

BUDGET COMMITTEE

JANUARY 26, 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: Budget Committee members B. Manning, Ken Jacques, Jeff Milne, Bill Sullivan, Jon Poston, Darrin Patten, Tim Cook, John Trachy and Selectman representative John Chiarella and Selectman Dave Tucker.

Also present: Dick Kipperman, Brandt Denniston, Jay and Janet Booker.

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

Minutes: Ken moved to approve the January 19, 2010 minutes as written, seconded by Jeff and unanimously approved.

Selectman Update: John Chiarella reviewed the discussion the Selectman had at their meeting which was predicated on their review of the proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. The Selectmen are concerned with enforcement costs as a result of Article 4 which would implement noise limits. John explained the Selectmen frequently get questioned about compliance with zoning amendments passed in previous years and discussed enforcement difficulties that exist. Their concern is with the potential for increased administrative costs, necessary training in noise measurement, equipment, and enforcement responsibilities. The Selectmen are in agreement there needs to be an increase in the operating budget for legal, engineering, and enforcement administration as a result of this article.

There was a great deal of discussion regarding these issues. John Chiarella stated the concerns the Selectman have with being increasingly asked to resolve issues between neighbors. John Trachy stated that as the town has grown, the demographics of the residents has changed so neighbors are not solving their own problems, they are asking the town to intervene. Without having regulations in place, the town becomes the arbiter in these cases. B. questioned if there was a need for such a stringent regulation. Jeff questioned whether these amendments are being proposed due to problems the Planning Board has encountered. Darrin stated the Planning Board was essentially told if they did not recommend these articles, they would be requested by petition. The Planning Board felt they had some control over such an ordinance if it were reviewed and introduced by them. Ken reported the Planning Board's intent was to look at these amendments as they applied to future subdivisions and site plan requests that came before the Board, not to create problems with existing situations. John Chiarella replied that this becomes problematic because intent is not written, and what is written is up to interpretation. The Board discussed the potential for complaints. Bill Sullivan stated, in his experience, he can foresee increased complaints from this article. Ken addressed his concern that the Budget Committee hasn't heard of the need for a Zoning Administrator before this. The Planning Board has discussed it. John Chiarella stated that the Selectmen have been discussing the position of a

Zoning Administrator for many years, and have discussed the consideration of sharing this position with another town.

Following lengthy discussion the Budget Committee felt they could not take a position on the warrant article, but could only look at it from a budgetary standpoint. Darrin recommended that the Selectmen wait to see what types of problems arise to get a better handle on the issue and costs involved next year.

The Board then reviewed the draft of proposed warrant articles relative to money appropriations. John Chiarella voiced concern with the possibility that funding for the statistical update may not be approved by the voters, even though the Selectmen recommend funding through the unreserved fund balance. B. suggested the Selectmen considering appropriating this in the operating budget if they feel strongly that it won't be supported.

Revenue: The Board briefly reviewed preliminary revenue information.

Town garage project:

Construction cost estimates for the highway garage drainage and sand shed project were reviewed and discussed. All present agreed that costs to do the complete project are too high given the limitations of the site. The existing site does not meet long-term needs for future growth. It does not make sense to put such a large amount of money into this site. Alternative sites and the possibility of moving the sand shed were discussed. B. suggested a viable solution might be leasing land for a sand/salt shed. Ken stated he felt there has not been enough time for anyone to review the information that has been provided and make sound recommendations. John Chiarella stated the Selectmen have discussed the possibility of installing the drainage swale and doing some grading around the building to address the immediate drainage issues. The Budget Committee suggested that the Selectmen review the proposal and make recommendations at the Budget Committee's next meeting.

Town hall painting:

Jeff reported Proctor Academy has used vinyl siding to take care of problems with their old buildings. The Town Hall is listed on the historic register as a historic building and this may not be a viable option. John Chiarella stated the Selectmen have discussed whether replacing the siding would be considered a cost-effective measure in the long-term. The Budget Committee suggested checking to see what New London did when they renovated Colby Academy. John stated the Selectmen will be reviewing options, but will probably not be recommending an appropriation this year.

There was no further discussion regarding the proposed operating budget. B. asked the Selectmen to have an idea what projects and estimates they are looking at for building maintenance at the next meeting, for the Budget Committee to have a better understanding of that line item in the operating budget.

The Board discussed a public information session being organized for Thursday, February 25, at 7:00 p.m. regarding the article on the Town Warrant proposing discontinuance of roads within Star Lake, the proposed Star Lake Conservation Easement, and Road Covenants. Articles 2 through 9 were reviewed and discussed.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Janet Roberts,
Recording Secretary