

**HAMPTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
MINUTES
September 16, 2014**

Budget Committee Members Present

Eileen Latimer, Chairman
David Wood, Vice Chairman
James Waddell, Selectman Representative
Robert Ladd, Hampton Beach Village District Representative
Jerry Znoj, School Board Representative
Joe Grzybowski
Timothy Citizen Jones
Sunny Kravitz
Stephen LaBranche
Brian Lapham
Jim O'Loughlin
Michael Pierce
Michael Plouffe
Richard Reniere

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Committee members made self-introductions.

Presentation by Hampton Town Treasurer

Chairman Latimer welcomed Ellen Lavin, Town Treasurer, to the meeting and said Ms. Lavin will do an overview of the duties of her position.

Ms. Lavin said she has served as Treasurer since 1991 and this is an elected position. She is responsible for reconciling 17 accounts every month. These include the operating account with five separate accounts, accounts for the Heritage and Conservation Commissions, and two police accounts. She also handles a retainage for Penta and Waterline.

Ms. Lavin said she also assists when there is a need to borrow. The general fund is a lot of work – approximately 1,200 checks go out every month.

Mr. Znoj asked if this was a full-time position. Ms. Lavin replied that it is part-time and she works approximately five hours per week.

Ms. Lavin said she goes out for a line of credit at the beginning of the year in case of the need to borrow in anticipation for payment of taxes by residents. Mr. Kravitz said he felt it

would make sense to have residents pay taxes monthly to avoid the need for borrowing. Ms. Lavin said this would have to go to Town Meeting and may not be cost effective.

Mr. Jones said the Town Treasurer and Budget Committee provide a very important role and he values Ms. Lavin's position. Mr. Jones noted that RSA 41:29 lists the duties of the Treasurer. A number of these duties appear to be performed by someone other than Ms. Lavin. This is allowed but requires a written procedure. Mr. Jones asked Ms. Lavin to provide a copy of that procedure. Ms. Lavin agreed to do that.

Chairman Latimer asked if it would be helpful to move the tax date back by 30 days. Ms. Lavin said that would depend on the State because they set the tax rate. Mr. LaBranche said an MS-4 must be prepared by September 1st and submitted to DRA. It takes time for DRA to process this. They set the tax rate by October 14th. It would not be feasible to back up the time.

Chairman Latimer thanked Ms. Lavin for her fine presentation.

SAU 90 Update

Chairman Latimer welcomed Kathleen Murphy, Superintendent SAU 90, Nathan Lunney, Business Administrator SAU 90, and Ginny Russell-Bridle and Rusty Bridle, School Board members as well as Jerry Znoj who represents the School Board on this Committee.

Superintendent Murphy said they would discuss the FY 2013-14 Goals and Objectives, the FY 2013-14 Financial Review, give an update on FY 2014-15 and discuss their Plan for Budget Development for FY 2014-15.

Superintendent Murphy said their enrollment now stands at 1,150 students. She discussed the goals for 2013-14. Goal #1 was Curriculum Assessment and Instruction which includes working towards 100% student proficiency. Goal #2 was Human Capital Resources. Superintendent Murphy said they are proud to have highly qualified teachers and support staff. There are 308 people employed in the District. There is a new teacher supervision and evaluation model. Staff size is constantly monitored and last year there was a reduction of three classroom teachers and some paraprofessionals. Goal #3 was Communication. There is a new website and parent communication via Blackboard Connects. Goal #4 was Governance which covered building strong relationships with students, families and the community. Goal #5 was Finance and Facility to align resources to accomplish priorities within a balanced budget.

Superintendent Murphy said the District enjoyed many accomplishments during this year. The STEM program was successfully implemented. A team of guidance counselors updated their plan. There have been technology upgrades in all buildings. There is a new student

information system called Power School. Parents can access information on grades and homework. This system will transfer into Winnacunnet HS.

Superintendent Murphy said the District has provided over 200 hours on Channel 22 – sporting events, musicals, etc. The start of Channel 13 is anxiously awaited. A number of forums were held this year on safety, bullying, school calendar and Special Ed Title I.

A handbook for substitutes has been completed and a training conducted. A 3-day safety survey was done by Navy Seals. They gave good recommendations for improvement. In the business area, the contract with First Student for bus transportation has been renewed. The Centre School project is complete and came in under budget.

In other exciting news Principal Costa was awarded the Elementary School Principal of the Year award and will be traveling to Washington, D.C. Centre School was nominated for a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence award and Marston was selected as a Rewards School. Marston was also selected as a Title I Outstanding School.

Mr. Lunney discussed the financials. The Operating Budget created a surplus of \$223,199. There was a transfer of \$17,500 to bring Food Service to solvency.

Mr. Lunney discussed overages. No students have been sent out of District, but this necessitated the hiring of consultants (sight, hearing, etc.) to meet the needs of the children. Regarding Buildings, safety upgrades were done to bleachers and intercoms were upgraded. The gas line was repaired at Marston. The overage in Transportation is due to the McKenny Vento Law which requires the District to pay partial transportation costs for homeless children back to their school of origin.

There was a surplus of \$29,933.72 for the Centre project. This amount is added to the bottom line.

Mr. Lunney discussed Revenues. Considering all revenues, the Centre project, etc., the General Fund Balance is \$296,767.

Superintendent Murphy discussed 2014-15 Goals. They are basically the same with the addition of developing plans to address Hampton Academy and its program needs.

Mr. Lunney discussed the Budget and Planning for FY 2014-15. The Total Appropriations are \$19,961,745. They are assessing the need for a part-time Human Resources Assistant for the SAU 90 office. Contracts will be in this Budget.

Chairman Latimer thanked Superintendent Murphy and Mr. Lunney for a good and clear report.

