



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

PLAISTOW BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES:

DATE: Tuesday, November 10, 2009

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 6:36 p.m.

PRESENT: Kristin Lewis Savage – Chair, Martha Sumner – Vice Chair, Normand Bouchard, Michele Conte, Ronald Hayes, Tricia Holt, Joyce Ingerson, Ben Sadewicz, Gayle Hamel, Dan Hooper, Catherine Willis, and John Sherman, Selectmen Rep.

EXCUSED: Neal Morin

Additional Attendees: Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager, Lori Sadewicz, Finance Director, Carli Malette, Recreation Director, Dennise Horrocks, Health Officer

MINUTES:

Motion by M. Sumner to approve the Minutes of October 20, 2009 as written.

2nd by T. Holt.

Vote 8-0-4.

Abstain: G. Hamel, C. Willis, and D. Hooper, K. Lewis Savage.

Motion Passes.

AGENDA:

BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

Health Department – Dennise Horrocks, Health Officer

D. Horrocks introduced herself to the Budget Committee and noted the summary of statistics for 2009: There are 58 licensed food establishments; 18 temporary food establishments (licensed); 7 licensed child care centers; and 3 public schools. She noted she receives numerous phone calls on many health related issues as well as a number of nuisance complaints. She described each line item and the amount proposed. Permanent positions – line decreased due to the elimination of the 53rd week. Staff flu shots – remained unchanged. Water testing – line decreased slightly. Town currently does compliance sampling for the Town Hall, Safety Complex and PARC, as well as routine testing for Library, Smith Field and Highway Garage. Mosquito Control – remained unchanged. Total amount budgeted was comprised of three components: larvicing, surveillance and emergency adulticiding. Compensation was based upon the work performed, and not lump sum payment. Based upon the surveillance data, there was not a need to do emergency adulticiding, so the money budgeted would not be spent.

(Larviciding was \$25,000, surveillance was \$8,000, and emergency adulticiding was \$6,000. The State offers financial assistance for mosquito control activities for those communities with a State approved plan, a declared public health threat, and a completed application, 25% of eligible expenses are covered. The Town of Plaistow had applied for \$6,528, based on the funds available. In 2008, Plaistow applied for \$6,275 and received \$2,761, and in 2007, Plaistow applied for and received \$8,552. Dennise reviewed the 2009 Mosquito Control Program end of the year statistics for EEE (State and Local).

M. Sumner asked if the Town was still required to send dead birds in to the State.

D. Horrocks indicated that they did not. She provided an update on the seasonal and H1N1 influenzas and noted pregnant women, health care workers and emergency responders will receive the H1N1 vaccinations first, children 6 months to 18 years of age and those with chronic medical conditions putting them at higher risk are also a priority. Then there possibly would be public vaccination clinics, hopefully within a few months.

C. Willis inquired as to whether there are any side effects from the vaccine.

D. Horrocks indicated she was not aware of any.

D. Hooper brought up the fact that many Towns our size do not have a full-time health officer/health department, but it was commendable that Plaistow had the foresight to hire a person.

J. Sherman added that because of Plaistow's location and type of Town, it had been very important for Plaistow to keep up. Plaistow was one of the first Towns in the region to recognize mosquito problems, but there are now more communities vying for the smaller pool of financial assistance.

S. Fitzgerald stated that Dennise Horrocks was indeed a leader for the area and having her expertise has helped us be a tremendous resource to not only Plaistow, but other communities as well.

Motion by M. Sumner to take the Health Department Budget under advisement in the amount of \$79,232.00.

2nd by D. Hooper.

Vote was 11-0-1.

Abstain: K. Lewis Savage

Motion passes.

**Recreation Department – Carli Malette, Recreation Director/Greg Mason,
Chairman of the Recreation Commission**

K. Lewis Savage noted she would be abstaining from the vote due to the fact she was a member of the Recreation Commission.

