

HAMPTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
MINUTES
October 29, 2013

Budget Committee Members Present

Eileen Latimer, Chairman
Richard Reniere, Vice-Chairman
Philip Bean, Selectman Representative
Robert Ladd, Hampton Beach Village District Representative
Pat Collins
Richard Desrosiers
Joe Grzybowski
Timothy Citizen Jones
Sunny Kravitz
Stephen LaBranche
Brian Lapham (7:15 p.m.)
Mark McFarlin
Sandra Nickerson
David Wood

Absent

Ginny Bridle, School Board Representative

Chairman Latimer called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Chairman Latimer said this meeting was the beginning of the process to actually prepare the budget for the Town of Hampton.

Chairman Latimer said there is an opening for the seat vacated by Victor DeMarco. David Wood has stepped forward as a candidate.

Moved by Ms. Nickerson, seconded by Mr. Collins, to appoint David Wood to the Budget Committee position vacated by Victor DeMarco.

Vote: 13 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

At this time, Jane Marzinzik, Town Clerk, swore Mr. Wood in for the position.

Self-introductions were made by members of the Committee.

Adoption of Minutes

Moved by Ms. Nickerson, seconded by Mr. Desrosiers, to approve the Minutes of October 15, 2013.

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no, 2 abstentions (LaBranche, Wood). Motion passed.

At this time Mr. Lapham joined the meeting.

Chairman Latimer then began the work session. She noted that last year's budget was \$24,599,427. The budget as proposed this year by the Board of Selectmen is \$26,109,500. She said some things cannot be changed such as debt service. Mr. Reniere said what this Committee is looking at is the Operating Budget. Many more things will come into play such as school budgets and warrant articles.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Town Clerk

Moved by Mr. Desrosiers, seconded by Mr. Reniere, to move forward to the Public Hearing the amount of \$238,198 for Town Clerk.

Jane Marzinzik, Town Clerk, said there is not a lot of change from last year's budget. A 3% increase in the Town Clerk's wages was requested but turned down by the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Marzinzik said they have been working very hard to increase revenues.

Amendment made by Mr. Desrosiers, seconded by Mr. Collins, to raise the Town Clerk's wage to \$56,875.

Chairman Latimer noted that the Town Clerk's position is unique because she is an elected official. Mr. Jones said the Town Clerk's office is an area of excellence in the Town.

Amendment made by Mr. Desrosiers, seconded by Mr. Jones, to raise the Town Clerk's wage to \$60,000.

Mr. Bean said as the Selectmen's representative he felt he was bound to vote as the Selectmen had.

Mr. LaBranche said the Town Clerk had asked for only a 3% increase and he felt that is acceptable in today's economy.

Chairman Latimer said there are a lot of employees in the Town who are worth a lot more. She said she would be in favor of the increase requested by Ms. Marzinzik. Mr. Lapham said he agreed with Chairman Latimer.

Mr. Desrosiers said he had two objectives for this year. It is important to take care of the Town employees and to improve the infrastructure.

Vote: 3 yes, 11 no (Bean, Collins, Grzybowski, Kravitz, LaBranche, Ladd, Lapham, Latimer, McFarlin, Reniere, Wood). Amendment failed.

Chairman Latimer asked for a vote on Mr. Desrosiers previous amendment to raise the Town Clerk's salary to \$56,875.

Vote: 13 yes, 1 no (Bean). Amendment passed.

Chairman Latimer asked for a vote on the adjusted total for Town Clerk which is \$239,302.

Moved by Mr. Reniere, seconded by Mr. Lapham, to move forward to the Public Hearing the adjusted amount of \$239,302 for Town Clerk.

Vote: 13 yes, 1 no (Bean). Motion passed.

Tax Collector

Moved by Chairman Latimer, seconded by Mr. McFarlin, to move forward to the Public Hearing the amount of \$95,081 for Tax Collector.

Vote: 14 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Executive

Moved by Chairman Latimer, seconded by Mr. Reniere, to move forward to the Public Hearing the amount of \$171,925 for Executive.

Mike Schwotzer said there are no changes under Board of Selectmen, Town Manager's section, Heritage Commission, Budget Committee and Trustees of the Trust Funds.

Mr. Lapham said he was concerned about overspending under Supplies & Expenses. Mr. Schwotzer said he believed this money is being spent wisely. This amount is up because of the copying and binding of original Town documents.

Vote: 12 yes, 2 no (Lapham, Nickerson). Motion passed.

Conservation Commission

Moved by Mr. Reniere, seconded by Mr. Collins, to move forward to the Public Hearing the amount of \$33,252 for Conservation Commission.

Jay Diener, Chairman of the Conservation Commission, said the only change is a salary increase for the Conservation Coordinator. The increase is 9.25%.

Ms. Nickerson said she would not be in favor of this kind of increase. It should be no more than what is being given to the Town Clerk which is 3%. Mr. Schwotzer said this employee is already receiving this increase and has been since July, so if this is changed, she would get a cut.

Chairman Latimer said that if this is true, sometime during this year this individual received a salary increase that was not budgeted. Mr. Collins and Mr. Ladd said they were opposed to this sort of process.