Mr. Reniere said so much is technology driven in the schools and asked about students who could not afford a computer. Superintendent Murphy said the schools have laptops, desktops, and Ipads available. Also they have purchased 300 Chromebooks. 150 will be given to third grade students and 150 to sixth grade students. The students will keep the same device through the following three years. Winnacunnet is also doing this. Mr. Lunney said the Chromebooks were less than \$300 each and there is also a negative interest rate.

Mr. Ladd said that some states are now having problems with privacy issues. Superintendent Murphy said all of the students have electronic portfolios. These are monitored very carefully. There are restrictions as to who can access this data.

Mr. Ladd said in some areas of the country teacher assessments are being approached from several sides such as students also evaluating teachers. Superintendent Murphy said District teachers set goals, have walk-throughs, formal observation, summatives at the end of the year and although not mandated, some teachers use surveys. Peer evaluation is also used.

Mr. Wood asked about student to teacher ratio. Superintendent Murphy said it is 25 in grades 3 to 8 and 20 in the primary grades.

Chairman Latimer asked where the money left in the fund balance goes and when. Mr. Lunney said there is a voter approved appropriation. The tax rate raises the dollars. This is offset with grants and aid, Medicaid reimbursement. The remainder is raised in taxes. At the end of the year (June 30) that money minus money spent is returned to the Town as a credit to the next year's tax bill.

Mr. Lapham asked if the Chromebooks would go home with the students. Superintendent Murphy said the 6th graders will be allowed to take them home, but 3rd graders will have to wait for a while.

Mr. Pierce asked about Channel 13. Superintendent Murphy said they had been given a date of September 15th, but nothing has happened.

Mr. Waddell asked about per student cost. Mr. Lunney said it is \$13,704. This is close to the state average.

Mr. Kravitz asked how the teachers control what the students access on the Chromebooks. Superintendent Murphy said there are firewalls.

Chairman Latimer thanked Superintendent Murphy and Mr. Lunney for their fine presentation.

A break was taken at 8:53 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 9:04 p.m.

Selectmen's Report

Mr. Waddell said the Selectmen are working on the budget. Mr. Waddell said he will be attending the NHMA Conference as a representative of the Selectmen.

Chairman Latimer asked if the Committee will be able to bring in someone from NHMA for a seminar. Mr. Waddell said he will look into it.

Mr. Waddell said budget books will be available October 17th.

Hampton Beach Village District

Mr. Ladd said this has been a very good year for the Village District. Parking continues to be a problem. The new parking lot had a big increase in revenue. The Police and Fire Chiefs spoke at the Village District meeting about evacuation. FEMA spoke on flood insurance and David Wood on climate change. Winnacunnet will present a musical event every year in June at the Sea Shell.

School Board

Mr. Znoj said they are beginning negotiations on the SESP contract. Also looking at the renovation at Hampton Academy. The budget process has begun.

Monthly Budget Review

Mr. Pierce said there is really not much of a change. Snow removal overtime is a problem.

Mr. Znoj noted that money budgeted for sidewalks has not been spent.

Chairman Latimer asked Mr. Waddell to give the Committee an update on encumbrances.

Preparation of Municipal Budget Committee Budget

Secretary wages were discussed. Chairman Latimer said she felt the Committee Secretary was underpaid and showed a comparison of wages paid to other Town board secretaries. Mr. Jones said the Budget Committee should demonstrate leadership and lower their budget. Mr. Jones said this function should be less expensive and be reduced to legal regulations only.

Moved by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Pierce, to redefine the function of the Secretary and allow bidding to take place for the position.

Mr. Pierce said Minutes should just be taken from the video tape. It was noted that this person would still have to sit through 3+ hours of a video to get basic notes.

Chairman Latimer said this Committee is difficult to do by video because it is so large. Mr. LaBranche said there are also video malfunctions. Mr. Ladd said he was satisfied with the status quo. Mr. Reniere said he was opposed to any change. Mr. O'Loughlin said the Minutes are an historical record of the meeting and needed to add the flavor of the meeting. Mr. O'Loughlin said the Secretary should receive an increase. Mr. Plouffe said he prefers it as it is.

Vote: 2 yes, 12 no (Grzybowski, Kravitz, LaBranche, Ladd, Lapham, Latimer, O'Loughlin, Plouffe, Reniere, Waddell, Wood, Znoj). Motion failed.

Chairman Latimer said there are now 20 meetings and not enough in that line item to cover them.

Moved by Mr. Lapham, seconded by Mr. Wood, to increase the Secretarial Wages line item by 3%.

Chairman Latimer made it clear that this 3% increase would be to cover the extra meeting and is not an increase in the Secretary's pay.

Vote: 12 yes, 2 no (Jones, Pierce). Motion passed.

No changes were made in Legal Expenses.

Staff Development is for seminars, etc.

Bud Com Expenses (Supplies) was discussed.

Moved by Mr. Znoj, seconded by Mr. Pierce, to cut the Bud Com Expenses line item by 50%.

Vote: 3 yes, 11 no (Gryzbowski, Kravitz, LaBranche, Ladd, Lapham, Latimer, O'Loughlin, Plouffe, Reniere, Waddell, Wood). Motion failed.

Moved by Mr. Lapham, seconded by Mr. LaBranche, to leave the Bud Com Expenses line item as it is.

Vote: 11 yes, 2 no (Pierce, Znoj), 1 abstention (Jones). Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of June 17, 2014 will be addressed at the next meeting as Mr. Jones had issues.

Old Business

Chairman Latimer said the Committee vacancy continues to be open.

New Business

There was no New Business

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, October 21, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at which time Rolling Stock and Assessing will be addressed.

Adjournment

Moved by Mr. Jones, seconded by Mr. Lapham, that the meeting be adjourned.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Rice
Secretary