C. Malette cited the increased participation in all of the Recreation Department events over the years. This year's Summer Recreation had a total of 103 participants a week, and there were many who were signed up for the entire 6 week program. There enrollment for baseball and softball was 307 and Senior activities, particularly the information sessions have been extremely well attended. She reviewed the budget line by line. Full-time Position went down due to the 53rd week; Part-time and Over-time stayed the same; Uniforms were down by \$221.00; Telephone went down \$160.00; Electric was up \$226.00; and Training, Recreation Supplies, Postage and Recreation Maintenance lines are the same.

Discussion ensued regarding the inclusion of fertilizer in an overall budget, not this budget.

S. Fitzgerald noted it may be included in the Highway Department budget.

K. Lewis Savage suggested it go into the Government Buildings line. She didn't think of this as a Highway Department activity. The reason for keeping it in the Recreation Department budget was so they would have an idea of how much it costs to run each department.

S. Fitzgerald noted he could provide a report with a specific breakdown of fertilizer used and where.

N. Bouchard asked about the overtime line and if it needed to be the same next year if we are not spending it at the proposed level this year.

S. Fitzgerald responded that the Town had been on a tight budget this year and that overtime had been kept to a minimum.

N. Bouchard asked if this could be done again next year.

G. Mason added it was important to have these monies available to tap into if it was needed.

C. Malette discussed Equipment Maintenance and noted she hoped to encumber some of this year's money.

M. Conte asked about grounds keeping and why there was no money specified for mowing.

S. Fitzgerald noted this line included picnic tables, portable toilets, supplies and facility related equipment for the recreation "campus." He noted that landscaping/mowing was not in this budget, but rather in the Highway Department budget.

J. Sherman indicated it would be nice to have a table showing the comparison of costs (hiring a company to do landscaping/mowing versus having the Highway Department Staff doing it).

N. Bouchard expressed his desire to have the line “Other Maintenance” defined. What the \$52,800 was for.

K. Lewis Savage suggested the word “mowing” be removed and inquired as to whether the Town needed to have staff be certified in order to apply fertilizer.

S. Fitzgerald said that it would be handled by experienced staff.

C. Willis inquired about the telephone line.

C. Malette noted there would be no more poles added this year. She commended the Town’s Highway Department Staff for the excellent job they did taking care of the fields.

A discussion ensued regarding the prior contract the Town had for mowing, etc...

C. Malette noted it was likely the Town was saving about \$20,000 to \$30,000 a year by having the Highway Department conduct the work. She noted Mileage line was down by \$250.00. Recreation Program line was staying the same. They needed to purchase additional replacement equipment. The Summer Recreation Transportation line item was the same. Recreation Community Trips line was proposed to be the same. She noted they were not really overrunning the cost as shown in the spreadsheet. The Recreation Community Transportation line was down by \$1,440.00. Plaistow Pride Day has \$1.00 assigned to it. She noted they are looking to rejuvenate this activity. Recreation Concerts were up by \$700.00 due to the addition of another concert. Senior Trips and Senior Transportation stayed the same. Recreation Special Events line was up for next year. Baseball Leagues line was up \$113.00. Little League line was up \$548.00 due to the need for replacement equipment.

J. Ingerson inquired about the fees that are received for the various programs and where this money goes.

C. Malette noted it went into certain lines for each activity to offset the general fund.

K. Lewis Savage asked if there was a revenue sheet available.

There was no revenue sheet available.

M. Sumner explained there was a revolving fund for community trips and they were self supported. This was a separate line from the other revenue lines.

C. Malette noted Recreation Softball line was up \$500.00 due to the need for equipment.

C. Willis inquired about the definition of “Youth Disbursements” which was level funded.

C. Malette noted these were events the Town doesn’t run. Miscellaneous Town Events, Umpire Fees and Holiday Events – Level funded.

K. Lewis Savage explained the application process was in order to assist organization attempt to keep costs for Plaistow participants low. Now the funds are awarded through the application process, no disbursements are given without the application being completed.

Motion by M. Conte to take the Recreation Department Budget in the amount of \$204,238 under advisement.

2nd by Joyce Ingerson.

Vote 11-0-1.

Abstain: K Lewis Savage.

Motion passes.

