

APPROVED at the April 11, 2011 Bristol Budget Committee Meeting

**BRISTOL BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
January 31, 2011**

PRESENT:

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

ABSENT:

Dan Arseneau, Dorcas Gordon

OTHERS PRESENT:

Town Administrator Michael Capone

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Lagueux called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

REVIEW OF MINUTES:

The meeting began with a review of the minutes from January 17, 2011; Mr. Chevalier made a motion to accept the minutes as written and was seconded by Vice Chairman Simard. A vote to accept the minutes as written was passed with 9 in favor and 2 abstentions.

OLD BUSINESS:

No old business was brought up and Chairman Lagueux continued onto new business.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Lagueux stated the Budget Committee would be voting to recommend or not recommend each of the warrant articles.

WARRANT ARTICLES #1

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one million three hundred thousand dollars (\$1,300,000) to build an addition to the Minot-Sleeper Library and renovate the existing library building, and to authorize the issuance of not more than the amount of one million three hundred thousand dollars (\$1,300,000) of bonds and notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33) and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon; furthermore to authorize the acceptance of any other grant or aid, which might be available for this project.. The first bond payment will be included in the 2012 budget.

The Budget Committee (does not) recommend(s) this article (insert vote)

The Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Ms. Greenwood moved to accept the article as written and Mr. Keegan seconded the motion.

Ms. Greenwood stated that she hopes the Budget Committee would recommend this article. The Board of Selectmen and the Planning gave the Library Committee some good advice, which included getting a quote from Bonnette, Page and Stone. The Board of Selectmen and the Planning have voiced their approval for this article. Ms. Greenwood added that the library is good mileage for any dollars spent.

Selectman Shackett added that the Board did approve this warrant article. He does not care for the exterior design of the proposed addition but he likes the floor plan of the addition. The added tax is not something he is in favor of but it is time to get this project voted on this project and paid off as quickly as possible. There are other projects pending.

Vice Chairman Simard stated that he supports the library and all the programs they offer. He addressed the Budget Committee by saying there was an opportunity to make cuts in the budget and we only decreased the tax rate by 4 cents. He cannot support any increase in the tax rate for the taxpayer of Bristol.

Mr. Carr commented that the warrant article puts the project before the people and they decide to build it or not to build. We do not make that decision.

Mr. Chevalier added that the current library has some serious life safety issues the must be addressed. He likes the new design and feels it is more suitable for the town. He supports the article.

Selectman Shackett thought there was another article or a provision in this one to set aside \$300,000 for the life safety needs. Ms. Costigan replied that they were advised not to include that amount because it was a number randomly chosen. The exact amount needed to resolve any life safety items is not known.

Chairman Lagueux concluded the discussion by stating that he has the same concerns as Selectman Shackett. He would also like to see a longer note so the payments would be lower.

Chairman Lagueux called for a vote to recommend the Minot Sleeper Library warrant article. This passed with a vote of 10 in favor and 1 opposed.

WARRANT ARTICLE #2

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate up to two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) to cover engineering expenses for the Water and Sewer Improvements, known as the Central Square Water and Sewer Replacement Project, and to authorize the issuance of not more than the amount of two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) of bonds and notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33) and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon; furthermore to authorize the acceptance of grant monies from all Rural Development, State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) RSA 486.14 established for this purpose, and/or any other grant or aid, which might be available for this project. The principal and interest payments of the bonds or notes paid through user fees. No funds will be raised through general taxation.

The Budget Committee (does not) recommend(s) this article (insert vote)

The Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0

Mr. Chevalier moved to accept this warrant article as written and Ms. Greenwood seconded the motion.

Mr. Chevalier stated that it is a good time to bring the water and sewer pipes up to date while the center of Town is under construction.

Mr. Thouin supports this article but would like to see the whole town pay for this upgrade and not just from the user fees.

Selectman Shackett noted that this project should be ready to go to bid in May of 2011 but construction would not begin until spring of 2012. The engineering and design work would be completed probably by October but that is not a good time of year to begin a highway project of this size.

Vice Chairman Simard asked what effect it would have on the user fee. Selectman Shackett stated that too many variables at this time to give accurate amount of cost to the users.

Mr. Preble stated that there is a need for a new pump station and some of the water pipes were placed in the 1800's. Something has to be done and it makes sense to do it now.

Chairman Lagueux called for a vote in favor of the warrant article for the Central Square Water & Sewer Replacement Project. This passed with 10 in favor and 1 opposed.

WARRANT ARTICLE #3

Shall the Town vote to establish a revolving fund pursuant to RSA 31:95-h, for the purpose of police special detail wages, benefits, supplies and equipment and to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) to be deposited into the fund. Further, all revenues received for police special details will be deposited into the fund, and the money in the fund shall be allowed to accumulate from year to year, and shall not be considered part of the town's general fund unreserved fund balance. The Town Treasurer shall have custody of all monies in the fund, and shall pay out the same only upon order of the Board of Selectmen and no further approval is required by the legislative body to expend. The balance in the fund shall be included in the Town Report each year.

