

HAMPTON MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE AGENDA

BUDGET WORK SESSION

Date: Thursday, November 5, 2015

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: Selectmen's Meeting Room

Budget Committee Members Present

Eileen Latimer, Chairman

Brian Lapham, Vice Chairman

Phil Bean, Selectman Representative

Nick Bridle

Scott Blair

Michael Pierce

Maureen Buckley, Hampton Village Precinct Representative

Sunny Kravitz

James O'Loughlin

Stephen LaBranche

Timothy "Citizen" Jones

Michael Plouffe

Jerry Znoj, School Board Representative SAU 90

David Wood, State Representative

Absent (excused)

Sandra Nickerson

- 1) Call to Order at 7:00 p.m.
- 2) Pledge of Allegiance
- 3) Introduction of Members
- 4) Work Session 3

Presentation & Questions of the following 2016 departmental requested budgets:

- a) Financial Administration – Fred Welch and Kristi Pulliam

Ms. Pulliam said that it is up .49%, the biggest change is in the postage meter, however, if you look at the explanation on page 5; the cost has not changed it is just how it is budgeted; we have a new postage meter with a lease on it. There is an increase for the treasurer for \$500; she has not had an increase since 2012. Part time wages is up 1.5%

which is in relationship to the non-union wages, which is what the employees received this year at 1.5%.

b) Personnel Administration

Ms. Pulliam said most of the lines that have increases are ones that we do not have control over like the retirement system, Medicare and Social Security, those are all wage related.

Chairman Latimer said those are all definite figures that are not subject to change at this point in time.

Ms. Pulliam said not unless they are wage line changes.

c) Municipal Insurance

Chairman Latimer asked what areas are holding us up right now.

Ms. Pulliam said the Liability and General Insurance and Worker's Compensation are holding us up, as they had gotten estimates from PLT, however, due to their court case they are involved in right now they have not relicensed, so as of June 30, 2016 at this moment they have not been relicensed to issue insurance, so am currently working to get at least 3 different vendors to give quotes, which is very involved. The estimates they have from PLT are even higher than what was put in the budget, because when I did the budget I just put in 5% like we do every year until we get the rates, but according to what we received from them; the Property Liability went up to \$353,334 and the Worker's Compensation is \$600,584. Topic will be revisited.

Town Manager Welch said basically other than Primex we are looking at the commercial market. Primex does not insure all the coverages we currently have. We bid Primex last year and they came in much higher and there were many coverages they did not afford us.

Ms. Pulliam said we have our rate for health insurance and it went up overall 17.3% and I looked at the actual plans our employees are on, because that is all we are budgeting for here and the average between the 5 different plans the employees are on, so that average was 17.85%.

Town Manager Welch said we have coverage on Property and Liability for 100% replacement of our fire equipment and ambulances, the other companies do not offer that.

d) Government Buildings

Ms. Pulliam said the largest increase was 12% for heating and fuel; we annualized all of those costs and came up with our best guess for any of the increases that are there; annualizing what we spent in 2015 and coming up with a number for 2016.

Town Manager Welch said fuel costs are going up, same with electric.

Mr. Znoj asked if they had gas.

Town Manager Welch said yes. The biggest problem we have in this building is maintenance; we are constantly maintaining this building.

Mr. LaBranche asked if this building was checked for mold.

Town Manager Welch said yes that there was one spot of mold in the back corner at the basement which was removed; we periodically have the building checked and have had the ducts cleaned.

Mr. LaBranche asked about the carpets and if they are cleaned.

Town Manager Welch said the carpets were brand new and cleaned twice a year.

Mr. Znoj asked if the heating companies give a budget plan.

Town Manager Welch said commercial buildings are not subject to that.

e) Legal

Attorney Gearreald said the budget of the legal department consists of two parts; the first part is the in house office portion and the second part is titled legal expenses, which is the outside portion. Overall the budget is \$198,875. This represents the lowest figure for the legal line since 2004; one thing you do not see is the income that the department does generate by virtue of reviewing condominium and homeowners association documents at the behest of the Planning Board; last year's figure was \$2,376.40, this year the figure is approximately \$6,000. We have a number of litigation cases that are handled in house, the bulk being tried are tax abatement cases; the total number of cases last year was 29; and as of this year that number is down to 16. The bottom line is between the budget requested this year and what was budgeted last year by virtue of the default budget we are at -4.33%. There is a development in the law that I do want to alert the board to after the budget is discussed.

Mr. Znoj said he did not see any gas drop off.

Attorney Gearreald said it was a contingency that you never know what you are going to be up against.

Mr. Znoj said outside counsel fees have doubled from last year, please explain.

Attorney Gearreald said there may be a few items that he projects will require the use of outside counsel for next year, based on his experience.

Vice Chairman Lapham asked about the library fee.

Attorney Gearreald said that fee was for updating the RSA books.

Attorney Gearreald said one of the seminars he recently attended on municipal law, one of the Attorney's reported there had been a case coming out of the Carroll County Superior Court involving the Town of Sandwich and it involved a situation where a party was challenging actions by the Zoning Board of Adjustment and by Selectmen on a land use matter and issued a right to know law request to find out what emails had been issued. It turns out that the in between meetings the Zoning Board of Adjustment had sent out, not just informational emails on saying we are going to meet on x date or here is material we are going to discuss, the emails were out there discussing what the position was or what it might be in between meetings. The Superior Court found that since sending such an email from one member to all others, even if it got no response was a meeting under the right to know law an illegal meeting because the public did not have a chance to view it. What happened was the Superior Court found these types of emails are illegal under the Right to Know Law, invalidating the decisions that were made involving those emails, ordered Attorney's fees on the part that the town be paid, and ordered that the boards in question undergo remedial training. I am telling every board I meet about this case.

5) Adjournment

Stephen LaBranche MOTIONED to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. SECONDED by Scott Blair.

Vote: 14 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstentions

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eileen Latimer, Chairman
T. Y., Secretary