



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

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

DATE: Tuesday, December 1, 2009

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 6:35 pm

PRESENT: Kristin Lewis Savage – Chair,
Normand Bouchard, Michele Conte, Gayle Hamel, Ron Hayes,
Tricia Holt, Dan Hooper, Joyce Ingerson, Neal Morin,
Catherine Willis, John Sherman–Selectmen Rep.

EXCUSED: Martha Sumner – Vice Chair and Ben Sadewicz

Additional Attendees: Sean Fitzgerald, Town Manager

MINUTES:

*Motion by M. Conte to approve the Minutes of November 10, 2009 with change to page 2.
2nd by T. Holt.*

Vote 9-0-2.

Abstain: N. Morin and K. Lewis Savage.

Motion passes.

Motion by G. Hamel to approve the Minutes of November 17, 2009 as written.

2nd by R. Hayes.

Vote 10-0-1.

Abstain: K. Lewis Savage.

Motion passes.

AGENDA:

BUDGET REVIEW

Format

N. Bouchard discussed each budget being on a different page.

S. Fitzgerald discussed page breaks and combining the smaller budgets to cover one page, and reduced columns which enlarged the font. He noted he would do whatever the committee wanted and was willing to make changes.

N. Bouchard noted that it looked good.

M. Conte noted pages 15, 16 & 17 needed titles at the top of the pages.

S. Fitzgerald noted it was per budget not per page however he could adjust if she wanted.

M. Conte noted it was fine and not a big deal.

K. Lewis Savage noted she had asked for questions prior to the meeting and had only received a few. She further noted that as the budget was received just prior to the meeting, that the Committee was not 100% ready to go budget by budget, however if Sean wanted to share the changes to date that was fine.

S. Fitzgerald noted the changes were:

- Tax Collector Budget: training line added \$300.
- Solid Waste Clean-up Budget: BOS approved at a level funded budget however the number approved was the actual and not the budget number, just a clerical error.
- Cable Studio Budget had not been approved by the BOS however he was coming back on Dec 14 to present a new revised budget to BOS due to the move of the studio from Route 125 to Town Hall.
- Collecting quotes for fertilizing Old County Road and Town Hall properties and next week he would present to the BOS.
- RFP was out for the Solid Waste Budget and was hoping to better define recycling in Town and better manage solid wastes.
- Looking at utility cost for electric, gas and oil – not anticipating significant increases however still being cautious.

N. Bouchard noted transportation mileage has gone up and inquired if Sean will be adjusting.

S. Fitzgerald noted we would be reviewing and possibly adjusting, however it was the BOS's prerogative

N. Bouchard inquired about the Legal budget and if there would be an adjustment to that budget because the law suit that was in limbo had been settled.

S. Fitzgerald noted there were another number of concerns to represent the Town however it was his hope to reduce that budget significantly.

K. Lewis Savage discussed 2010 Budget Committee column and noted the committee had not "approved" but only accepted for consideration at this time.

S. Fitzgerald noted he would change the wording to under consideration.

K. Lewis Savage inquired if the Board had Revenue information.

S. Fitzgerald noted they were in the budget.

K. Lewis Savage inquired if Sean had an analysis for grounds keeping.

S. Fitzgerald noted he did not have it with him however he would email to Budget members.

K. Lewis Savage inquired if Sean had an update done on the road service management and what had the Highway Department given up since they were doing grounds keeping.

S. Fitzgerald noted the Highway Department had not given anything up, they had been able to accomplish all of their work and had not missed out on anything. They had taken on additional work and picked up on a number of additional efficiencies. He discussed the possibility of additional seasonal employees. He note he had a report updated and had given it to the BOS last night. He discussed roads being well maintained and keeping up with the needed repairs.

J. Sherman discussed the information presented at BOS meeting the night before.

M. Conte questioned the waste collection and disposal line.

J. Sherman noted disposal was the pick up which is trash and recycle.

M. Conte inquired if the Town was paying less for the recycling portion.

S. Fitzgerald discussed the negotiated five year contract based on a tonnage fee.

K. Lewis Savage noted the contract was due to expire at the end of February 2010.

S. Fitzgerald noted RFPs were sent out.

J. Sherman noted that was why Sean noted that the Solid Waste Disposal Budget may change.

D. Hooper discussed as soon as you get rid of the free throw aways that line goes up.

J. Sherman discussed page 23 of the workbook and noted Solid Waste collection was not much of a description, in previous years they use to have the tipping fees and the tonnage listed.

S. Fitzgerald noted he would update.

K. Lewis Savage noted the description of the Cemetery needed to be cleaned up.

J. Sherman wanted to review 3 budgets:

- General Government page 11/12, 3rd line down, Part Time Positions. He wanted the difference between what was requested and what was approved. He noted it looked like the number was brought forward from last year and not what was requested.
- Town Insurance page 12. He wanted the difference in what was requested and what was approved.
- Public Works Administration page 21. He wanted the difference in what was requested and what was approved.
- Highway salaries. He noted what was budgeted last year looks like it was copied and not what was requested.

