

Hampton Municipal Budget Committee

DRAFT MINUTES

Tuesday January 7, 2020
Selectman's Meeting Room 7 PM

Attendance

Brian Warburton, Chair
Michael Plouffe, Vice Chair
Stephen LaBranche
Steven Henderson
Joyce Skaperdas
David Maurer
Rusty Bridle, Selectman Representative
Maureen Buckley, Hampton Village Beach District Representative

Absent

Virginia Bridle-Russell, SAU90 Representative

1. Call to Order at 7 PM by Mr Warburton

2. Pledge of Allegiance by Mr Bridle

3. Introduction of Members

4. Attending:

Fred Welch, Town Manager, Jamie Sullivan: Deputy Town Manager, Kristi Pulliam, Finance Director

5. Review and Approval of Minutes from December 10, 2019

Mr Plouffe moved to accept the Minutes of December 10, 2019; Second: Mr Henderson
Approved: Unanimous; Abstained: Ms Buckley

6. 2020 Hampton Town Warrant Articles - continued review

[Secretary's notation: The descriptions of the Warrant Articles below are for identification purposes. The full text of Warrant Articles can be found on the Town of Hampton Website or from the Finance Director.]

(i) Master Plan Initiative/Update

Attending: Jason Bachand, Town Planner

Mr Bachand said the Master Plan process began in June of 2019 and involved many discussions with the Steering Committee comprised of representatives of various boards and committees, and community participants. To justify the \$125,000 request to complete a comprehensive document, costs, population data, and plan documents from other communities were compared. New Hampshire municipalities are required to have master plans recommended to be updated every 5 years. The Town's existing plan dates back to 1985 with limited revisions over time. An up-to-date master plan with a vision for the town's future is needed to maintain property values and the quality of life, and enhances the likelihood of the Town being successful in obtaining grants for projects that are otherwise unaffordable in Hampton. The process will include robust public participation.

Mr Bachand reported that the Town has already obtained a \$45,000 grant earmarked for the Vision and Coastal Management sections. This Warrant Article request is to allow concurrent completion of the entire plan which is fully current, comprehensive and user friendly. Mr Warburton called attention to the preliminary Survey which so far has had 1600 participants, 400 of which have responded to 2 or more questions yielding valuable insight. The Survey can be accessed on the town website. Mr LaBranche said the survey was well done.

Mr Maurer recalled that last year the outdated master plan was described as very unwieldy, disordinated, and hard to get at information. He wanted to see the strategy with goals, and asked for a sample plan with results. Mr Bachand said the new plan needs to be more concise than those reviewed, and not necessarily in a format where chapters are done at different times; it needs to cover current topics including coastal issues. The Steering Committee reviewed several other plans (e.g. Exeter, York, Hampton Falls). He felt looking at them one-by-one would not be productive, but noted that at least one community had spent \$200,000 during their process. In response to Mr Maurer, Mr Bachand said the requested funds will be paid to consultants who work with the Steering Committee and provide progress reports; his office would provide ongoing monitoring.

In response to Mr Maurer's question about how the consultant for the vision and coastal components was chosen, Mr Bachand said the team evaluating the 3 submissions (to the rfp) was, Tracy Emerick, Ann Carnaby, Jason Bachand, Laurie Olivier, and Natalie Morrison. In response to Ms Skaperdas, There would be a full new rfp procedure to select the consultant for the work under the Warrant Article. Mr Warburton commented that the firm chosen for the Vision and Coastal sections was already working with the DPW. Mr Maurer was concerned about the possibility of work getting behind schedule, and/or if \$125,000 is not enough. In his experience some consultants had expert technical capacity e.g. software, while others were lacking. Mr Bachand said the consultant would deliver progress reports to the Town, and meet with the Steering Committee; he would monitor progress; there would be no increase in the contract fee; the contract runs to 2023. Mr Sullivan said the contract would be controlled by law.

In response to Mr Maurer, Mr Bachand said they had worked with the grant funder to evaluate the 3 firms that submitted responses to the first rfp, using predetermined criteria and questions. The selection was based on the proposal submissions, qualifications, previous work, and checking some references. The selection was made after averaging the scores. Mr Maurer said the contract should specify that all of the work had to be completed for the stated contract price; there would be no increase in the fee amount. If they do fall behind schedule they are responsible for the completion; penalties would usually be addressed. Mr Warburton said this consultant is already known to the Town. The Town Planner will be monitoring. Mr Bachand agreed the contract should state that the \$125,000 from the Town is the full amount to complete all of the work.

