

HAMPTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
MINUTES
March 21, 2006

Budget Committee Members Present

Mary-Louise Woolsey, Chairman
Michael Plouffe, Vice Chairman
William Lally, Selectman Representative
John Kane, Precinct Representative
Russ Bernstein
Pat Collins (Present, but not sworn)
Dick Hansen
Eileen Latimer
Jack Lessard
Richard Nichols
Michael Pierce
Norman Silberdick

Excused

Maury Friedman

Chairman Woolsey called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Chairman Woolsey introduced the members of the Committee. She said there was no School Board Representative at the meeting because they were meeting tonight. Chairman Woolsey welcomed Mr. Silberdick to the Committee and congratulated Mr. Plouffe, Mr. Collins and Mr. Friedman on re-election.

Approval of Minutes – February 21, 2006

Moved by Mr. Plouffe, seconded by Mr. Pierce, to approve the Minutes of February 21, 2006 as amended.

Changes made were as follows:

1. Page 3. Mr. Preston wished to clarify his reasons for abstaining in the vote for the Precinct total operating budget and revenues. An Addendum is attached to these Minutes outlining Mr. Preston's changes.

Vote: 8 yes, 0 no, 3 abstentions (Bernstein, Latimer, Silberdick). Motion passed.

Chairman Woolsey then asked for nominations for Chairman.

Moved by Mr. Hansen, seconded by Mr. Pierce, to retain Ms. Woolsey and Mr. Plouffe as Chairman and Vice Chairman.

Vote: 8 yes, 1 no (Latimer), 2 abstentions (Plouffe, Woolsey). Motion passed.

Chairman Woolsey discussed the appointment of a Budget Committee member as representative to the CIP Committee. She read a letter from Mr. Friedman requesting that he be appointed as representative. Ms. Latimer brought up the point that Mr. Friedman has not yet been sworn in so it would not be correct to appoint him at this time.

Moved by Mr. Pierce, seconded by Mr. Lessard, to move to the April agenda the appointments of representatives to the CIP and Recreation Advisory Board.

Vote: 8 yes, 2 no (Lally, Latimer), 1 abstention (Woolsey). Motion passed.

Mr. Lally gave the Selectmen's Report. He said they have discussed the default budget. They are waiting for department heads to get back to them before looking at numbers. He said the Selectmen will make the budget work and do it in a positive fashion.

Chairman Woolsey said this year she would like to see the Selectmen sit down and review the finances at least once a month. This would educate the public as well as having the Selectmen more on top of the fiscal picture. Mr. Pierce said he also agreed that it would be nice to hear each month about just where the finances are.

Transfers of monies within the budget were discussed. Chairman Woolsey said it is the job of the Board of Selectmen to authorize transfers. They should vote in open session to authorize such transfers. This should be done in a more open fashion. Mr. Plouffe said the public also needs to understand about surplus monies.

Mr. Kane gave the Precinct Report. He said the annual meeting will be Friday, March 31, at 7:00 p.m. He thanked the voters for letting the Precinct use the revenues. This will allow the Precinct to lower their budget by \$82,000.

Chairman Woolsey said that the vote on Article 5 sent a very strong message on the problem of growth. She mentioned the passage of articles on the wastewater treatment plant, the ladder truck and the social service agencies. She said the passage of the revolving funds is a great step forward. Mr. Nichols said that the Police Department will now have access to money that has just been sitting there. This will definitely help.

Chairman Woolsey complimented the Budget Committee for putting forward a budget that reflected the needs of the average taxpayer. She asked the members to give some thought as to what they feel as individuals might be an acceptable approach to spending for 2007.

Old Business

Chairman Woolsey discussed the Selectmen's response to the request for clarification of the 19 "year end 2005 expenditures". She picked up the response today and asked the committee members to review it. This will be put on the agenda for the next meeting when there can be a more comprehensive review.

Chairman Woolsey said every committee member should review the Town and School District annual reports.

New Business

Topics for future meetings were discussed. Ms. Latimer suggested a work session with Dawna Duhamel to go over accounting procedures for the Town budget. Mr. Pierce said he felt the committee did not look at the school budget with the same scrutiny as the Town budget. Ms. Latimer said the committee should also meet with someone from the Schools to go over their accounting procedures.

Mr. Hansen said he felt the committee should think about their review and possibly revise its approach to coming up with a recommended budget for the coming year. He said the committee should review 2005 and 2006 budgets by major breakdowns, departments in particular. The committee should then analyze for possible improvements in operations that might result in budget corrections. Mr. Hansen said that possibly the committee could come up with a recommendation on the total budget early on rather than at the end. Chairman Woolsey replied that this committee is dependent on the Selectmen for their figures.

Ms. Latimer said she felt that any correspondence that goes from this committee should be done through a vote so members are aware of it.

Moved by Ms. Latimer, seconded by Mr. Pierce, that any correspondence going out on behalf of the Budget Committee go through the Chair or Vice-Chair and be approved by the committee.

Mr. Hansen said he didn't think it is practical that a vote would need to be obtained by the entire committee. Mr. Kane said he agreed.

Vote: 3 yes, 6 no (Hansen, Kane, Lally, Lessard, Nichols, Silberdick), 2 abstentions (Plouffe, Woolsey). Motion failed.

The topics for future meetings were again discussed.

Moved by Mr. Nichols, seconded by Mr. Pierce, to approve the following schedule for Budget Committee meetings:

April	Dawna Duhamel – Explanation of Accounting Procedures
May	Assessing Officer
June	Board of Selectmen
September	School Board and new Business Manager (Explanation of Accounting Procedures)

Vote: 10 yes, 0 no, 1 abstention (Woolsey). Motion passed.

Chairman Woolsey said the next meeting will be April 18, 2006.

Chairman Woolsey said that Mr. Lally leaves a one-year vacancy on the Budget Committee due to his election to the Board of Selectmen. There are basically three options:

- 1) Appoint next candidate on ballot for the Budget Committee.
- 2) Fail to fill vacancy.
- 3) Pool suggestions from members to see if they can agree on a replacement.

Chairman Woolsey explained that in non-MBA towns the Moderator fills the vacancy. However, Hampton is an MBA town and Budget Committee members are authorized to fill vacancies. Chairman Woolsey said that she did feel it would be a good idea to seek clarification about this statute.

Moved by Mr. Hansen, seconded by Mr. Lessard, to not make any decision on the filling of the Budget Committee vacancy at this time and to allow the Chairman to seek clarification from legal counsel at the New Hampshire Municipal Association on the Committee's rights and responsibilities under the statute.

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no, 1 abstention (Woolsey). Motion passed.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Mr. Hansen **moved**, seconded by Mr. Lessard, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Rice
Secretary

Mary-Louise Woolsey, Chairman