoming budgets are in a different format, a Town format that Sean is working on and it is a work in progress.

S. Fitzgerald discussed being familiar with last year's format for the budget, the goal is to give everyone the most amount of information on one piece of paper. He compared both 8.5 x 11 sheet to a 11 x 17 sheet of paper and all the wording and information that both equally provided.

He discussed presenting a budget booklet with all budgets and reducing administrative time and confusion.

K. Lewis Savage discussed size of prints, date stamp which she noted is needed on all printed copies, and the note column which needed more of an explanation to help newcomers understand the line items presented.

J. Sherman suggested changing the columns so there was less white space. He liked 8.5 x 11; deleting cents and making the numbers whole dollars and noted the Notes need to be enhanced.

#### **4150 - Tax Collector**

R. Bayek discussed Part Time Position and Tax Collector Salary noting she was not going to address because she has nothing to do with salaries and Part Time Employee works 520 hours.

J. Sherman suggested adjusting the note column.

R. Bayek discussed Mortgage Research, sending certified letters and this year going with 100 liens at \$25 each.

J. Sherman discussed last year's note and suggested using it.

R. Bayek discussed Telephone, Data Processing which is BMSI support system and not knowing what it is going to be next year; Mailing Service is to print tax bills; Training is down because Deputy is shared with Town Clerk so they switch off the charge for training each year; Dues are the same; Office Supplies staying same as last year; Postage has gone up and includes mailing of the bills and went up because postage had gone up; Mileage Reimbursement has gone down because she did not go to Balsalms for training and the Town Clerk and her share the bank runs to reduce the mileage expense; Record Registry of Deeds is for recording liens and deeds; and Research Unknown TC Deeds is for property in Town that does not get taxed because they do not know who owns it.

J. Sherman discussed project to try to catch up on owners unknown and doing a few each year; continuing to budget for but when you are in tough financial times it is really hard to justify because it is hard to get the money back and they are not high value pieces.

D. Hooper inquired about electronic delivery of bills and suggested bringing this information up to the Tax Association.

***Motion by M. Conte to take into consideration the Tax Collector Budget for \$49,826.***

***2nd by C. Willis.***

***Vote 10-0-1.***

J. Sherman discussed voting no because BOS took a different bottom number of \$49,526 into consideration but accepted this increase.

***Abstain: K. Lewis Savage.***

#### **4150 - Assessing**

S. Fitzgerald discussed change in contract for Assessor Agent so Assessor's Salary/Contract has been removed; line was deleted for Assessor; and Assessing Office Clerk and Training had been level funded.

D. Hooper discussed being home when the Assessors came by this year and noted they were very professional, they had a badge, explained who they were, and were very quick, in and out.

S. Fitzgerald discussed Mapping (Tax Map Updates) and Data Processing (Arc View Software).

B. Sadewicz inquired about the licensing software.

S. Fitzgerald discussed Dues level funded; Office Supplies are down, looking at different trends and expenditures; Postage level funded; Books and Periodicals increased slightly for a bottom line of \$138,283.

J. Sherman discussed recommendation by Assessing Agent regarding the residential property values. He discussed keeping with Assessing Agent's recommendation, the Town has adjusted assessed values of properties, net effect is residential has gone down, but commercial and industrial stayed level. The net effect of the tax burden has shifted from residential to commercial and industrial.

J. Ingerson discussed tax rate staying the same.

S. Fitzgerald discussed equalization.

J. Sherman discussed traditionally they had very good results from Assessor's Agent regarding accuracy on assessments and the Tax Rate is set in late September.

S. Moured noted property values dropped roughly 15-18% (estimated by Marybeth at 17-17.5%).

***Motion by D. Hooper to take into consideration the Assessing Budget in the amount of \$138,283.***

***2nd by M. Conte.***

***Vote 10-0-1.***

***Abstain: K. Lewis Savage.***

#### **4150 – Finance**

S. Fitzgerald discussed Salaries; Data Processing increase; Training increased because of bringing some LGC training aspects to Town Hall; Office Supplies, Mileage and Professional Audit is level funded for a total bottom line of \$72,478.

