

HAMPTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
MINUTES
June 20, 2006

Budget Committee Members Present

Mary-Louise Woolsey, Chairman
Michael Plouffe, Vice-Chairman
William Lally, Selectman Representative
Rosemary Lamers, School Board Representative
Rusty Bridle
Pat Collins
Maury Friedman
Dick Hansen
Eileen Latimer
Jack Lessard
Richard Nichols
Michael Pierce
Norman Silberdick

Excused

Russ Bernstein

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Chairman Woolsey introduced the members of the Committee. She welcomed Mr. Bridle who will take Mr. Lally's place and serve until March 2007.

Approval of Minutes – May 16, 2006

Moved by Mr. Pierce, seconded by Mr. Lessard, to approve the Minutes of May 16, 2006, as amended.

Changes made were as follows:

1. Page 1, 5th paragraph. Mr. Friedman said he had asked why the Police Department had spent 50% of their budget while the Fire Department had only spent 30% year to date.
2. Page 3, 10th paragraph. Mr. Lally said the tax revenue figure per week should be \$500,000.

Vote: 10 yes, 0 no, 3 abstentions (Bridle, Lamers, Latimer). Motion passed.

Chairman Woolsey welcomed Selectmen Moore, Griffin, and Russell to the meeting.

Mr. Lally discussed the question of the \$74,000 in the unemployment account. This account was increased in anticipation of having to pay for laid off individuals. However, this was not necessary. The next year more layoffs were expected, but didn't happen and this money was carried over. The funds are still available because there were no layoffs.

Mr. Lally said there are some serious problems regarding the location of the Fire Department. The Board of Selectmen will have a working session with the Fire Department regarding long term plans. He would like to see Chief Lipe come in with a plan. Mr. Lally said he felt confident that a workable plan will be found to take to the voters. He said the Board of Selectmen will also be having work sessions with all the other departments. The Selectmen all want to come in with a budget that is going to pass.

Chairman Woolsey said that in light of the events of the flood, it might be helpful if a training room could be set up uptown that could double as an EOC.

Mr. Nichols said that most of the dialogue at the Fire Station Committee meeting was on the location.

Mr. Bridle said that what we are looking at at the beach is probably the size of the uptown station or smaller.

Ms. Latimer said it is important that everyone have an open mind when looking at this problem. Everyone agreed that it is important to know what the plan really is.

Mr. Lally said that the west side of town is being looked at also, but will probably be in the future.

Mr. Friedman said that a lot of time had been spent talking about things without any real data. He asked what the demand is on the west side of town and said that it is important to know numbers.

Mr. Silberdick commended the Fire Department for their help in coping with the storms.

Chairman Woolsey asked if there would be any public commentary at the Fire Station Committee meetings. Mr. Nichols replied that the Selectmen will bring this up.

Chairman Woolsey said that the Budget Committee looks forward to working with the Selectmen this fall. She said she felt it would be a difficult year again. Large increases are probably not going to be acceptable. She said that the Budget Committee would like to know as soon as possible the effect of debt service on next year's budget.

Ms. Russell said that the Selectmen had just hired a new Finance Officer. Ms. Duhamel will work with him for a few days. He will then meet with the Selectmen and the Budget Committee.

Chairman Woolsey asked if Social Services will be put back into the budget. Ms. Russell said yes, but that is going to raise the budget. Mr. Moore said that the \$120,000 for Social Services will not be a part of the default budget calculation.

Regarding health insurance, Mr. Lally said that the highest possible amount is budgeted because of different coverages. Budget is set at maximum level for vacancies. Mr. Nichols said he felt the health insurance issue should be revisited later.

Chairman Woolsey asked if the revolving funds were on track. Ms. Russell replied that they are.

Chairman Woolsey said that the Ad Hoc Committee will have a report by the end of the month.

Mr. Lally said that the new cruisers will be in at the end of July.

Ms. Latimer said that the storms have caused damage and money has been spent. She said she would like to request a breakout to see how much is defrayed from the budget by FEMA. She requested an overview at the next meeting.

Mr. Silberdick encouraged the citizens to apply for reimbursement from FEMA if they have suffered damage from the storms.

Damage to the streets was discussed. Ms. Lamers expressed concern about school buses traveling on the streets. Mr. Plouffe said that buses are much lighter than trash trucks, etc. However, as the summer passes, the water table recedes and more damage will be found. He does feel, however, that the roads are definitely safe for the school buses.

Mr. Griffin said that Drakeside Road is still a problem. Ms. Russell said that sewers and drains are always the first to go, but this has shown us that there are consequences.

Mr. Silberdick said he would expect the Town to be in close contact with FEMA and making sure claims are being reimbursed. Ms. Russell said Chief Lipe is working closely with FEMA. She said DOT will be coming in to evaluate the situation.

Ms. Lamers suggested having a volunteer list with a chain for emergencies. Mr. Lally said there is a program like this in Maryland. He will get the information.

Chairman Woolsey said that there is a serious need for more firefighters on the street. This is a serious problem. She hopes the Selectmen will address this. Mr. Moore said there is a money problem and everyone will have to work together on this issue. Chairman Woolsey said that her concern is that every year a budget is produced it is a building block for future years. It is necessary to balance the needs of the community against the public's ability to pay. Mr. Bridle said education of the public is vital.

Mr. Moore said he felt Social Services should be on a Warrant Article, not in the operating budget. Ms. Russell agreed.

Ms. Latimer said the department heads need to go to the Selectmen with what they need and then the Budget Committee needs to evaluate this.

Mr. Friedman said it is necessary to have a plan before you try to educate people. It is necessary to make sure that the employees of the Town are being efficiently utilized. It is important to justify to the public what is being done. If the public truly understands the reasons for increases, they may vote for such increases.

Chairman Woolsey thanked the Selectmen for their participation.

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Mr. Lally left the meeting at this time.

School Board Report

Ms. Lamers discussed the computer tech program and passed out a manual. This is a packet of information by grade level and shows what software is being used. The manual addresses Kindergarten through 8th grade, State standards, Federal standards and the technical plan. This program ties in closely with "No Child Left Behind". Standards have to be met on local, State and Federal levels.

CIP Report

Mr. Friedman said the committee had just met. Tracy Emrich, Chairman of the Planning Board, explained to the group that there is a form to be filled out when a requested is submitted. Mr. Friedman said he looks forward to putting together a different kind of CIP report.

The next meeting of the Budget Committee will be on Tuesday, September 19, 2006, at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's meeting room at which time the Committee will meet with the School Board.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Mr. Lessard **moved**, seconded by Mr. Bridle, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Rice
Secretary

Mary-Louise Woolsey, Chairman