

HAMPTON MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE AGENDA

Monthly Meeting DRAFT MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, September 20, 2016

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: Selectmen's Meeting Room

Attendance

Michael Plouffe, Vice Chairman
Regina Barnes, Selectman Representative
Virginia Bridle Russell, School Board Representative SAU 90
Robert Ladd, Hampton Beach Village District Representative
Danielle Augustine
Steven Henderson
Timothy "Citizen" Jones
Sunny Kravitz
Stephen LaBranche
Brian Lapham
Michael Pierce
Mary Louise Woolsey

Absent

Nicholas Bridle- Resigned

1) **Call to Order** at 7:00 p.m. by Vice Chairman Plouffe

2) **Pledge of Allegiance**

3) **Election of New Chairman**

Mr. Plouffe began the meeting by notifying the committee of the resignation of Chairman Bridle citing time constraints of Mr. Bridle's new employment. Mr. Plouffe also informed the committee of the resignation of the Bud Com Secretary.

Chairman Plouffe asked for nominations for Chairman.

Motion by: Sunny Kravitz to nominate Mary Louise Woolsey for Chairman,
Seconded by Stephen LaBranche.

Nomination accepted by Mary Louise.

Motion by: Timothy "Citizen" Jones to nominate Brian Lapham for Chairman.
Declined by Mr. Lapham.

No other nominations were given.

Vote: to accept Mary Louise Woolsey as Chairman approved **(9-0-3) (abstentions Tim Jones, Regina Barnes, & ?)**

4) Vacant Seat Announcement

Mary Louise Woolsey assumed the seat as Chair and notified the public of a vacancy on the Committee created by Mr. Bridle's resignation. She asked for anyone interested in the vacants to contact her or Mr. Plouffe prior to the next meeting.

5) Confirmation of new secretary.

According to an email from Nickolas Bridle the Secretary would no longer be working with the committee. Mary Louise had contacted another individual who is now unable to take the position. Eileen Latimer has offered to serve as Secretary with Joan Rice as back-up if needed.

Motion by Stephen LaBranche to accept Eileen Latimer as Secretary with Joan Rice as backup.

Seconded by Steven Henderson.

Vote approved, **(12-0-0)**.

Mr. Kravitz asked what the Secretary would be paid. Chairman Woolsey responded with the same rate that has been paid at \$125.00 per meeting. Chairman Woolsey also stated that the Secretary will be submitting form for approval by the Chair before request for payment is made to the Finance Department and that all recordings would be taken from home.

Mr. LaBranche requested a manifest of all budget committee member information be made the duty of the Secretary.

6) Introduction of Committee Members

7) SAU 90 Review June 30, 2016 year end close.

Chairman Woolsey introduced SAU Superintendent Kathleen Murphy and Finance Officer Nathan Lunney for the Sau 90 Budget Review. She also acknowledged School Board Committee Chairman Les Shepard and member Peppa Ring in attendance.

Superintendent Murphy offered to share with the Budget Committee, the budget and accomplishment highlights for 2015-2016.

- A. The expansion of STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, & math) to grades
- B. 3-8. Hampton Academy has had the program for the past 3 years but now will include Marston with an Innovation Lab.
- C. All students have a chrome book from grades 3-8.
- D. Grades K, 1 & 2 do not have individual Chromebooks but do have computer access.
- E. There is a 1 to 1 computer effort now in place in grades K-8.

- F. Food Service continues with a small surplus. The first 4 years saw this program in the “red” but through continued efforts of Mary & Nathan this year we saw a surplus just over \$800.
 - G. Wellness Program instituted to reduce rising health costs and the cost of substitute teaches due to staff illnesses is proving to be successful.
 - H. SAU 90 continues to receive grants from Title I, II, III, & X.
 - I. The SAU also received a \$24K grant from Homeland Security and is working with Hampton DPW for a TAP grant “Safe Routes to School”.
 - J. Donations from PTA came in at over \$30K.
- As a financial snapshot, Mr. Lunney gave the following figures:
- \$425,227 as the Fund balance to offset taxes.
 - \$540 K as accepted grants
 - \$800 + savings in Food Budget Expenses
 - \$225K Trust Fund Balance for Special Education

Mr. Lunney also stated that 2015-2016 anticipated teaching personnel was planned with 7 teachers per grade plus 1 kindergarten aide. Ultimately due to class size 1st grade & 1 Kindergarten teacher, as well as 1 aide were not required. Replacing retirees with “new hires” also created a savings in personnel.