Mr Plouffe, Mr Henderson and Mr Bridle said the town needed to move the Master Plan process to completion now. Mr Bridle noted a lot has changed since 1985, although some items in that plan had been done. Mr Bachand said when applying for grants a master plan is usually requested; an up-to date master plan is an advantage, if not required, especially for coastal towns. Ms Skaperdas asked what had been accomplished in re the 1985 plan, and wanted to know that the requested money would be well-spent. Mr Bachand said an implementation schedule is key and that would be a priority for him. Mr LaBranche said the completed master plan is needed as a tool for obtaining coastal grants; without it would be more difficult. Mr Bachand had brought the process to the next level which was very good compared to what was presented in 2019. In response to Mr Mauer, Mr Bachand said the plan would be comprehensive, and include current information and plans from the DPW e.g. condition of infrastructure and interaction, and show interaction with all departments.

Mr Henderson moved to forward to the public hearing the sum of \$125,000 for completion of the Master Plan. Second: Mr Bridle. Approved: Unanimous. (8-0)

(ii) Firefighters Contracts

A firefighters' representative expressed appreciation for the civil negotiation in re each of two fire department contracts that keep the Town in a good position to attract personnel in a very competitive job market. He asked for approval of both contracts. Mr Sullivan said the contracts are between the Board of Selectmen and the respective firefighter unit. For purposes of the negotiation the two bargaining units were merged, although the contracts will be separate. The items in the warrant article represent costs above the current budget and have to be ratified by the Town Meeting. Each contract increases by 2.8% for each of 3 years; there are some salary adjustments to fall in line, as well as adjustments for BA degrees and dress uniforms.. Some of the language changed.

Mr Warburton said the FY2020 requests amount to increases of \$87,623 for the Firefighters Association, and \$31,742 for the Supervisory Association. Mr LaBranche supported both requests. In response to Mr Maurer, Mr Sullivan explained that the figures are adjusted because the contracts expire in April; when reaching the next level stipends increase accordingly. Mr LaBranche and Mr Henderson consider the Hampton Fire Department the very best,

professionally trained, doing great jobs. Mr Henderson remarked that these contracts will now be more in line with the Police contracts. Mr Bridle also commended the good negotiation. Ms Skaperdas noted the contracts stay in place to 2023 and apply to existing personnel. Mr Warburton supports the contracts for the Town's well-qualified firefighters who do a great job and keep the town's reputation high.

Hampton Professional Firefighters Association

2020 \$ 87,623
2021 \$118,455
2022 \$125,166
2023 \$ 29,054

Fire Department Supervisory Association

2020 \$31,742
2021 \$38,398
2022 \$37,769
2023 \$ 9,499

Mr LaBranche moved to forward to the public hearing the sum of \$87,623 for the 2020 Hampton Professional Firefighters Association contract. Second: Mr Plouffe. Approved: Unanimous. (8-0)

Mr LaBranche moved to forward to the public hearing the sum of \$31,742 for the 2020 Fire Department Supervisory Association contract. Second: Mr Plouffe. Approved: Unanimous (8-0)

(iii) Veterans Cemetery Markers

Attending: Chris Nevins

Mr Nevins said last year the article to restore payments for cemetery markers for veterans failed. They are grateful for the town's respect and ask that it reconsider the amount of \$6,500 that would about cover 200 markers; the town pays for the flags. In other towns markers are invoiced for reimbursement. In response to Mr Warburton, Mr Nevins said 200 markers are catch-up; he will suggest a written plan, noting they raise some funds and give a few scholarships. Ms Skaperdas said if markers are pulled up they should be replaced. Mr Welch said the appropriation was only for flags. Mr Bridle said markers are taken up for repairs and put back. Mr Plouffe and Mr Maurer agreed that an appropriation should be in the Budget. Mr LaBranche felt it inappropriate for a non-profit to ask taxpayers for a hand-out, although he would be glad to make a personal donation. The American Legion should be fundraising and buy what they can each year. Ms Buckley disagreed saying they had every right to come to the people; she would support the Warrant Article.

Mr Plouffe and Mr Maurer want the cost of markers to be in the budget to show community support. Mr Welch said the cost of flags had increased substantially over the years; if markers are added the appropriation would have to be larger. If the current problem for the 200 markers were solved there would be time to plan for the future. Mr Warburton said everyone in the

community supports the veterans, and felt the marker money should be in the cemetery operating budget rather than chance that the warrant article doesn't pass..

