

HAMPTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
MINUTES
November 8, 2007

Budget Committee Members Present

Mary-Louise Woolsey, Chairman
Mike Plouffe, Vice-Chairman
Rick Griffin, Selectman Representative
Sandra Nickerson, School Board Representative
Victor DeMarco
Maury Friedman
Dick Hansen
Jack Lessard
Richard Nichols
Michael Pierce
Norman Silberdick

Excused

Russ Bernstein
Pat Collins
Eileen Latimer

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Chairman Woolsey introduced the members of the Committee.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Building & Code Inspection

Moved by Mr. Plouffe, seconded by Mr. Pierce, to move forward to the public hearing the amount of \$177,079 for Building & Code Inspection.

Chairman Woolsey welcomed Kevin Schultz, Building Inspector.

Mr. Schultz said this budget is up only \$2,400. This increase is due to gasoline prices, vehicle maintenance, employee uniforms and staff development. Mr. Schultz said building codes will be updated this year.

Mr. Nichols asked about the reduction in revenues. Mr. Schultz said this was a result of the slowdown in the real estate market. However, there are projects in the system.

Mr. Griffin thanked Mr. Schultz for doing such a fine job.

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Civil Defense, Tree Planting & Removal, Lifeguards & Hydrants

Moved by Mr. Plouffe, seconded by Mr. Pierce, to move forward to the public hearing the amount of \$392,340 for Civil Defense, Tree Planting & Removal, Lifeguards & Hydrants.

Mr. Griffin said that consideration is being given to the Town's hiring of lifeguards.

Mr. Nichols asked about an evacuation plan. Chairman Woolsey said the Town participates in exercises conducted by the nuclear plant.

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Planning & Zoning

Chairman Woolsey welcomed Jamie Stefan, Town Planner.

Moved by Mr. Plouffe, seconded by Mr. Lessard, to move forward to the public hearing the amount of \$127,922 for Planning & Zoning.

Mr. Stefan said the department is asking for only a slight increase. This is due to having the Conservation Coordinator on board. Other areas have been reduced.

Chairman Woolsey asked if there was any way of recovering any of the expenses associated with the Conservation Coordinator and if there could be a fee as part of the review process. Mr. Stefan said they had increased the fees, however, this will not cover this employee's salary.

Mr. Silberdick asked if everything possible is being reimbursed. Mr. Stefan said fees are collected from developers. Application fees are up and this covers notices, etc. in the newspaper.

Mr. Nichols said there had been impact fees for the schools. There had been talk about doing this for the developers, but nothing happened. Mr. Stefan said they are waiting until the master plan is updated. In order to do impact fees, a comprehensive study has to be done.

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes – November 6, 2007

Moved by Mr. Lessard, seconded by Mr. Pierce, to approve the Minutes of November 6, 2007 as amended.

Vote: 8 yes, 0 no, 3 abstentions (Griffin, Hanson, Nickerson). Motion passed.

Corrections made to the Minutes are as follows:

Add on page 4, after 6th paragraph:

Mr. Friedman said he was concerned about this Committee and the Board of Selectmen dealing with issues like solid waste handling. No one has made an effort to look into how the departments could be run differently than they have been for the last 20 years.

Legal

Chairman Woolsey welcomed Mark Gearreald, Town Counsel.

Moved by Mr. Plouffe, seconded by Mr. Lessard, to move forward to the public hearing the amount of \$348,391 for Legal.

Attorney Gearreald talked about the estimated 2007 revenue in the amount of \$3,000 raised by attorney review. He said they are now charging for condo reviews. The \$3,000 will be exceeded next year.

Mr. Silberdick asked about the rate of \$90/hour. Attorney Gearreald said this reflects the cost of running the entire Legal Department.

Mr. Nichols inquired about staff development. Attorney Gearreald said this is due to the Legal Assistant who works part time. She is presently going to law school.

Mr. Nichols asked about litigation expenses. Attorney Gearreald said this is for outside counsel fees.

Mr. Friedman asked about the trend associated with grievances. Attorney Gearreald said grievances are down.

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Welfare

Chairman Woolsey said by state law the Town is responsible for welfare as a community.