Mr. Lunney ended the presentation saying \$70,000 had been encumbered for the replacement of sidewalks & cross walks. This project had been sent out to bid with only 1 bid being returned at twice the cost of the amount set aside. This will be re-bid at a later date.

During a question & answer period, Mr. Kravitz asking about options for the Hampton Academy project including if the Board had reached out to Hampton Falls? According to Superintendent Murphy, the School Board has reached out to Hampton Falls in what could be a regional relationship and an opportunity to collaborate, but has not received a response from Hampton Falls.

Mr. Jones calculated educational cost of \$18,770 per student and questioned Mr. Lunney as to the accuracy of these calculations. Mr Lunney said the federal calculation is in the \$15K range because the Federal calculation does not include transportation or bonds for school buildings, otherwise, Mr. Jones calculations were accurate. Mr. Jones then asked if expenses were trending up or down to which Mr. Lunney responded they are seeing a 1.8% increase.

It was also discussed between Mr. Jones & Mr. Lunney that the part-time Superintendent position had been budgeted at full time due to anticipation of the School Board in the 2015-2016 budget. This position has been included in the 2017-2018 budget subject to only a COLA increase. There was a delta in the original line but the savings are now gone.

Mr. Jones questioned the contract extension of 4 years for the Superintendent and the possible RSA violation of putting forth \$70,000 for sidewalk repairs not owned or

controlled by the schools. Mr. Jones pointed out that sidewalks were not in the budget.

Mr. Lunney responded that under “Safe Routes for Schools” the committee went before the Board of Selectmen and received approval.

Superintendent Murphy & School Board Representative Virginia Bridle both spoke to the safety of the children coming first.

Mr. Jones expressed that school budget should be focused on education and not town infrastructure. He was against paying for sidewalks, not passed by the town, being expended out of the school budget.

Chairman Woolsey suggested that before any further action takes place that it be checked with the DAR Administration.

Superintendent Murphy continued her update saying there are currently 3 Out of District placements. Students with other languages is now up to 35 and these children are from all over the globe.

The School Department’s goals continue to:

Have steady growth with communications including Twitter & Facebook

The School Board Focus will be on the development of policies & aligning with the state.

Looking for options for Hampton Academy.

Mr. Lunney reminded the committee that they would be back in December with the SAU Budget with anticipated increases in the retirement system of 10.8% for Teachers and 1.9% increase for non-certified personnel. These figures have already been rolled out.

Superintendent Murphy reminded the committee of a Public Forum of the Hampton Academy Facilities Committee on October 25th @ 7 PM. This forum is open to the public.

Timothy Citizen Jones asked who makes up the Facilities Committee and who decides who should be on it? The response by Virginia Russell and Superintendent Murphy was that the committee was comprised of approx. 25-30 members from the community including, teachers, parents, and anyone interested in being on the committee. According to Mrs. Russell “Whoever asked to be on the committee is on it”. Average attendance is about 20. Agendas & minutes are posted.

Steve LaBranche asked the status of the MS 25. Nathan Lunney responded that it has been completed and signed but not uploaded.

School Board Representative Russell interjected at the close of the Q & A that safety was the sole reason why the School Board was looking into sidewalks. Mr Jones

added he ‘Appreciates the motivation behind wanting to do the sidewalks’. The problem is with how voters thinking they are approving money for education not infrastructure.

Chairman Woolsey concluded that the Board of Selectmen has no right to give land away or to authorize use without the voters consent.

Chairman Woolsey thanked Superintendent and Mr. Lunney for their presentation and went on to introduce the next speaker Norman Silberdick.

8) Appointment: Norman Silberdick - Encumbrances

Mr. Silberdick started by saying he was a representative of the Rational Taxpayers when Mrs. Woolsey interjected he was being recognized as a taxpayer. Mr. Silberdick proceeded to give his credentials including his elected service on the Budget Committee, School Board, and Trustee of the Trust Funds. He also stated that he was A vocal communicator of the way our Selectmen go about doing business, and works with a group of individuals that are sticklers for rules & regulations and “playing by the rules”.