Mr. Diener said he would take responsibility. Mr. Diener said he felt this employee deserved this increase even though it was outside the normal process. Mr. LaBranche said he did not feel the Committee could undo this at this time.

Town Counsel Mark Gearreald said the Town Manager sets compensation for employees. The Board of Selectmen do have the authority to transfer monies in the budget during the course of the year. This is really not out of line. Mr. Diener said this was addressed by the Board of Selectmen and they approved it.

Chairman Latimer said it is wrong to not bring this type of issue before the Budget Committee. Merit increases are different because they are a one time thing. Chairman Latimer said this Committee needs to send a message that this is not how this is done.

Mr. Wood said many people have had employees that they felt were underpaid. However, there is a budget to adhere to. This could start a precedent. Mr. Desrosiers said he would support the Town Manager and Board of Selectmen on this matter. It was within their right to do this. Mr. McFarlin said he did not feel the Committee could cut this amount since it was approved by the Board of Selectmen. A message has now been sent, but this employee should not have her salary cut. Fred Welch, Town Manager, said the Conservation Commission is a lawful board that voted to give an employee a raise. Mr. Welch said he has no jurisdiction to overrule this.

Amendment made by Mr. Lapham to adjust the amount for the Conservation Commission to \$31,597. There was no second.

Chairman Latimer then said she felt the main motion should be tabled.

Moved by Ms. Nickerson, seconded by Mr. Collins, to table the motion to move forward to the Public Hearing the amount of \$33,252 for the Conservation Commission

Vote: 10 yes, 2 no (McFarlin, Reniere), 1 abstention (Bean). Mr. Lapham was absent for this vote.

At 9:00 p.m. Chairman Latimer called for a break.

The meeting resumed at 9:15 p.m.

Assessing

Moved by Chairman Latimer, seconded by Mr. Desrosiers, to move forward to the Public Hearing the amount of \$242,287 for Assessing.

Ed Tinker, Assessor, discussed the \$60,000 noted for Contracted Services. This is used for various legal actions. Attorney Gearreald said it is basically a litigation expense item. Mr. Tinker said the number of appeals received is below average and no new appeals have been filed this year.

Vote: 14 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Legal

Moved by Mr. Reniere, seconded by Mr. Desrosiers, to move forward to the Public Hearing the amount of \$235,600 for Legal.

Attorney Gearreald said this budget is down by 1.31% from last year and is the lowest budget since 2004. The increase in Outside Counsel Fees is due to the Seabrook matters. There is an addition of a part-time clerical person for 16 hours per week.

Mr. Jones asked what the legislative authority was to create this position. Attorney Gearreald said it was RSA 41:8 – Authority under the Board of Selectmen to Manage the Town.

Ms. Nickerson said she was not in favor of creating this position. Mr. Wood, Mr. Collins, Mr. Ladd, Mr. LaBranche and Mr. Reniere all spoke in favor.

Chairman Latimer noted that this department is really growing and there are needs in other departments.

Amendment made by Mr. Lapham, seconded by Ms. Nickerson, to remove line item 1200, P/T Wages, from the budget for Legal.

Vote: 5 yes, 9 no (Bean, Collins, Desrosiers, Grzybowski, LaBranche, Ladd, McFarlin, Reniere, Wood). Amendment failed.

Chairman Latimer asked for a vote on the main motion.

Vote: 9 yes, 5 no (Jones, Kravitz, Lapham, Latimer, Nickerson). Motion passed.

Parks & Recreation

Moved by Mr. LaBranche, seconded by Mr. Reniere, to move forward to the Public Hearing the amount of \$240,631 for Parks & Recreation.

Dyana Martin, Parks & Recreation Director, went through her budget. Changes are primarily from parks and maintenance. These things change from year to year.

Ms. Martin discussed lifeguards. They try to have them start on Memorial Day, but it has been difficult to find qualified and certified people.

Chairman Latimer asked what income is created by this department. Ms. Martin said it was approximately \$650,000. This includes parking lot income.

Mr. Ladd asked which programs were self-sustaining. Ms. Martin said the Recreation programs. Mr. Ladd asked where the parking lot income goes. Ms. Martin said it goes into the general fund.

Vote: 14 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Parking Lots

Moved by Mr. Desrosiers, seconded by Mr. Jones, to move forward to the Public Hearing the amount of \$68,250 for Parking Lots.

Ms. Martin said she requested a higher starting salary for parking lot supervisors and a small raise for those who have worked longer. This was not approved by the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. LaBranche said this is a cash business and it is important to have trustworthy employees.

Amendment made by Mr. LaBranche, seconded by Mr. Collins, to increase line item 1200 (Part-Time Wages) to \$66,991 bringing the bottom line to \$83,241.

Mr. Jones said this was approximately a 28% increase and seems irrational.

Chairman Latimer said she would like to table this and look at man hours.

Mr. LaBranche withdrew his amendment.

Hampton Budget Committee
October 29, 2013
Page 7

The next meeting will be Tuesday, November 5, 2013, at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at which time review will continue on General Government.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Rice
Secretary