Mr LaBranche moved to add \$6500 to the FY2020 cemetery budget line. Second: Ms Skaperdas. Approved: Unanimous. 8-0

Mr Welch said the petitioner should request removal of the Warrant Article.

(iv) Public Works Warrant Articles

Attending: Chris Jacobs, DPW Director; Jennifer Hale, DPW Deputy Director

(i) Asset Management for Wastewater Assets.

Mr Warburton read the Warrant Article for the sum of \$30,000 to assist the DPW with Asset Management for Wastewater Assets, said sum to be offset by principal loan forgiveness under the NH Department of Environmental Services Clean Water State Revolving Fund. Ms Hale said these funds are for staffing and GIS purposes, and are important for pre planning; this continues the work begun last year.

Mr LaBranche moved to forward to the Public Hearing the sum of \$30,000 to assist the DPW with Asset Management for Wastewater Assets, and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for and accept funding for this purpose, to borrow or issue bonds in anticipation of such funds, and to authorize participation in the State Revolving Fund. (3/5 vote required).Second: Mr Plouffe; Approved: Unanimous 8-0

(ii) Multi-Year Contracts for Solid Waste Recycling, Construction and Demolition Waste and Waste Hauling

Mr LaBranche moved to forward to the Public Hearing the sum of \$425,127 for Multi-Year Contracts for Solid Waste, Recycling, and Demolition Waste and Hauling to cover substantial increases in contract costs for the second half of 2020, and approval of the Board of Selectmen entering into a 3 1/2 year contract(s) with entities that have submitted bids for this work; such sum to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance. Mr Jacobs said in addition to the increased hauling costs, the town no longer receives payment for the contents. (Zero Tax Impact); Second: Ms Skaperdas. Approved: Unanimous. 8-0

(iii) Locke Road Sewer and Drainage Systems Replacement

Mr Warburton read the entire Warrant Article. Ms Hale said this project has been on the list for some time. Mr Jacobs said it is also in the CIP, and cost savings from projects like this will help (i) retain the wastewater treatment plant capacity, and (ii) avoid expansion. Mr Plouffe, Mr Henderson and Mr Warburton wanted this project done now. Mr Warburton thought such costs could be bonded. Mr Plouffe was very concerned that the project would not be completed on time, citing \$1,500,000 approved for Route 1 but not yet begun. Mr Henderson reminded that the town also has roads falling apart and infrastructure needing improvement in the near term. Mr Warburton reminded that the public's concern must be recognized, and felt the town should accelerate the infrastructure work. In response to Mr Warburton, Mr Jacobs confirmed that this

work will be done by subcontractors. Mr Welch explained that the project includes the time it takes to close out state grants etc which continues long after construction is completed. Mr LaBranche moved to forward to the Public Hearing the sum of \$850,000 for the purpose of replacing Locke Road Sewer and Drainage Systems ...also addressing related infrastructure. Second: Mr Plouffe. Approved: Unanimous. 8-0

(iv) Public Works Replacement Equipment

Mr Warburton read the full article. Ms Hale said \$303,000 covers the purchase of (2) ¾ ton trucks with plows, (1) utility hot box, and (1) 926 Caterpillar loader. Ms Hale said the vehicles being replaced are on their last legs. In response to Mr Plouffe, Mr Jacobs said there were too many expensive repairs to do that would take a lot of staff time and money. This is a critical long-term purchase.

Mr LaBranche moved to forward to the Public Hearing the sum of \$303,000 for the purchase of (2) ¾ ton trucks with plows, (1) utility hot box, and (1) 926M Caterpillar loader to replace aged vehicles, such sum to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance. (Zero Tax Impact) Second: Mr Henderson (8-0)

(v) Flood Control Designs

Mr Warburton read the full article. Ms Hale explained that the requested \$200,000 will be used to create modeling exercises to produce data in re flooding, water flows, sea level rise and the like in the Route 1A/Hampton Estuary area and surrounding streets. The objective is to be better able to seek funding for modeling solutions and preliminary designs, as recommended by the town and its consultants, which can serve as the basis for implementation and ultimately construction. Data is being collected and the engineering firm has been engaged to produce a report with recommendations. A related report is expected from consultants under a \$185,000 award to the Town. The current focus is to determine which recommendations can be put through to design including permitting and identifying potential resources such as the Army Corp. The town can then look for matching grants to implement the recommendations. Mr Jacobs said this work would demonstrate the Town's commitment to get this done with a firm plan needed to attract financial backing.