Moved by Mr. Plouffe, seconded by Mr. Pierce, to move forward to the public hearing the amount of \$158,132 for Welfare.

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Executive

Moved by Mr. Plouffe, seconded by Mr. Pierce, to move forward to the public hearing the amount of \$143,700 for Executive.

Mr. DeMarco said he would want an explanation for the increase of \$50,000 for the Town Manager's expenses. Mr. Griffin said this was a consulting fee.

Mr. Nichols said he did not see the need for any consultant considering all the talent in the Town.

Chairman Woolsey said that an explanation will be made by Mr. Welch when the Committee meets with him.

Amendment made by Mr. Nichols, seconded by Mr. Lessard, subtract the amount of \$50,000 (Town Manager's Expenses) from the Executive budget.

Mr. Griffin said the majority of the Board of Selectmen did not want to support the Manager on this.

Vote: 8 yes, 3 no (DeMarco, Friedman, Pierce). Amendment passed.

Budget Committee

Moved by Mr. Plouffe, seconded by Mr. Silberdick, to move forward to the public hearing the amount of \$1,839 for the Budget Committee.

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Trustees of the Trust Funds

Moved by Mr. Plouffe, seconded by Mr. Silberdick, to move forward to the public hearing the amount of \$2,350 for the Trustees of the Trust Funds.

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Heritage Commission

Moved by Mr. Plouffe, seconded by Mr. Pierce, to move forward the amount of \$1,200 for the Heritage Commission.

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Total Executive

Moved by Mr. Plouffe, seconded by Mr. DeMarco, to move forward to the public hearing the amount of \$114,589 for Total Executive.

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Town Office Building

Moved by Mr. Plouffe, seconded by Mr. Griffin, to move forward to the public hearing the amount of \$86,873 for Town Office Building.

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

District Court

Moved by Mr. Plouffe, seconded by Mr. Griffin, to move forward to the public hearing the amount of \$400 for District Court.

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Patriotic Purposes & Town Beautification

Moved by Mr. Plouffe, seconded by Mr. Griffin, to move forward to the public hearing the amount of \$1,650 for Patriotic Purposes and \$500 for Town Beautification.

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Conservation Commission

Moved by Mr. Pierce, seconded by Mr. Griffin, to move forward to the public hearing the amount of \$3,600 for the Conservation Commission.

Amendment made by Mr. DeMarco, seconded by Mr. Pierce, to add \$1.00 to the line item Land Acquisition.

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no. Amendment passed unanimously for a total of \$3,601.

Moved by Mr. Pierce, seconded by Mr. Griffin, to move forward to the public hearing the amount of \$3,601 for the Conservation Commission.

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Griffin discussed the new Hampton Energy Committee. He said it is broken down into four subcommittees (Residential, Business, Municipal and Program Information). Mr. Griffin said that a meeting was held at Foss. Foss was very impressive and brings recycling to new heights. Everything is made with recycled plastic bottles. The next meeting of this new committee will be November 21. Call Mr. Griffin or Warren Bambury (929-4322) if interested.

Mr. Nichols said it is a complicated task for the Budget Committee to set a budget. The Committee has to balance the wants and needs of the departments, the schools and the taxpayers.

Mr. Nichols presented an analysis of the tax bill. It is broken down into Town (net of revenues), Local Education, State Education and County. Town spending is up 44%. School spending is up 87%. Mr. Nichols said it would appear there has been more generosity towards the schools than the Town. Mr. Nichols said taxes on a single family home in 2002 were \$4,391 and in 2007 \$5,852.

Ms. Nickerson said a lot of increase in the school budget is due to contracts. This year's school budget will show an increase because of the contracts voted in last March.

Chairman Woolsey noted that the schools are single function entities and do not bring in revenues like the Town does.

Mr. Nichols said that based on this analysis the school expenses have risen substantially faster than the Town's. This analysis should be presented to the School Board prior to the meeting with them so clarifications can be made.

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The next meeting will be Tuesday, November 20, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room. At this time Elected Officials will be addressed.

Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Rice
Secretary

Mary-Louise Woolsey, Chairman