

## **BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**DECEMBER 2, 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: Budget Committee Members, B. Manning, Ken Jacques, Rick Kidder, Jon Poston, Bill Sullivan, Darrin Patten, Ex-officio John Chiarella, and Selectman Don Hill. Absent: Dave Tucker. Tamara Butcher also attended the meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m.

Elections: Ken nominated B. Manning as Chairman, seconded by Bill and unanimously approved. Jon nominated Ken Jacques as Vice-Chairman, seconded by Bill and unanimously approved.

The 2009 meeting schedule was discussed. Meetings will be January 6, January 20, with the public hearing on February 3. The last day for petitioned warrant articles is February 3. If an additional hearing is needed it will be scheduled and announced on February 3. The Board would like to ask department representatives to attend the January 6<sup>th</sup> meeting. If a bond hearing is required it will most likely be held on January 20<sup>th</sup>.

John Chiarella reported the Selectmen began creating a tentative schedule of capital needs last year. They would like to complete that this year.

B. reported he had been contacted by John Wilson, Chair of the New London Budget Committee. Budget Members and Selectmen from other towns attended a Municipal Budget meeting on November 25<sup>th</sup>. Concern regarding the school budget was discussed. 53.1% of Springfield's taxes go to the school, 18% to the Town. The School Board's first budget version presented a 13% increase, the latest version is currently at 7% but more areas are being looked at. There is a possibility there will be an alternative budget proposed by a taxpayer group at the deliberative session and public hearing on December 16<sup>th</sup>. The Municipal Budget Committee is working diligently to keep costs down.

The Board discussed anticipated costs for 2009. John reported the Selectmen met with Brad, Tim and Steve. Department heads have been asked to reduce requests 3 to 3.5% from last year's proposals. The black truck H3 is due for replacement and Brad is looking at pricing. The Ford Explorer is due to be replaced but the Selectmen have asked Tim to put that purchase off for another year. There are no plans for reclamation projects or major paving jobs for 2009. Brad anticipates doing more shoulder and shim work. Funding of a new truck was discussed. The unreserved fund balance is in the 8-9% range of the amount the Department of Revenue likes to have towns retain.

Anticipated revenues from the State were discussed. Actual numbers are not known at this point. John stated the Selectmen will be looking at the tax revenue next week.

Engineering costs were reviewed. The status of the safety complex engineering was discussed. John stated that completion of engineering work will be done by bid. Due to wetlands issues that property is no longer being considered for expansion for the Police Department. Further engineering work and permitting will be required to address the outside storage needs for the Highway Department and relocation of the Sand and Salt Shed. The fuel tanks for highway and fire vehicles have been moved to an outside containment area.

Health insurance and employee benefits were discussed. Don reported health insurance premiums for employees have essentially remained the same this year at -0.8%. The Selectmen have agreed to leave the current benefits as is. They will be looking at employee benefit packages to determine how to meet future needs of current employees and any new employees as costs to the Town rise. The Selectmen have not reached a decision whether there will be any raises this year or not.

The next Budget Committee meeting is scheduled for January 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Janet Roberts  
Administrative Assistant