**The Budget Committee (does not) recommend(s) this article (insert vote)
The Board of Selectmen recommends this article 5-0**

Ms. Costigan moved to accept the Police Department's warrant article to establish a revolving fund and Ms. Greenwood seconded the motion.

Mr. Carr stated that the present system of placing these funds in the general fund works. Setting up these special funds will spread to other departments and the Board of Selectmen could be pressured to make purchases for the departments. Mr. Carr is against this warrant article and thinks it is a bad idea.

Mr. Preble thought the wording to allow the funds to accumulate from year to year would be removed. He is not happy with this warrant article.

Vice Chairman Simard states that there will be a loss of transparency with this type of special fund. He likes the system now where the department head goes to the Board of Selectmen and presents the need and shows the best price for the need. They justify the need and the expense.

Ms. Greenwood asked if once the fund was established and other money comes from special duty would the applicable payroll and taxes come out of this fund? Town Administrator Capone stated that this fund cover the extra expenses that are in excess of the budgeted line. He continued with an example: The Chief budgeted 10,000 for outside details but the actual amount was 15,000 and the revenue for outside details was 17,000. This revolving fund would allow the actual expenses to be paid without affecting the operating budget.

Selectman Shackett directed the committee to the budget worksheet where it shows for the last 3 years this line was over budget by \$8,000. He is not in favor of other departments having this type of revolving fund.

Vice Chairman Simard asked if the special details are receiving overtime rates. He added that if the Police Chief would cut the \$40,000 overtime amount then this revolving fund would look better. Town Administrator Capone replied that he did not know if all special details were overtime.

Chairman Lagueux stated that the overtime line is only \$20,000 not \$40,000. He also believes that over the years more was requested but the Budget Committee and Select Board decreased the line item amount.

Mr. Chevalier asked if this money could be pulled for items needed in other departments. Town Administrator Capone replied, No, that is not allowed but it can be used toward items within the police department, offsetting expenses.

Mr. Thouin stated that one of the things it does is, we don't have to raise funds by taxation. The police department budget is more stable and this would allow for better budgeting.

Chairman Lagueux stated that this has been unfunded for the past several years by \$8000. Mr. Carr replied that it could be resolved by increasing the line item in the budget.

Selectmen Shackett stated that this fund could be dismantled, or voted out, at a town meeting.

Mr. Preble stated that he is opposed to this article because they can accumulate the funds. He asked if the funds could go to the general fund at the end of the year. Town Administrator Capone replied that he asked the DRA and that transfer to the general fund is not allowable.

Chairman Lagueux called for a vote to recommend the warrant article allowing the police department to establish a revolving fund. This passed with 8 in favor and 3 opposed.

PETITIONS

To see if the Town will vote to have all funding for the waste water to Newfound Lake Project be paid for by user fees and not taxation.

To see if the Town will vote to limit the size of the police department to 2 full-time officers per 1000 full-time residents.

To see if the Town will vote to return to an on-call volunteer fire department.

Chairman Lagueux explained that these petitions do not state any dollar amounts therefore the Budget Committee does not need to recommend or not recommend them. Mr. Thouin asked if the last two petitions affect the budget. Town Administrator Capone stated that he checked with the DRA and he was advised that since they do not state any specific dollar amount we should leave them alone.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

A few town residents were present and asked if they would like to speak to the Budget Committee.

Mr. Eric Rottdeker questioned the petition regarding the reduction of police officers and the Committees statement of it not impacting the budget. Chairman Lagueux replied that if the petition specifically stated the amount of money it would change to then the Budget Committee would vote on it.

Mr. Rottdeker asked who submitted the revolving fund warrant article. Selectman Shackett replied the Board of Selectmen did.

He also stated that it makes sense to replace the water and sewer lines now instead of tearing up the center square after it is all finished. However, he feels it shouldn't be just the users who pay for it. Chairman Lagueux stated that we could only recommend what is before us.

Karen??? stated that she would like to clarify that the police department does have a line item for overtime in the amount of \$40,000.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Member Comments:

Town Administrator Capone asked the Budget Committee if they needed to see all of the retirement and wage adjustments from taking the proposed wage increase from 1.5 percent to 1 percent corrected in both the Selectmen's budget and the Budget Committee's budget or could he just make them in the Budget Committee's column. The Committee was fine with just showing the corrections in their column. The extra \$668 in adjustments would be for the FICA and Medicare contributions to the employees who receive the Health Insurance Buyout.

Selectman Shackett thanked Town Administrator for his tremendous work and assistance throughout this budget process. Mr. Preble thanked the Select Board for their involvement this year.

Town Administrator Comments:

He gave the Committee members a worksheet showing the adjusted figures and giving realistic revenue numbers.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be the Public Hearing at the Old Town Hall at 7:00 on Monday, February 7. There is a second public hearing scheduled for Wednesday, February 9 *if needed*.

The Budget Committee will meet on February 14 at 7:00 for reconsideration of the budget and to vote on the bottom line. Town Administrator Capone will have an MS/7 ready for signature if there are not changes to the budget.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Chevalier made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Preble. Meeting adjourned at 8:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Emily Hemingway
Recording Secretary