Human Services – Agencies – Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager

S. Fitzgerald presented this budget and noted it was primarily being level funded. The Town supports a number of agencies. There were multi-disciplinary needs by those who come to the Town Hall for assistance. He noted there are applications for every organization that was financially supported by the Town.

It was determined that it was not necessary for Sean to go through each and every organization, that only those that have changed need to be highlighted.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the efficacy of the organizations that the Town funds and what criteria was used to decide if they are warranted.

C. Willis explicitly asked if the clinics that were held at the Vic Geary Center are only for those with insurance and if there was a fee involved.

S. Fitzgerald and L. Sadewicz noted they will find out.

K. Lewis Savage explained there was a notebook containing all of the applications received from the organizations and that if any Budget Committee members were interested, they may go through it. Again, a lengthy discussion ensued regarding how the funding levels for each organization were determined and if they were “fair.”

D. Hooper expressed his belief that many of the organizations being supported should be closely scrutinized and determined if they were clearly justified.

S. Fitzgerald noted he would be willing to convene a meeting to review all of the organizations.

S. Fitzgerald noted the 25 hour a week position was currently vacant but he was looking to fill it.

K. Lewis Savage noted that Carrie Chooljian the Human Services Coordinator some years ago had done an excellent job for the Town by negotiating with the organizations and by being very “hands on.”

S. Fitzgerald indicated he had actually contacted Ms. Chooljian. Discussion ensued regarding whether this could be a position handled as a regional service. He noted that hiring someone specifically for Plaistow required that person to be able to not only conduct the Human Service activities, but some of the executive support services as well.

Another lengthy discussion ensued regarding how the costs for each of the social service agencies are quantified.

D. Hooper inquired if CART had applied this year.

They did not.

J. Sherman noted most of the agencies are funded at a level to provide them with the best possible assistance.

Noted was the organizations were initially approved at Town Meeting.

M. Conte asked if the Town needs to vote on an organization that no longer receives funding or if the funding levels change.

They do not. The Board of Selectmen can vote on these issues.

Motion by M. Sumner to take the Human Services Agencies budget in the amount of \$69,996.00 under advisement.

2nd by Tricia Holt.

Vote was 11-0-1.

Abstain: K. Lewis Savage.

Motion passes.

Human Services – Welfare Administration – Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager

Brief overview of the proposed budget was given by Sean Fitzgerald.

Motion by M. Sumner to take the Human Services Welfare Administration budget in the amount of \$840.00 under advisement.

2nd by B. Sadewicz.

Vote 11-0-1.

Abstain: K. Lewis Savage.

Motion passes.

Human Services – Direct Assistance – Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager

S. Fitzgerald noted the overall budget had been decreased due to the criteria for qualifications becoming more strict. The shelter and rent line had dropped by \$10,000.

M. Sumner noted that the words “Exeter and Hampton” should be replaced with “Unitil.”

D. Hooper asked Sean to expound on his opening remark regarding the fact that provision of assistance is mandatory.

S. Fitzgerald noted that statutorily, Towns are required to provide assistance.

J. Sherman further noted that if a resident (or non-resident) qualifies, they must provide assistance, no matter what the budget or residency.

Motion by M. Sumner to take the Human Services Direct Assistance budget in the amount of \$53,350 under advisement.

2nd by D. Hooper.

Vote 11-0-1.

Abstain: K. Lewis Savage.

Vote passes.

Discuss upcoming meetings/schedule and handouts. Status of November 17th

Meeting Time

K. Lewis Savage reviewed the schedule of upcoming Budget Committee meetings. Next week are more budgets. The following week they are off for Thanksgiving. Then they meet again for budget reviews and then the warrant article wording reviews. She reminded all Budget Committee members that it was the bottom line of each budget that goes on the warrant. Then how it was spent was up to town government. She requested for the next meeting the Board be provided with the Revenue spreadsheet. She reminded Members that next Tuesday night there was a Special Town Meeting at the Library at 6pm and then Budget Committee members would meet at Town Hall, 2nd Floor at 7 pm. Kristin asked if the tax rate would need to be reset based on the proposed vote at the Special Town Meeting next week. Sean Fitzgerald responded that it would not.

Old Business

New Business

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Leigh G. Komornick*