

Board of Selectmen
September 13, 2012

PRESENT: Richard Griffin, Chairman
Richard Nichols, Vice Chairman
Michael Pierce, Selectmen
Philip Bean, Selectmen
Ben Moore, Selectmen
Frederick Welch, Town Manager

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

I. Public Comment Period - None

II. Budget Reviews

1. General Government

(1) Budget Committee

Mr. Pierce motioned to lower the funding amount and it failed with no second.

The Legal request was added to their budget last year and it was requested to be carried forward to this year's budget.

(2) Trustees of the Trust Funds

They are requesting the same amount of money as last year. No questions.

(3) Heritage Commission

No Questions.

(4) Town Clerk; (5) Voter Registration; (6) Election Administration

The budget is down 4% (as a whole it has 3- Sections, noted above) due to no state elections next year, it does include wage increases for staff that are contractual agreements and the Town Clerk.

Mr. Nichols asked if the Town Clerk's wage increase has the insurance concession, and it does not apply to her as she does not have the Town's insurance.

(7) Tax Collection

The budget almost the same as last year, but it was overspent by \$755.00; and \$500.00 of that is for tax lien and instruments, but the line item is 100% reimbursed. The budget includes wage increases for staff and the Tax Collector.

Mr. Nichols asked if the wage increase has the insurance concession, and Mrs. Bennett was not aware of the insurance concession for wage increase.

Mr. Nichols explained that all five unions and nonunion staff under the Selectmen have made the concession on the health insurance costs; where the wage increase was coupled with the increase of the employees cost from 10% to 15% of the total of the health insurance. Mr. Nichols feels very strongly that in order for any wage increase in the areas that have not been addressed, the insurance concession should be made part of it.

(8) Cemeteries

Director Danny Kenney explained his proposed budget and the cost items. Tree removal money to be encumbered for this year.

(9) Mosquito Control

No comment.

(10) Library

Amanda Reynolds, Director, explained her budget and the retirement numbers are slightly above then what was submitted previously. She has made cuts in several areas to offset the change in the retirement numbers. Wage increases are contractual agreements. Insurance benefit costs will increase by 8%. Utility costs have decreased. The budget increase is 2%, at \$85074. Patron use has increased.

Mr. Moore asked if the Library has contractual agreements, and they do. Mr. Pierce and Mr. Nichols both asked about the insurance concession and the Library did not. Mr. Nichols will be putting forth that the non-union member's wage increases are not to be included in the Default budget, so the voters can be warned. Mr. Bean complimented the Library.

(11) Conservation Commission

No questions.

(12) Assessing

The Budget was lowered by 20%. A line item was added, representing \$60,000 for contracted services to defend abatement for appeals, and which contains \$40,000 that was from the elimination of one of the Data Collector. Budget will increase by \$20,000, which comes from the Legal Department Budget for the contracted services.

(13) Legal

The Budget was lowered by 14%. Outside counsel costs have been lowered as the Assistant Town Attorney is now performing much of the work previously outsourced to outside counsel, and at a lower rate. The budget reflect a net reduction of \$39,000; of which, \$20,000 has been shifted to Assessing for contracted services, and \$19,000 for the work of the Assistant Town Attorney and not outside counsel.

Mr. Pierce asked if the 2012 budget includes money for the Water Rate and it is about \$5,000.

Mr. Bean asked about secretary support, and it was confirmed that there is no secretarial support since Mrs. Robertson became the Assistant Town Attorney, and it is not budgeted for. Mr. Bean suggested for future budgeting a part-time secretary support. He complimented the Legal Department for its work and fiscal savings for the Town. Mr. Nichols followed up on Mr. Bean's question regarding the total cost of outside labor in a

previous year (2009) for settlements, what was spent was approximately \$368,000. Mr. Nichols pointed out that there was a lot of negativity in the past of the cost of in-house counsel and that in the last three years in-house legal counsel is under than \$200,000 which includes the assistant attorney and is saving the Town a substantial amount of money.

