

BUDGET COMMITTEE

JANUARY 15, 2008

MEMORIAL BUILDING

7:00 P.M.

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

Present: John Trachy, Darrin Patten, Jon Poston, Rick Kidder, Ken Jacques, B. Manning, Chairman and Bob Anderson, Selectman Representative. Absent: David Tucker and Bill Sullivan. Selectmen: John Chiarella and Neal Huntoon.

Others: Dick Kipperman

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Minutes: Ken moved to accept the December 6, 2007 minutes as written, seconded by Jon and unanimously approved.

The Selectmen reviewed budget appropriations:

Bob explained the Selectmen have approved 3% COLA for weekly paid employees.

Other departments will be as reviewed.

The Selectmen need to continue looking into estimates for engineering for drainage at the fire station/highway garage, and possible locations for a police department. Relocation and replacement of the sand shed also needs to be considered. A second fuel tank is needed to separate building fuel and vehicle fuel. The heating system at the highway garage/fire station needs replacing.

Following the last budget meeting, the Board of Selectmen agreed to wait until after Town Meeting to consider a full-time office assistant at the Town Office. An additional part-time employee has been hired.

Police Department:

Tim Julian, Chief, met with the Board. Wages reflect the 3% COLA adjustment approved by the Selectmen as well as 53 pay periods this year. Patrolman wages reflect a full year of full-time duty. Since Mike was not hired full-time until April 1 and attended the academy for 12 weeks, the department has not had a full year of coverage with the two full-time officers. He is not proposing adding any part-time positions this year, since he does not know what is needed at this point. He has reviewed his phone service and has the cheapest plan available with three phone lines. He signed a 5 year contract in order to be able to get cheaper rates 2 years ago. Telephone expense also includes cell phone service. He has doubled the anticipated fuel appropriation. Dispatching shows up as double in 2007's expenditures. Newport Dispatch bills at the end of the year and in the past, the bill would get held until the beginning of the new operating budget. The auditors have said the expense should be paid in the year of the expenditure. Therefore, expenses reflect dispatching for 2006 and 2007. This should now be corrected for 2008.

Tim anticipates replacing the Ford Explorer in 2009.

Cemetery:

Brad Butcher, Road Agent, reviewed the cemetery budget. The Cemetery Trustees are proposing a wage increase for Frank Anderson. There are two large pine trees that need removal in the upper cemetery which will require the use of a crane. The Highway Department will do pressure washing of stones. The old riding lawn mower is in need of repair and the engine is obsolete and parts are not available. Brad is proposing a new mower with a small trailer to haul small loads.

Highway:

Brad reviewed 2008 appropriations line by line. He is proposing 1" pavement overlay on Colby Hill Road. He also has a price for reclamation work on Stoney Brook Road in the area from the Grantham Town line half way to Bog Pond. He expects to raise the low lying area by 12" and install filter fabric. There will be one remaining section in the middle from the reclamation area of last year and this year's proposal. Other line items essentially reflected cost increases.

Brad anticipates replacing a highway truck in the next year or two. The loader will need replacement in the next few years as well. He would consider replacing with a used loader if the right one were available. He would also like to add a third full-time person soon.

Fire Department:

Dallas Patten, Fire Chief, reviewed appropriations. He reviewed appropriations line by line. Dallas proposes an increase in training/response wage. In 2006 the department responded to 97 calls, in 2007 they responded to 125. He has moved the appropriation from Forest Fire Wages to Casual Labor. He would like to get other members involved in doing home inspections and would like to be able to compensate these members. Forest Fire Wages, if needed, would be paid from Casual Labor. Dispatching for the Rescue Department has been switched from New London Dispatch to Hanover Dispatch effective December 31, 2007. The Department is proposing two hydrant repairs. Dallas presented the Board with information regarding a large-item washing machine for fire gear. NFPA recommends washing after each fire or chemical exposure. He feels members should have a place to wash their gear. Exposure to elements on gear is a risk to members, and also shortens the life of the equipment. They do not have any means to wash gear on-site. The Board questioned the water capacity and the leach field capacity for the washer. Dallas was asked to also investigate the detergents that are used.

Three Fire Department members are starting Level I Fire Fighter training in January and will be reimbursed when they pass the course. The rescue truck is being scheduled for some needed repairs.

John Trachy asked Dallas to explain dues for the Midwest Hazmat Team. Dallas stated the team is a 13 town team trained to respond to chemical spills or environmental emergencies. Through grants, they have been able to purchase a number of pieces of equipment to assist in these types of emergencies. The team decided to appropriate dues to cover the costs of inspections for the technicians.

Dallas presented specifications for new trucks. Dallas reported they have talked to 4 fire truck manufacturers. Three of them have been from program-truck dealers. They have investigated two cab styles. The Department is favoring a custom cab. This allows for a shorter wheel base, better safety ratings, and more room in the cabs for passengers and equipment. They have gotten some pretty firm pricing from a couple of the dealers. The trucks will be set up according to NFPA standards. Costs for additional equipment were reviewed. The Department is also looking to replace aging hose on the trucks with larger diameter hoses and newer fittings more compatible with area departments. The Board questioned what would happen to the old truck? Dallas reported they propose to sell it. They have been told it does not retain much market value. Depending on where they finally order the truck, it could take anywhere from 90 days to 6 months for delivery. Financing options were discussed. Lease/purchase agreements are available from the dealer at a rate of about 4%. Lake Sunapee Bank will offer 3.9% financing. Terms of financing were discussed. The Board would like to review 3, 5, and 8 year financing. The Board questioned whether there might be some money in the fund balance to offset financing. This will be reviewed.

The Board moved to adjourn at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Janet Roberts,
Administrative Assistant