***Motion by D. Hooper to recommend taking into consideration the Finance Budget for the amount of \$72,478.***

***2nd by N. Bouchard.***

***Vote 10-0-1.***

#### **4150 - Treasure/Trustee/BudCom**

S. Fitzgerald discussed Treasurer's Salary which is level funded at \$6,844; Budget Committee Secretary had a decrease of \$442 due to calculation of less meetings; Trustees Mileage was based on past utility which dropped by \$175 and Budget committee expenses is level funded at \$100 for a total Bottom line of \$8,114.

***Motion by B. Sadewicz to take into consideration the Treasurer/Trustee/BudCom budget for the amount of \$ 8,114.***

***2nd by N. Morin.***

***Vote 10-0-1.***

***Abstain: K. Lewis Savage.***

J. Sherman requested to have the number of hours and meetings listed in the notes section for the Budget Committee Clerk.

#### **4711 - Debt (Interest/TAN/Principal)**

S. Fitzgerald noted that the Town paid off the last bond payment and no longer is carrying the principal on the debt. He discussed the budgeted amount of \$26,000 for interest for a Tax Anticipation Note and requested Total for Debt Service at \$26,000.

K. Lewis Savage noted the account number is incorrect for long term bonds.

D. Hooper inquired if the significant decrease with bond being paid off will help surplus.

J. Sherman noted he doesn't think it will turn into surplus in these economic times.

D. Hooper and J. Sherman discussed economic times; surplus; debt going down; reduction in budget which is good; Town hurting for revenue; brief review of revenues which are down; cash flow and DRA guidelines.

***Motion by N. Morin to take into consideration the Debt (Interest/TAN/Principal) Budget in the amount of \$26,000.***

***2nd by C. Willis.***

***Vote 10-0-1.***

***Abstain: K. Lewis Savage.***

J. Sherman discussed the money set aside to put into Capital Reserve Accounts cannot be considered as Revenue because when the Town talks to DRA about their situation, that money does not count in DRA's eyes.

#### **Revenue**

S. Fitzgerald discussed Revised Estimated Revenues (MS-4) that needs to be completed. He noted he added a couple of columns to the form and suggests review this again in 4-6 weeks.

D. Hooper inquired an explanation of the columns.

S. Fitzgerald noted the 2nd 2008 column is from the MS4 Report submitted to DRA. The first 2008 is Actual and the 2nd 2008 is Budgeted. He discussed downward adjustment; formatting changes; Licenses, Permits and Fees; Motor Vehicle Permit Fees noting we will not hit the targeted number and discussed Cash for Clunkers, and a fair conservative number. He noted Building Permits had a significant drop in the last few years, people have put off projects; Health Licenses typically take in \$7,800 to \$10,000 which those numbers are actually rolled into the overall License and Permit Fees and we have taken in year-to-date \$42,256 however next year we think \$40,000 is a reasonable number.

Board discussed Actual and Budget amounts.

S. Fitzgerald discussed Shared Revenues, Court House, Other Governments, projections, and amounts taken in.

L. Sadewicz discussed sitting down with DRA and setting the Tax Rate.

J. Ingerson requested breakdown of descriptions for clarification and understanding.

J. Sherman requested breakdown of numbers and clarification on column headings.

S. Fitzgerald discussed Income from Departments (Zoning, Planning and Recreation) and Sale of Municipal Property which is for lease on the cell tower. Other is a number of accounts: Reimbursements on Health Insurance, Police agreement at Wal-Mart, Charge offs and reimbursements; and \$380,000 was transferred into the Town budget from Capital Reserve for items such as ladder truck as a Warrant Article; Offsetting revenues and Net decrease in Revenues.

K. Lewis Savage inquired to John if the BOS has any idea or any talks regarding overall direction of budget.

J. Sherman discussed going through process regarding presentation of budgets, getting an overall picture to see where that may take us, then making adjustments accordingly and then going back to the Town Manager and requesting cuts if needed.

K. Lewis Savage suggested getting BMSI out to everyone.

Board members discussed upcoming meetings/schedule and handouts.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

No old business discussed.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

K. Lewis Savage discussed Friends of Rec's Fall Festival this Saturday from 2-6 on the Town Hall Green. It is geared to kids of all ages; there will be entertainment, food, and music. This is something to give back to community. Events are free, charge for food, and people are welcome to bring donations for the Food Pantry.

D. Hooper inquired if the Town Hall could be made into a wireless hotspot.

S. Fitzgerald noted that it may be something that could happen however he is concerned with the Town security and intranet security.

Meeting adjourned at 9:12 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Audrey DeProspero