(14) Planning Board; (16) Office of Planning

Mr. Steffen stated that the budget has not changed from previous years, but he noted that except the Planning Board authorized the salary increase this past year for the Planning Secretary.

It was asked if the wage increase was implemented this year and it was, and if the insurance concession was included in this wage increase and it was not.

(15) Zoning Board; (17) Building & Code Inspection

The budget is the same as last year for Zoning. Building and Code Inspection budget has an increase, contractual wage agreements, vehicles replacement – onetime cost, and to add a part-time (16hrs) secretary to help with the overall working of the office.

Mr. Nichols MOTIONED that the Town Manager and Finance Director to take another pass at this budget to identify savings to cover the level of increases. Mr. Pierce seconded.

Mr. Bean AMENDED the MOTION to incorporate the cost for a Legal Department part-time secretary. Mr. Pierce seconded.

VOTE on the AMENDMENT 3-2 (Griffin, Moore)

VOTE on the MOTION 3-2 (Griffin, Moore)

(18) Welfare

The budget is 6.61% lower than last year due to the showing of the actual wages of the Welfare Administrator at \$29,000; transferred \$1000 from Medical Payments to Food.

The Board thanked Michelle for her work.

(19) Board of Selectmen; (20) Town Manager

No change in the Board of Selectmen budget. Town Manager's has two budget changes: the minute transcription increase, to reflect actual paid cost, and the bookbinding cost increased. The transcription fee is a flat fee. Bookbinding is to preserve the BOS and towns records.

(21) Misc. Committees

\$500.00 for recycling that is now in the default and no funds for Highway Safety.

(22) Finance; (23) Audit Services

The budget increases are: wage increased due to contractual agreements, supplies: postage, procurement and advertising. Total increase - \$8,000 change. Digitalizing Town records is \$5,000 and will plateau. No change and the re-bid date is 2014 for the Audit Services.

(24) Management Info Systems

No change in the budget. It was suggested that this department should continue to be modernized, and the budget increased to achieve that.

(25) Personnel Administration

This line item reflects all of the overhead costs (CBA's Social Security, Medicare, Retirement, etc.) except for the Insurances. It has increased by 14%, going from 2.1 million to 2.4 million. The Retirement Rates increases effect years 2013 and 2014, and are reflected in this line item. This line item was over extended in 2012 and this year is to catch up.

(26) Government Buildings

Telephone has increased, custodial services are running low, electricity is running consistently, and water will increase, building maintenance will increase.

(27) Municipal Insurance

With the Health insurance changes, the changes amounted into a negative, which when the 8% is applied, the rate will be only 1%, using the current rate. Life insurance – no increase. Unemployment costs have increased, due to the layoffs of part-time employees for the winter who file. Workers Comp rate hopefully will come in at level or be lowered.

(28) Other Services – Hydrants

This will experience an 18% rate increase as we rent the Hydrants from the Water Company.

(29) Patriotic Purposes

This will be increased to what is actually spent.

(30) Other - Town Beautification

This will stay the same.

(31) Municipal Debt Service

Two adjustments are requested, principal and interest of the SRF Loan for the Church Street Pump Station. The first SRF payment will occur in 2014, not 2013; so the payment and interest line items will have an adjustment down by \$116,063. In the debt of 2012 versus 2013, 2013 is down by \$700,016, as the majority of that amount reflects the final payment of the Police Station bond.

III. Old Business

Mr. Nichols brought up DPW budget review on 09/24/12; he suggests that a non-public meeting occur before the 24th to discuss the re-organization, it is scheduled for the 18th.

IV. New Business

Discussion on Mr. Stonie's resignation and his length of service to the Town and the form of recognition to be done for his service. The Community Oven approvals are in place.

V. Selectmen's Closing Comments – None

VI. Adjournment

Mr. Nichols MOTIONED to adjourn the public meeting. Mr. Moore SECONDED.

VOTE: 5-0-0

Chairman