Mr LaBranche said this process creates the "building blocks" for implementing solutions. Residents in the area want something done properly. He thought with a plan finding grant money is possible. Mr Maurer said that today flooding happens with much greater frequency. With ice floes melting and sea levels rising he struggles to understand what can be effectively done when water will keep coming over the seawall, and asked what can be constructed to stop Mother Nature when houses fall into the ocean because of erosion. Mr Jacobs said the review process will have to address that question Ms Hale said one technique may be "managed retreat" i.e. bringing properties back to estuary form because the frequency of flooding is so much greater. However, if there is a combination of solutions that can alleviate the problem people can stay where they are. Mr LaBranche referenced the effective work being done

through the CHAT group, and said structures can be waterproofed, raised, allow water to pass under and flow back, or retreat. Ms Hale said the priority is to tackle the most vulnerable spots; perhaps construction grants could come from federal sources. Mr Maurer recalled that a lighthouse that had been moved back from the coast some time ago would now be moved even further back.

Mr Henderson moved to forward to the Public Hearing the sum of \$200,000 for Flood Control Designs; Second: Mr Plouffe. Approved: Unanimous (8-0).

(vi) Intersection, Sidewalk and Traffic Light Improvements – High Street and Mill Road

Mr Warburton read the full article. In response to Mr Henderson, Ms Hale said it is not too early to do this section so that the infrastructure is in place when the overhead crossing lights are installed. Mr LaBranche said the intersection is used a lot by children because of proximity to the Marston School and the Academy. In response to Ms Skaperdas, Mr Jacobs said there were no crossing guards; that would be a school board matter.

Mr Maurer moved to forward to the Public Hearing the sum of \$195,000 for the reconstruction of the High Street and Mill Road intersection, including ADA sidewalk construction and installation of underground piping for future pedestrian signal improvements. Second: Mr Henderson. Approved: Unanimous (8-0)

(vii) Side and Rear Loading Refuse and Recycling Trucks

Mr Warburton read the full article. Mr Jacobs said these vehicle requests are for 5-year leases; the full cost of the Mack Cab Over Refuse and Recycling Truck with a Labrie Automated two-sided Loader Body unit with arms on both sides is \$350,395; the full cost of the Mack 16-yard rear loading refuse and recycling truck is \$237,090. This request is for the first year lease payments of \$75,500 and \$51,000 respectively, for a total of \$126,500. Mr Jacobs said the recycling truck is similar to 2 trucks the DPW already has. (Three trucks had been traded in). They are asking to appropriate the third and expect a 20-year life. The current front loader would not pass inspection. Once an order is placed, delivery takes about 18 months.

Mr Plouffe is concerned that the trash industry is in turmoil. The rear loaders are proven to last for years and could have persons to load from each side as necessary on narrow streets. He suggested purchasing the rear loader first and the two-sided next year. Mr Jacobs said the department is down two staff; last year he had 5 openings and could hire only 3 laborers, although they can find drivers – this is a universal problem. The rear loader needs at least 1 person on the back. They can't use a bigger truck on narrow beach streets. Mr Maurer thought the warrant article confusing. Mr Jacobs said the DRA requires that the total value as well as the cost of the first year lease must be in the article. Mr LaBranche said leasing is good for now because 18 months out they can stop the lease which helps the taxpayers. Mr Jacobs said last year he leased one truck for part of the year which helped lower the CIP figures. The choice is to cycle out older vehicles rather than wait until they are 27 years old. If they don't follow an annual schedule for replacing trucks the cost to replace several trucks in one year will escalate.

Mr Warburton said the discussion will continue after the vote in March. Taxpayers are consistently asked for new trucks. He asked if the DPW could get by with purchasing one rear loader this year and hold off on the second truck. Maybe the town should get rid of the trash obligation, require fewer new trucks, and concentrate on improvements to roads and other infrastructure. Mr Jacobs said that was done in the past but was stopped because drivers from the private contractor were maxed out of overtime and streets were missed. Then voters decided they wanted a good level of service including picking up commercial trash. Mr Warburton thought the 2011 experience is not comparable to now. The overall cost of road and sewer improvements has been estimated at \$150,000,000; a west side fire substation has been suggested. Everything can't be done at once; something has to be cut. Hampton is the only community that collects commercial trash. Mr Warburton thought a comprehensive evaluation should be done next year with regular reports to Boards etc. to see where the Town is going. It would be a good message to taxpayers if the DPW could do without one of the trucks this year.

