

***BRISTOL BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
August 9, 2010***

PRESENT:

Shaun Lagueux-Chairman, Paul Simard-Vice Chairman, Barbara Greenwood, Dave Carr, Dorcas Gordon, Dan Arseneau, Jon Thouin, Ron Preble, Tom Keegan, Jeff Shackett, Ashley Dolloff, Bob Dudley

ABSENT: Wendy Costigan

OTHERS PRESENT:

Selectman Donald Milbrand; CIP members: Murray Campbell, Dick Hill and Steve Favorite, Town Administrator Michael Capone

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Lagueux called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

REVIEW OF MINUTES:

The meeting began with a review of the minutes from June 14, 2010; Mr. Preble made a motion to accept the minutes as written and was seconded by Ms. Gordon followed by a majority vote in favor.

NEW BUSINESS:

CIP:

Chairman Lagueux welcomed the CIP committee and asked Mr. Campbell to give his presentation. Mr. Campbell explained that the CIP committee is a sub-committee of the Planning Board. The department heads give them their projected needs and the CIP committee budgets those estimated costs using a 10-year plan. It is also recommended that the use of capital expense funds be used so the money is available when the purchase is needed. Mr. Murray continued by expressing his frustration with the Budget Committee and their failure to implement the suggestions of the CIP and this has resulted in the deferment of expenses. He felt that the town's voting against various items over the past few years was a result of the Budget Committee not supporting the CIP budget and they did not "sell" the plan to the public. Mr. Hill, a CIP member, agreed with Mr. Murray and expressed his frustration as well. Mr. Favorite, a CIP alternate member, addressed the importance of including safety, security and education in our budgets. We look at what we need but forget the importance of taking care of what we have.

Several members of the Budget Committee commented on Mr. Campbell's presentation. Mr. Preble thought the budget committee would be receiving the proposed

CIP budget. Chairman Lagueux did not expect that but asked when we could expect to receive it. Ms. Dolloff added that the CIP budget was presented too late last year.

Chairman Lagueux noted that in past years some items were placed in a warrant article while other items were included as a line item on the budget. Mr. Shackett answered that it depends on the value of the item. Mr. Carr pointed out that the budget committee has included a line item for road paving every year. It was the Selectmen and the Town Manager who removed it two years ago and that some paving was provided this year.

Mr. Thouin expressed a concern for the items in the CIP budget that remain there for years. He also stated that he is not really in favor of the capital reserve accounts. To set aside the money for years does not gain enough in interest. He prefers funding the items as needed.

Vice Chairman Simard asked where the capital reserve items are kept, within the budget. Do the departments have control of the reserve, or is it the administrator or the selectmen?

Ms. Gordon stated that she is willing to “sell” a budget item if she can believe the item is really needed and the expense is realistic. Who determines exactly what item will be budgeted? It was decided through discussion that the department heads are responsible for presenting the best item for the best price to the committees.

Mr. Carr mentioned that it would be very helpful if we could have the CIP budget before we meet with the individual department heads.

Selectman Millbrand commented on the discussion: He asked that the Budget Committee inform the CIP committee when they will begin to number crunch. A reply was given that the Budget Committee usually begins to look at the numbers by late September/early October and would like to have the CIP budget by then. He also stated that statutes are given to determine what can be a warrant article and what can be a line item. Mr. Millbrand was surprised that we do not create a multi-year budget questioning why we create a new one each year. Chairman Lagueux replied that RSA’s restrict us from doing it differently and the rotation of members makes it difficult to work on a multi-year budget.

Chairman Lagueux concluded the discussion by stating the committees want to work together and the dialogue was helpful for everyone. He thanked the CIP members for coming to meet with the Budget Committee.

Chairman Lagueux welcomed and thanked Town Administrator Michael Capone for attending the meeting. He also wanted to publicly thank interim Chief Lewis for the time they spent together. Chairman Lagueux was able to ride along with Chief Lewis and it was very informative.

OLD BUSINESS:

Sub-Committee:

Vice-Chairman Simard, Mr. Thouin and Ms. Greenwood gave a preliminary set of rules/guidelines for the Budget Committee to follow. (See attached) They are a set of standards that everyone agrees to and can be referred to by the Chairman if and when a need arises. Chairman Lagueux asked that each member look them over and be prepared to discuss these rules at the September meeting.

Mr. Thouin stated that progress is being made with the information packet for members. He has compiled a short list of RSA's and is working on the various departments determining what items we can or cannot change and if an item is under contract. He expects to have this report ready for the September meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Member Comments:

Ms. Greenwood would like a specific list of questions that each department head be prepared to answer when they come to meet with the committee. She would also like an update from the departments on how they are doing with the current budget. Are there any problems or anticipated situations that might affect the budget? Chairman Lagueux asked the Town Administrator Michael Capone to ask the department heads to keep us informed.

Chairman Lagueux stated that he would be meeting with the Town Administrator soon to plan the Budget Committee schedule.

Mr. Preble clarified that the Budget Committee meetings are not public meetings. The public is welcome to attend but they cannot participate. Mr. Preble wanted to clear up a misunderstanding about the public and our meetings.

Vice-Chairman Simard had a question regarding over-time. Town Administrator Michael Capone stated that he would look into the issue and get back to the committee with an answer.

It was noted that there is a special Town Meeting on August 28, 2010 at 1:00 pm regarding the sewer project for the lake. It will take a 2/3 vote of those attending the meeting to pass the item. Mr. Keegan noted that this is the same day as Old Home Day. Mr. Shackett explained that is why the later meeting time, hoping more will attend and the meeting will not interfere with the morning activities.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be September 13, 2010 at 7:00 pm.

ADJOURNMENT:

Vice-Chairman Simard made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Mr. Preble. Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Hemingway
Recording Secretary