

BUDGET COMMITTEE

JANUARY 30, 2007

MEMORIAL BUILDING

7:00 P.M.

The Following are to be considered draft minutes only until approved by the Board at their next meeting.

Members Present: Chairman B. Manning, Ken Jacques, Don Garlock, Doug George, Jon Poston, John Trachy, and Bill Sullivan. **Absent:** Darrin Patten and Rick Kidder.

Selectmen: Bob Anderson, George McCusker, and Neal Huntoon.

Others: Dick Kipperman and Tim Julian.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes: John moved to accept the January 16, 2007 minutes as submitted, seconded by Don and unanimously approved.

Selectmen Updates: Bob explained the proposed warrant article for \$500 for a survey has been moved to the operating budget under executive printing charges. The Board has decided not to post the \$2500 for a website assistant as a warrant article. Brandt Denniston has indicated he will continue as webmaster on a voluntary basis. If it is decided that he needs help, the Selectmen felt they could fund it from the budget and make adjustments next year if necessary.

The proposed warrant article for Stoney Brook reclamation has been placed in the highway budget. The project cost is \$88,900.

Warrant Articles:

The Board reviewed warrant articles with money appropriations.

Draft article 8: proposes to enter into a 4 year lease agreement for the purchase of a police cruiser. There was no discussion at this time, this will be discussed with review of the police operating budget.

Draft article 9: proposes to appropriate funds for a natural resource inventory by the Conservation Commission. John Trachy explained the Conservation Commission is mandated by state law to do a wetlands inventory. A natural resource inventory is not mandated, but it makes sense to do the whole project at one time. The inventory would identify a host of natural resources. The Conservation Commission is seeking grants. It is quite possible there may be money available through the moose plate program. Another grant through the Connecticut River Watershed program can be applied for later this month. Application has been made to the Society for the Protection of NH Forests, seeking permission to use funding from the Royal Arch Fund toward the natural resource inventory

Ken Jacques explained that the Master Plan Update specifies that a wetlands inventory should be done and will be a useful tool to all town boards.

Draft Article 10: proposes \$10,000 to complete Phase I of the skateboard/basketball court. Bob stated the Selectmen would like to finish fencing and landscaping, and would like to purchase the 2 pieces of skateboard equipment. Bob explained landscaping work has been discussed but was not able to be done last year. Some of the fencing was to be donated, but that has not happened and the company has been sold. It is not yet know if that fencing will still be donated. Three pieces of equipment have been recommended for the skateboard park, but there was only money enough to purchase one piece of equipment, which has been ordered.

Budget Worksheet.

The Board reviewed the proposed budget by category.

John Trachy questioned the appropriation for state unemployment compensation. The proposal is an estimate only. Wage estimates have not been calculated.

Bob questioned whether the Board felt final numbers would be recommended by the Budget Committee tonight so budget changes would not be made during the Public Hearing. B. stated the budget probably would not look a lot different than it does currently, but the Board might need more time to review some of the proposals. The procedures for the Public Hearing were reviewed.

B. stated the Board would want to take a look at where the fund balance stands and what the revenue figures are.

John questioned if there was a cost from Pike for Stoney Brook Road reclamation. The cost is \$88,900 and has been included in the highway operating budget under reclamation.

Revaluation of Property; Code Enforcement: John Trachy questioned whether the code enforcement appropriation would be used to enforce home occupation/home business issues. Neal stated it is going to take time to start this process. Once the process has started, code enforcement is going to be a critical position. Bob stated he has attended a joint board of selectmen's meeting and discussion of sharing a code enforcement position in the future has been discussed. The current code enforcement appropriation is to maintain the status quo.

Appraisal: The Board discussed the estimate for the Hemphill appraisal. Issues related to the closing of Hemphill were discussed.

Legal Expenses: The Board discussed the appropriation for legal expenses. The Board suggested reducing the appropriation to \$10,000.

Personnel Administration: Health insurance coverage was reviewed.

General Government Buildings: John Trachy questioned if the 2006 appropriation reflected the work done at the fire station. He asked if there was intent to use that meeting room for some of the meetings that take place in town. The Selectmen indicated they have discussed this. B. suggested there should be a tour of the building on Town Meeting day. John asked whether using the fire department room would free up space at the town office building. Neal indicated that it has been discussed. Tim stated it is not feasible for the Police Department to be located there due to the stairs to the second floor where a potential office might be located. John stated if that room could be used for meeting, would it be possible to use the downstairs meeting room for other needs? Neal stated that the Selectmen have discussed this. The Board discussed the possibility of an addition at the fire station for future needs of the Police Department.

Police Department: Bob stated that the increase in wages reflects an officer for an additional 20 hours a week, and the equipment needs for that officer. A new cruiser for a second officer is reflected in the warrant article appropriation for leasing a cruiser. John asked Tim what he saw as the greatest benefit for adding one full-time officer versus several part-time officers? Tim stated it is hard to get qualified officers to work part-time. Part-time officers with an opportunity to work overtime at their regular job will take the opportunity to work for their primary employer. Another full-time officer can follow up on cases they begin instead of starting them and having to leave them for the chief to finish. Two full-time officers would split up on-call hours. There will be situations when State Police will still be on call.

Ken Jacques stated that is a big step for the Town. Tim has presented the Board with good justification to support his request; public safety is an issue the town needs to take seriously.

Tim stated that the Explorer would be scheduled for replacement in another two years. Without another cruiser for another officer, it would need to be replaced sooner than that. He anticipates having one 4WD vehicle for the department.

Fire and Rescue:

John Trachy questioned the amounts for dispatching fees for New London Dispatching versus Hanover Dispatch. Dispatching for the rescue squad happens through New London Dispatch simultaneously with the call to New London Ambulance. A rescue call would mean New London Dispatch would have to notify another carrier at the time of a rescue squad, resulting in a critical delay in time. A fire call would be dispatched directly to Hanover. George reported on the number of calls the rescue squad responded to in 2006.

Highway: The Board discussed paving on Hogg Hill and the proposed reclamation work for Stoney Brook Road. Brad did a comparison whether the Town could haul the gravel to reduce the cost and that was not the case. Bob stated that this project is in line with Brad's capital improvement plan. Capital improvements need to get started so as not to fall further behind.

Sanitation: The final number is not known from the Sunapee Transfer Station.

Recreation: Bob explained that the warrant article to establish the revolving fund for the recreation department is not just for the summer camp. If the recreation department holds a fund raiser, the monies now have to go back to the general fund. The summer camp is part of fund raising, and is supposed to be self-funded. In the 2007 budget there is an appropriation for the summer camp. Money that is taken in this year from the camp will go into the revolving fund and not the general fund. Next year funding for the summer camp would not be from the operating budget but through the revolving fund. The revolving fund would be managed by the Board of Selectmen.

B. asked for an estimate of revenues and a general idea of where the fund balance is for next week's meeting. The Board will review those figures and the appropriations at the Public Hearing on February 6. If the Board is not ready to make recommendations, the hearing can be continued.

The Board voted to adjourn at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Janet Roberts,
Recording Secretary