Mr LaBranche said even if the requested side arm truck is refused, next year a truck will have to be leased. He would go with the DPW plan. Mr Maurer affirmed the DPW does a phenomenal job. Ms Hale said they get behind when there are delays for lack of vehicles. The results of any change won't be felt for a year. They can quit the lease if there are changes. Mr Henderson said the townspeople pay good taxes and want trash pick-up. It takes 18 months or longer to get new trucks. Omitting one truck could cost the taxpayer a lot more money. An overall future plan must be done. Mr Warburton asked if there would be savings if the town stopped commercial trash pickup.

Mr LaBranche moved to forward to the Public Hearing the sum of \$126,500 for the first year lease payments for one Mack Cab Over Refuse and Recycling truck with a Labrie Automated two sided Loader Body unit with arms on both sides, and one Mack 16-yard rear loading refuse and recycling truck. Second: Mr Henderson. Approved: Stephen LaBranche, Steven Henderson, Joyce Skaperdas, David Maurer, Rusty Bridle, Maureen Buckley, Opposed: Michael Plouffe, Brian Warburton. Approved: (6-2)

(viii) Recycling Revolving Account

Mr Jacobs said the Solid Waste Committee recommended this item.

Mr LaBranche moved to forward to the Public Hearing the sum of \$80,000 to establish a Recycling Revolving account. Money in this account shall be allowed to accumulate from year to year, and shall not be considered part of the town's general surplus. Payments from this account, for the receipt processing and related purposes, may be ordered by the Board of Selectmen or the Town Manager with no further approvals required. Second: Ms Skaperdas. Approved: Unanimous. (8-0)

(ix) FEMA Advanced Assistance Grant.

Mr Bridle said the town must apply for this assistance on behalf of a land owner, and moved the sum of \$50,000 for participation in the FEMA Advanced Assistance Grant Program that will reimburse the Town 75% of its related expenses to establish a process to prioritize, manage,

and administer requests for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds on behalf of Hampton property owners interested in elevating their structures or selling valuable properties within the FEMA flood hazard areas that are or will be subject to sea level rise, utilizing private and Federal funds; said appropriation to come from the Town's Unassigned Fund Balance. (Zero Tax Impact). Second: Mr LaBranche: Approved: Unanimous. (8-0)

(x) Town Office Second Floor Heating System

Mr Warburton read the Warrant Article. Mr Plouffe moved to the Public Hearing the sum of \$32,000 to replace the Town Office Second Floor West Side heating system with a heat pump mini-split system...said appropriation to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance. (Zero Tax Impact). Second: Ms Buckley (8-0)

(xi) Step-Up Parents/private article

This assistance is for parents and grandparents of children with drug abuse problems; if passed, in the future the \$500 allocation will appear on the list of non-profit service agencies to which the town annually contributes.

Mr Maurer moved to the Public Hearing the sum of \$500 as a contribution to Step-Up Parents. Second: Mr LaBranche Approved: Unanimous (8-0)

7. Operating Budget Adjustment

Ms Pulliam said the Budget needs to be reduced by \$33,349 to correct a line 43111 figure. Mr Maurer moved to reduce line 43111 in the operating budget by the sum of \$33,349. Second: Mr Henderson. Approved: Unanimous

8. Operating Budget Revised

Ms Skaperdas moved to the Public Hearing the adjusted sum of \$28,328,836 as the Town of Hampton FY2020 Operating Budget. Second: Mr Plouffe. Approved: Unanimous.

9. Bud Comm Meeting Schedule

January 14, 2020 Continued Warrant Article Review; Other Business – Selectman's Meeting Room 7PM

January 16, 2020 Public Hearings: SAU 90 and Town of Hampton Budget and Warrant Articles at the Academy Auditorium at 7PM

February 1, 2020, Deliberative Session, Winnacunnet High School

10. Adjournment

Mr Warburton adjourned the January 7, 2020 Municipal Budget Meeting at 9:45PM.

Respectfully Submitted Barbara Kravitz
Recording Secretary Municipal Budget Committee

Municipal Budget Committee
January 7, 2020 DRAFT