Mr. Silberdick went on to say that last year we had an issue with numerous violations of the purchasing policy, and no competitive bids over \$15K. At the end of the year \$455k was encumbered that would have otherwise gone on warrants to the taxpayers. He brought this to the Town’s attention and was told town counsel approved what was a defacto waiver of the purchasing policy. Subsequently we have ended up with a cost on a surveillance system that is in excess of what can be spent.

This has been brought up with DRA about process and procedure. Currently he is waiting for DRA to initiate a conversation between the DRA & the town on how to go about doing business. Mr. Silberdick stated he did not want the budget work to be in vain. He also found last year’s efforts to restrict Budget Committee from visiting & speaking direct to department heads to be wrong and illegal.

Chairman Woolsey said last year was the messiest budget year yet. Selectmen tried to keep within parameters so voters would not reject the budget. A number of warrant articles were pulled back using surplus instead but signed purchase orders are needed before December 31. Selectmen can “tap” surplus but must have signed purchase orders.

Norman pointed out that the Town must be mindful not to dip below the 3%-5% recommended level of budget/surplus reserves when spending down the surplus.

Timothy “Citizen Jones’ brought up the encumbrance of funds for police cameras whose cost had been declared by the Finance Director’s Report to the Board of Selectmen in the end of year recap dated January 23, 2016 while the Chief of Police indicated at a January 25th BOS Meeting he still hadn’t had time to access costs.

Mr. Jones said he thought these similar issues over encumbrances were settled in 2012.

Mr. Silberdick finalized his appointment by saying he was “optimistic this will not happen again”. Regarding encumbrances, “Make decisions sooner and do it properly”.

9) Report from IT Sub Committee

Mr. Jones gave the IT Sub Committee Report saying this is now a 2 member committee with the loss of Nick Bridle’s resignation leaving him and Michael Pierce on the committee.

This year the town’s issue of wanting to take \$30K out of the Trust Funds to pay for a cloud based email third party solution was neutered at the deliberative session. A 70% savings over the proposal needs to be discussed with Town personnel.

According to Mr. Pierce we have to look at the cloud application as what we need now vs. what we need in the future. Don’t buy everything upfront. Word & excel are already resonant on the system and Microsoft offers some of these programs free to schools & government.

Steve LaBranche asked if the Selectmen would be receptive to advice for IT from Mr. Pierce & Mr. Jones since they had also served on the Selectman’s IT Committee? Selectman’s Representative Regina Barns said they should go through the protocol but she also offered to confer with Kristy.

Chairman Woolsey asked for a consensus of whether to leave the number of people on the IT Sub-Committee at 2.

Response was unanimous to leave the number at 2.

10) Approve Minutes of March 15, April 19 & June 21, 2016

Approval of Minutes for April 19, 2016

Motion to approve the minutes by Stephen LaBranche

Seconded by Brian Lapham

Vote: Approved (11-0-1) (1 abstention-T. Jones)

Approval of Minutes for May 17, 2016

Motion to approve the minutes by Stephen LaBranche

Seconded by Brian Lapham

Correction: Mr. Kravitz was written as an unapproved absence. This should be changed to Excused Absence.

Vote: Approved (10-0-2) (2 abstentions T. Jones, S. LaBranche)

Approval of Minutes for June 21, 2016

Motion to approve the minutes by Michael Pierce

Seconded by Michael Plouffe

Approved (10-0-2) (2 abstention-T. Jones and V. Bridle-Russell)

11) Protocol for completing the 2017 Budget.

The Chairman set the next regular committee meeting for Tuesday, October 18, 2016. Nick had been investigating dates for the rest of the year, Mrs. Woolsey will now finalize the dates and will have a printout for the next meeting. There will be no meetings on Thanksgiving week and she will try to stick to a Tuesday, Thursday schedule. The School Board will be back in early December for their budget review.

Mr. Jones requested the schedule be emailed.

Mr. Ladd made an announcement that a “Flood Preparedness Workshop” would be held on Wednesday, October 28 between 6:30 – 8:30 PM in the Police Department Training Room.

ADJOURNMENT 8:58 PM

Motion by Stephen LaBranche to adjourn,

Seconded by Michael Plouffe.

Respectfully,

Mary Louise Woolsey, Chair
E.L., Secretary