

BRISTOL BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
December 20, 2010

PRESENT:

Shaun Lagueux-Chairman, Paul Simard-Vice Chairman, Barbara Greenwood, Dorcas Gordon, Jon Thouin, Ron Preble, Ashley Dolloff, Tom Keegan, Dan Arseneau, Mark Chevalier, Selectman Jeff Shackett, Wendy Costigan

ABSENT:

Dave Carr

OTHERS PRESENT:

Town Administrator Michael Capone; Select Board Members: Chairman Rick Alpers, Joe Denning, Donald Milbrand; Police Chief Lewis

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 December 13, 2010; Vice Chairman Simard made a motion to accept the minutes and was seconded by Mr. Preble. A vote to accept the minutes as written was passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

At the December 13 meeting Town Administrator Capone was asked to follow up on three items. Vice Chairman Simard asked about the information regarding the Conservation Committee and if the money for the Conservation Commission stays with the Commission or goes to the general fund? The Town Administrator replied that it goes into the general fund. He also commented on the other two items; the length of the bond for the ladder truck is seven years, and that he put together the information for the projected revenues that the Budget Committee requested and each member should have a copy.

NEW BUSINESS:

Selectmen Jeff Shackett joined the Select Board during the proposed budget discussion. Chairman Lagueux welcomed the Select Board to the Budget Committee meeting.

Chairman Alpers thanked the Budget Committee for allowing them another week to work on the budget. The Select Board's goal was to level fund the Town's portion of the budget. Chairman Alpers was pleased to say they are presenting a budget that meets that goal and exceeds it. With a lot of work and careful decisions they cut \$195,000 out of the proposed budget. One employment change was made from full time to part time. However, they were able to maintain the 1.5% raise for all employees (which equals about \$30,000), and fund 3 out of 5 of the Capital Improvement Projects. Chairman Alpers added that a change in the Health Insurance Plan that will take effect July 1 would save the Town some money. The

employees that are affected by this change will be attending a meeting to learn about the new Health Plan. Chairman Alpers stated that Town Administrator Capone saved the Town money by making a change with the Workers Comp.

Selectmen Shackett stated that the Select Board took the time to carefully and respectfully review the needs in each department and asked the department heads where cuts could be made within their respective departments.

Chairman Alpers continued by highlighting the various suggested changes to the proposed budget.

Line 4130-810: New Equipment -- The old server will be refurbished and used at another location within the Town.

Line 4152-342: Computer Support – Hopefully the new software will be approved by the Town’s voters. If so this computer maintenance will shift to the new company saving the Town money on this line item.

Line 4152-301: Annual Audit – The increase is a result of the grant money that the Town is receiving. This money is closely monitored and may result in more auditing than other years. The Town is also preparing for a re-appraisal and that will result in more auditing as well.

Line 4153-320: Legal – The Select Board greatly reduced this item. The Town Administrator uses a free legal service and seldom calls the Town’s legal counsel. Selectmen Shackett added that all questions go to the Town Administrator and then he obtains the proper legal advice. In response to a question from a Budget Committee member that he doesn’t foresee any uncovered litigation. The outstanding litigations are almost wrapped up.

Line 4155-275: Grant Writer – This position was eliminated. Selectmen Joe Denning has written several grants in the last few years and has been quite successful in obtaining financing for various projects throughout the town. It was also noted that several of the department heads have written grants with successful results as well.

Line 4194-432: Safety Committee Repairs – This item was not previously funded but is needed.

Line 4194-815: Newfound Area Access – This item was lowered after talking with Ray. The web site is very successful.

Line 4195-651: Homeland Cemetery – The Select Board did not change the amount requested for the Homeland Cemetery.

Line 4196-480: Property/Liability Insurance – This may be shopped out at renewal, but no change now.

Line 4197-830: Chamber of Commerce – The Newfound Chamber of Commerce merged with the Chamber in Plymouth. This merge has lowered the current dues to \$80 from \$250.

Line 4199-890: Contingency Fund – The Select Board lowered the amount for this item.

Police Department – Police Chief Lewis is reviewing the budget to determine where to cut \$23,000. Vice Chairman Simard asked if the Lieutenant’s position has been filled? It has not, but currently advertising for a replacement.

Fire Department – The Fire Chief has provided a revised budget reducing it by more than \$17,000.

Forestry – This shows a reduction of \$1000.

Emergency Management – Reduced to \$1500

Highway Department

Line 4311-682: Sand/Gravel -- was reduced to \$22,000. The department has a large stockpile and agreed to this lesser amount.

Line 4312-390: Resurfacing Roads – Reduced to \$200,000 this is needed to upkeep roads.

Line 4312-392: Road Reconstruction – Keeps the \$41,088 when added to the resurfacing line it provides more funding for roads than last year. Mr. Preble asked what roads would be resurfaced this year. Town Administrator Capone stated he would get the list for the members. Chairman Alpers stated that the Department head agreed to the \$200,000 amount.

Solid Waste

Lines 4324-362: Freon Removal & 4324-362: Construction & Demo Disposal – reduced to an amount based on prior expenses.

