

*APPROVED as written at the 5/2/11 Bristol Budget Committee Meeting*

**BRISTOL BUDGET COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
April 11, 2011**

***Present:***

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

***Absent:***

Dorcas Gordon, Ashley Dolloff

***Others Present:***

Town Administrator Michael Capone

***Call to Order:***

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

***Election of Officer:***

Chairman Lagueux welcomed the committee members for the first meeting of 2012 budget. The meeting began with the election of the Chairman and Vice Chairman. Mr. Preble made a motion to have Chairman Lagueux continue as Chairman of the Budget Committee. Mr. Chevalier seconded the motion. No other nominations were made; therefore Chairman Lagueux called for a voice vote. The vote in favor was unanimous. Mr. Preble made a motion to have Vice Chairman Simard continue in that role for another year. Mr. Arseneau seconded the motion. No other nominations were made. Chairman Lagueux called for a voice vote. The vote in favor was unanimous.

***Review of Minutes:***

Chairman Lagueux asked the member to review of the minutes from January 31, 2011 meeting. Vice Chairman Simard made a motion to accept the minutes as written and was seconded by Mr. Chevalier. This passed with a unanimous vote. The minutes from the February 7, 2011 public hearing were reviewed next. Mr. Chevalier made a motion to accept the minutes as written and was seconded by Vice Chairman Simard. This passed with a unanimous vote.

***Old Business:***

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

**NEW BUSINESS:**

The Committee members had copies of the current revenues and expenditures. Vice Chairman Simard opened the discussion by asking Town Administrator Capone how the new appraisal is going. In response Town Administrator Capone stated that the data collection was finishing up and the results should be ready by early October. This schedule allows time for the data to be calculated and distributed and reviewed with the final results ready by the end of October in time for the setting of the tax rate.

Mr. Thouin questioned if the Water & Sewer Department was estimating the bills and if so what effect does that have on the revenues. Town Administrator Capone was not sure and would find out and respond to Mr. Thouin.

Chairman Lagueux asked how the Highway Department was doing. Town Administrator Capone replied that they have been stretched but not over budget. The expenses are manageable but on the high side and are being monitored closely by the department head.

Town Administrator Capone stated that Public Assistance has been busy. He added that it should even out with the change of the season.

The street lighting was the next topic of interest with Town Administrator Capone stating that there is a reduction in the number of lights and the retrofit of the other lights to energy efficient lighting has created some savings. He explained that the monthly savings would go toward paying the retrofit bill. He noted that there was an increase in the electric and he will be looking into it.

Vice Chairman Simard asked if the Over Time in the departments is monitored. Town Administrator Capone assured the Vice Chairman that it is closely monitored. Mr. Shackett noted that the Police Department was short a couple of officers due to personal issues and training. He added that Police Chief Lewis is filling in rather than call in an officer causing overtime. Mr. Shackett also stated that the Police Chief has applied for several grants to obtain equipment while staying within the budget.

Mr. Shackett encouraged any of the members to go talk with the Police Chief and discuss the budget. Vice Chairman Simard stated that he prefers to have the discussion in a public setting where it is recorded. He likes to be transparent and feels that a one on one discussion is not transparent enough. Town Administrator Capone stated that anytime the Budget Committee would like to meet with a department head just ask and he will invite them to attend a meeting. Chairman Lagueux stated that the process is getting easier and thanked Town Administrator Capone and the Select Board for that. Mr. Shackett added that we have an amazing group of Department Heads who are willing to answer questions and do what is needed to benefit the town and work within their budgets.

Ms. Greenwood stated that going to each of the departments helped her to better understand how they operate. Chairman Lagueux said that he prefers talking one on one finding it beneficial. Mr. Keegan added that the open meetings are good but can't get all the details and he found his visit with the Fire Chief to be very helpful. Mr. Arseneau prefers having the Department Heads come to a meeting because it is documented and on camera.

Mr. Shackett suggested having the department heads attend a meeting and allow time for a general candid conversation. The other members liked this idea and stated that it would be good to do early on in the process.

Mr. Chevalier asked Town Administrator Capone about the accounting software. Town Administrator Capone replied that they did look at other companies but AVATAR was the only integrated system. He is being cautious with the transition from the old to new software trying to avoid any problems and making it go as smooth as possible. He wanted to make sure we could continue to operate and be ready by September 1 with the new software transition. Town Administrator Capone stated that the re-val is going well and the process is going smoothly but is proceeding cautiously.

Ms. Greenwood stated that she is planning to attend the school budget meeting and would encourage everyone else to attend.

Mr. Chevalier commented that at town meeting it would be helpful for the town residents to see how their tax dollars are divided out. Town Administrator Capone said that it could be done. It was stated that the Town of Bristol pays \$450,000 to the school district. Ms. Greenwood added that there needs to be a balance and encourages people to attend these meetings.

Vice Chairman Simard inquired about the water/sewer to lake project asking if we pay \$5000 out monthly to a lobbyist. He feels that our Congressmen should be lobbying for us. Mr. Shackett replied that the Select Board pursued the Congressmen actively but did not receive any response. This lobbyist was chosen because it is on a monthly basis avoiding a long-term contract.

### ***OTHER BUSINESS:***

#### Town Administrator Comments:

Town Administrator Capone did not have any further comments but distributed a tentative schedule for the Budget Committee.

#### Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be May 2 at 7:00 pm at the Old Town Hall. Police Chief Lewis will be asked to join committee members for a discussion.

### ***ADJOURNMENT:***

Vice Chairman Simard made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Preble. Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Emily Hemingway  
Recording Secretary