

DRAFT
Budget Committee Minutes
Town of Sandown, NH

Meeting Date: Wednesday, December 21, 2016

Type of Meeting: Public

Method of Notification: Public posting – Town Hall & Post Office

Meeting Location: Town Hall, Second Floor

Members Present: Steve Brown, Michael Costanzo, Fran Rosenau, Lee Dube

Recording Secretary: Michael Costanzo

Not Present: Lorna Walker, Sue Reynolds, Tom Tombarello (Selectman Ex-Officio)

Vice Chairman Michael Costanzo called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Michael asked the members to agree to use this meeting as work session to review the current status of the budget and potential funding scenarios in preparation for the final meetings. Because several members of the committee were not present, it was agreed that there would be no motions or votes to change existing line items

The discussion began by configuring the newly installed digital projector and screen to project the budget as an active spreadsheet so the committee could look at the complete budget in real time and see the percent increase over 2016 under various funding scenarios.

The first thing discussed was the potential removal of the highway block grant from the budget. Most scenarios explored included the removal of the grant, as when the grant is included the projected budget increase for 2017 exceeds 10%.

The budget committee began by reviewing the budget without the grant, and the reduction of funds for repair of the Meeting House roof and town hall floors, since the Board of Selectmen is considering encumbering funds from the 2016 fund balance to make those repairs. The budget committee calculated that that removing those funds from the 2017 budget would create a 5.4% increase over 2016, which excludes the increase for the Police payroll. The funding the Police payroll, which was undecided at the last budget meeting was explored next. The committee considered the impact of increasing payroll 3%, 5%, 50% of the requested raise, and 100% of the requested raise. Those increases over 2016 would be approximately 5.8%, 6%, 6.1%, 6.8% respectively, assuming the block grant, Meeting House and Town Hall expenses are removed from the 2017 budget.

The budget committee explored several other permutations of funding the Police increase without making a significant overall budget increase, and formulated questions to ask Chief Gordon, including the funding of two vacant positions, the necessity of air conditioning the second floor offices, and if the department could lease a single cruiser instead of two.

The budget committee then reviewed the overall budget department by department and felt that overall, the budget is very tight and that several of the larger increases, such as benefits, were appropriate and necessary.

The fund balance was then discussed. It was determined that the budget committee needed some concrete information about the fund balance and what it has been over the last few fiscal years and the potential to encumber expenses or return the fund balance to the budget next fiscal year.

As a final note, the committee discussed the potential of default and that raises and benefits for town employees, as well as repairs to government buildings are in jeopardy

under that scenario. The budget committee agreed to ask for the projected budget under default scenario for comparison.

The meeting adjourned by consensus at 8:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Costanzo