Mr. Chevalier asked if businesses pay an over and above fee. A brief discussion followed regarding businesses that dispose of their waste on Saturday. The amount and the time for large disposals are a concern. Selectmen Shackett stated that businesses are taxpayers as well and rather than an increase in cost maybe a time restriction for using the facility on Saturday or making Saturdays residential use only may be an option to consider. Chairman Alpers stated that the Board is looking into this matter.

Land Use/Health

Line 4411-120: Land Use/Health Officer – The Select Board carefully considered this position, they determined that a full time officer is not currently necessary. Therefore effective, January 1 this will become a part-time position.

Health Agencies

Line 4415-350: NANA – The Board did not change the amount for this item.

Line 4415-352: Plymouth Regional Clinic – The Board did not change the amount for this item.

They did not fund the Red Cross.

Welfare Services

No changes in this department. This department provides an excellent service to those in need. They try hard to find other assistance before using these funds.

Beach

Line 4521-120: Beach Attendants – Increased to 3 attendants. This past summer there were two and it was not enough to keep the beach area clean and maintained. Several complaints were made regarding this issue.

Kelley Park

Line 4522-820: Master Plan Capital Items – Increased this item to allow funding for a lawn mower and the necessary fertilizer and seed to maintain the park. Ms. Greenwood commented that she has received many positive comments about the park and the summer concerts program.

The Select Board chose to provide the funding requested to the Patriotic Department, Conservation Commission, and the Historic District Commission.

Social Services

The Select Board decided to provide some funding to Tri-County Community Action, Grafton County Senior Citizens Council, Voices Against Violence, Child & Family Services, GENESIS, Pemi River Local Advisory Committee, CADY and Bridge House Shelter.

Debt Service

The Select Board is looking at the current debt items to determine if refinancing any of the items would be a profitable option.

TAN was reduced because it appears that a lesser amount will be borrowed in the spring.

Chairman Alpers stated that Town Administrator Capone is managing the cash flow throughout the town and is getting the finances back on track.

Chairman Alpers concluded the Select Boards Proposed 2011 Budget presentation. He asked if there were any questions from the members.

Vice Chairman Simard is concerned about the outside details for the Police Department. Town Administrator Capone stated that this is a revenue neutral item. Vice Chairman Simard stated that his concern is it states in RSA that the treasurer is to be the administrator on this item. Our treasurer is part-time and he expressed a concern about the transparency of this account. Selectmen Denning assured him the auditors monitor this item closely and they review their findings with the Select Board. Vice Chairman Simard cautioned that the warrant article has to be carefully worded. Town Administrator Capone agreed that the wording has to be very specific and is reviewed by legal counsel before it is presented to the Town.

Ms. Gordon questioned the 1.5% pay increase. Chairman Alpers stated that no raises last year and felt that this was an affordable amount to give our employees. It equals to less than \$30,000 being added to the total budget. This increase is not based on any factors it is simply a small across the board increase to encourage the employees and to thank them. Ms. Gordon also noted that the Selectmen included them in this increase. She felt this was reasonable due to the extra workload they have without a Town Manager and the extra hours required of them.

Mr. Chevalier asked if any legal issues with the taking down of the Mica building. No one expects there to be any problems and the only foreseeable legal expense is the transferring of deeds.

Will there be any other CIP or other projects coming before the Board at this late date in budget planning. The Minot-Sleeper Library is the only known project outside of the CIP projects that will be requesting funding.

The bottom line for the proposed budget amount can be determined by subtracting \$23,000 (from the Police Dept.) and adding approx. \$71,075 (for the CIP items).

Chairman Lagueux thanked the Select Board for their hard work and for making the Budget Committee's task easier. The communication and cooperation between the boards is appreciated.

Selectmen Shackett joined the Budget Committee for the remainder of the meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Town Administrator Comments:

Town Administrator Capone hoped the detail on the revenue page was enough information for the members. Chairman Lagueux asked if the amount for the sale of Town owned properties was accurate? The \$30,000 is a projected amount and the list of properties is being reviewed to determine if the Town has a use for the property and if the property is sellable. The properties will probably sell in the spring.

The library revenues were difficult to determine based on inconsistent amounts. Kelley Park rental is also questionable. Usually the amount is \$8000 but now is \$4000. Ms. Greenwood explained that last summer the amount changed because only half of the park could be used and they were given permission to pay half the rent amount. This amount should change back to the original amount.

Solid Waste Tip Hauling – Chairman Lagueux asked what this was. It is the amount the vendors pay the town after hauling the solid waste to a landfill or other community.

Vice Chairman Simard asked if the ambulance fees were enough to cover costs. These fees are based on a formula the Fire Chief uses and he assured the committee that the town is covering our costs.

Next Meeting:

The Public Hearing meeting and when to schedule it was the next topic discussed. It was listed for the 3rd Monday in January however after some discussion the committee may not be ready for a public Hearing that soon. Town Administrator Capone stated the last day to hold a Public Hearing would be February 11. It was decided that the Public Hearing would take place sometime between February 2 and February 11. The January 17 date is now scheduled for a Deliberative Session, if needed.

The next meeting will be on Monday, January 3 at 7:00 in the lower level of the Town Office building. This will be the first Deliberative Session.

ADJOURNMENT:

Vice Chairman Simard made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Chevalier. Meeting adjourned at 8:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Emily Hemingway
Recording Secretary