

BUDGET COMMITTEE

JANUARY 19, 2010

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: B. Manning, Ken Jacques, John Trachy, Jon Poston, Bill Sullivan, Jeff Milne, Darrin Patten, Tim Cook, and Selectman Representative John Chiarella.

Also in attendance: Don Hill, Selectman, Dick Kipperman, Moderator, and Tim Julian, Police Chief.

B. called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes: John Trachy moved to approve the January 12, 2010 minutes as written, seconded by Ken and unanimously approved.

New London Hospital: Terry Leblanc, Chief Clinical Officer, and Kent Wheeler, Emergency Department Administrator, from New London Hospital met with the Board. Ms. Leblanc reviewed a spreadsheet showing ambulance cost sharing throughout the coverage areas. The ambulance is staffed 24 hours and averages about 3 runs every 24 hours. Ambulance service can only be billed for runs that end in the transport of a patient, so only about two-thirds of the ambulance calls are billable. The ambulance services runs at an operating loss of about \$300,000. The hospital remains committed to providing this needed service. The loss is shared between the towns in the coverage area. Springfield's number of runs was up 28% from the prior year. The new ambulance is now 4 years old and is beginning to have some off warranty repair costs. There is one more year left on the note for that ambulance. The second ambulance is 12 years old. The hospital will be reviewing the ambulance replacement schedule. B. thanked Ms. Leblanc and Mr. Wheeler for their presentation.

Police Department: Tim Julian, Police Chief reported to the Board. Following questions raised last week, Tim explained the fuel line. Last year the line was bumped up due to increased fuel costs. For two months there was only one cruiser being used during the transition from the Explorer to the Taurus. In addition, Mike was away at school for two weeks. There were also fewer traffic details. Tim is proposing the same appropriation for fuel for 2010. The Town has been approved for a 50% grant from the NH Traffic Safety Division for in-car video cameras. The Selectmen voted to encumber up to \$4,000 from the 2009 police operating budget toward the Town's match. That will leave approximately \$1,000 which Tim has appropriated in his 2010 budget. The Board discussed the funding and completed review of the operating budget. B. commended Tim on his conscientious budget.

Recreation Department: Brandt Denniston, Recreation Department Treasurer discussed budget appropriations with the Board. The recreation department had a very active year last year and a successful Old Home Day event. Brandt shared a schedule of activities for 2010. The Recreation Department is keeping their budget level funded this year. An appropriation for Old

Home Day has been added to the operating budget. The Selectmen have also agreed to propose a warrant article for a Special Revenue Fund and to establish the fund with \$1900.00 which represents a portion of the proceeds raised from OHD events. This creates a fund for revenue and expenditures for Old Home Day purposes which will be maintained separately from the town general fund. B. thanked Brandt for his presentation.

Highway Department: Brad Butcher, Road Agent met with the Board. B. asked Brad for a report of the highway department equipment. Brad reported that the “new” used truck is doing well. The white truck and the “new” red truck are both 2001 vehicles. The loader is a 1986. He has received an estimate of \$100,000 for a new loader. The Board asked Brad what the existing loader would need for repairs to make it worthwhile to keep. Brad stated there are some oil leaks that need fixing and the transmission sometimes hesitates. The loader also needs new pins and bushings. Jon Poston questioned whether it would be worthwhile to obtain an estimate for rebuilding. Brad felt consideration needs to be given to the loader issue. He discussed a replacement schedule for the equipment. He would like to have the small truck on a 7-8 year replacement schedule, and the bigger trucks every 10 years. The grader is a 1994 and there is no plan for replacement. Brad stated he would like to purchase a tow-behind leaf blower for blowing leaves out of ditches. He felt a blower would minimize erosion and disturbance of ditch material versus cleaning the ditches with the grader or backhoe. Brad reviewed and discussed operating budget line item appropriations with the Board. B. commended Brad for the work he does for the Town.

B. stated there will be equipment decisions that will need to be looked at over the course of the next several years. Brad indicated he will look into what the costs for upgrades to the existing loader will be. The Board discussed used loaders. Brad stated that he has found that there is not a substantial difference in costs between new and used loaders.

Fire Department: Dallas Patten, Fire Chief met with the Board. Dallas reported that he has been told by Hanover Dispatch that the radios currently being used in the highway trucks will become obsolete by 2013 due to an FCC planned split of the bandwidth. Dallas reported fire department radios updated by the grant, and the updated pagers will not be impacted by this change. Dallas would like to continue updating two pagers per year so as to be in compliance by 2013. Dallas reviewed and discussed operating budget line item appropriations. He reported on the recent purchase of new software for the required state reporting by the department. The new software will be more compatible with the State’s requirements, be more user friendly, and will cost less in annual renewal/support fees. Line item appropriations have essentially been appropriated the same or lower than last year. B. thanked Dallas for his presentation.

Other Discussion:

Painting Town Hall: John Chiarella reported that the person who looked at the Town Hall with last week is concerned with the presence of lead in the existing paint. John indicated that this complicates the process and substantially increases the costs of repainting the building. He recommended tabling this while measures are reviewed over the course of the next year. The

Board discussed the lead abatement process. Jeff stated he will check with Proctor Academy to see how they have handled this.

Highway Complex: John Chiarella reported that Ross has someone who is looking at the engineering plans and will be preparing an estimate of materials. Ross has presented three different scenarios for possible phasing of the project. The Selectmen will review the project for cost estimating once the materials estimate is received. The Board discussed the project. Ken Jacques stated he is uneasy with the sand and salt storage there. Other possible sites were reviewed. There has been a lot of time spent on reviewing this site, which is what was discussed during last year's budget discussions. Without some idea as to cost estimates, it is difficult to make any recommendations yet. More information should be available for next week's meeting.

The Board discussed the proposed operating budget numbers, and agreed there was not a lot of room in the budget for further cost cutting.

With no further business, the Board voted to adjourn at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Janet Roberts,
Recording Secretary