- Town Clerk budget page 4, the \$ 250 difference was already looked at last night by the BOS.

S. Fitzgerald noted he would get that information clarified.

D. Hooper noted other than verifying numbers and data being correct he wanted to know if there were any other questions. He noted comparing this year's budget to last year's efforts this had been much more streamlined this year. He thought this was just a book keeping thing and compared to last year they were miles ahead of where they were last year.

S. Fitzgerald noted this was his first time through from beginning to end.

D. Hooper noted he liked separate sheets with extra information, such as an addendum sheet as the Library does. It gives them the extra stuff they were looking for and he could put the addendums separately from the budget.

S. Fitzgerald discussed explosion of clarity.

K. Lewis Savage asked J. Sherman if there was a discussion at the BOS meeting regarding the budget concerning any needs for a reduction percentage wise or if the BOS were currently satisfied..

J. Sherman noted the Operating Budget was in pretty good shape. The BOS wanted to see Warrant Article before saying this was the budget they were going with. Warrant Articles impact the tax rate. He noted the BOS was in agreement that the Operating Budget was in good shape. They have a few questions regarding Legal and Cable and were not ready to put a final stamp on it.

S. Fitzgerald discussed Warrant Articles and noted they were listed near the end of the budget booklet.

K. Lewis Savage inquired if there were adjustments made to this budget can Sean give the Budget Committee members a heads up. She requested that the Budget Committee be emailed a one liner if there were discussions or information that things changed to keep them up to date. She noted this information would be helpful to the Budget Committee members.

S. Fitzgerald agreed.

K. Lewis Savage noted the updated Library budget in addition to the worksheet was held for Cathy Willis to present.

C. Willis discussed the changes on health and disability line; rate setting; and changes on gas and electric line. She spoke to Unutil who was projecting a slight decrease in electricity however gas was to remain the same. The projection was only for 6 month because that was all the length of time Unutil could project. Janitor expense had a small increase. She discussed lines 4, 17, 18 & 21; trust funds; list of accounts on first sheet which could not be touched without a huge penalty;

second sheet which was funds that they make their deposits and withdrawals from; not spending a lot this year; fines and lost books anticipated year income was actually 2,500 not 25,000 and the last sheet was the sheet that the members already had and had no changes to it.

J. Ingerson requested for C. Willis to give an example of fund special projects not cover by Town appropriation.

C. Willis discussed the purchase of a snow blower and next year purchasing a copier. She noted they buy all sorts of things even chairs.

K. Lewis Savage noted there was a new bottom line number for the Library so the Board needed to vote/motion to take the Library budget into consideration.

Motion by D. Hooper to accept for consideration the Public Library Budget's new bottom line number of \$439,274.

2nd by J. Ingerson.

Vote 8-1-2

Against: J. Sherman

Abstain: C. Willis and K. Lewis Savage

Motion passes.

J. Sherman inquired why there wasn't any Revenue for the Water Department on page 24.

S. Fitzgerald noted it was an RSA however they do have it, it was a question that the revenue had to support particular water line improvements. There was special legislation for the water revenue and he wanted to get more information before adding the information. He noted they bring in 100,000 from the revenue.

K. Lewis Savage noted she would like to see that information of total revenue emailed to all members.

K. Lewis Savage noted Dan Hooper asked about the Tax Rate so she turned the meeting over to him to discuss.

D. Hooper discussed the tax bills came out and he had been approached regarding the tax rate and wanted to be able to explain to people the behind the scenes information. He thanked Sean for his handout and noted it was lengthy but filled with simple easy details to help explain and understand the tax rate.

S. Fitzgerald discussed the upcoming presentation he would make on the cable channel regarding the tax rate explanation.

J. Sherman noted the tax rate calculation was in the Town Report and there was a pretty good explanation in there. He was disappointed with the Eagle Tribune's tax rate explanation that he had read, and noted articles were written by people who do not understand and then there are people who add the flashy head lines.

J. Sherman and D. Hooper held a discussion regarding tax rate explanation.

K. Lewis Savage noted the next Budget Committee meeting would be next Tuesday and they would see Warrant Articles and that Sean would get the members that information.

J. Sherman requested from Kristin a completed list as to what the Board would be reviewing next week.

K. Lewis Savage noted she would put it on the agenda to be emailed to everyone.

N. Bouchard publicly thanked the Police Chief for the 3 hour tour of the Police Station.

K. Lewis Savage noted she sent out an email from the Police Chief regarding lap tops in the cruisers and noted if the Budget Committee would like to see the technology the Police Chief could attend their meeting and the members could go outside and see the inside of the cruisers or small groups could go to the Safety Complex to see it themselves.

S. Fitzgerald noted he asked the Police Chief to put together a presentation for the Cable channel.

Board held a discussion regarding the viewing of the new technology inside of the police cruisers.

OLD BUSINESS:

None noted.

NEW BUSINESS:

None noted.

Meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Audrey DeProspero