

Approved as written at the January 3, 2012 Bristol Budget Committee meeting

**BRISTOL BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
December 19, 2011**

Present:

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

Others Present:

Town Administrator Michael Capone, Board of Selectmen: Chairman Rick Alpers, Joe Denning, Don Milbrand, and Phil Dion

Call to Order:

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

Review of Minutes:

Chairman Lagueux asked the members to review of the minutes from the December 12, 2011 meeting. Ms. Greenwood made a motion to accept the minutes as written and was seconded by Mr. Chevalier. The vote to accept the minutes as written was unanimous.

Old Business:

Chairman Lagueux stated that any old business would be discussed after the presentation from the Board of Selectmen.

NEW BUSINESS:

Board of Selectmen presented Proposed Budget for 2012:

Chairman Lagueux welcomed the Board of Selectmen to the meeting and asked Chairman Alpers to present the proposed budget to the Budget Committee.

Chairman Alpers stated that the Board of Selectmen worked hard to prepare this 2012 operating budget. The goal was to level fund the Town's portion of the budget and asked each department head was asked to submit a workable budget that would make that goal attainable. After their initial submission, the Police, Fire and Highway Departments were asked to trim an additional \$10,000 from their proposed budgets. Other departments and Board/Committees were asked to make reductions as well. Chairman Alpers is pleased to present this proposed budget, which meets the goal of level funding the Town's portion of the operating budget.

A few highlights of this proposed budget: No new positions were created, a 2% salary increase is included across the board, and it shows a reduction in Healthcare costs. This is a result of a change in the Health Care provider that will take place July 1,

Chairman Lagueux asked what the net change in premium is. Town Administrator Capone stated that it shows a reduction of \$20,000 to \$30,000. It was noted that the current provider had a 9% increase scheduled for 2012. Chairman Alpers added that this new provider has agreed to an 18-month rate. He thanked Town Administrator Capone and Executive Assistant, Kelly Lacasse for their research and securing this provider through the Local Government Center. In response to a question Chairman Alpers stated that all the employees pay 7% of the premium. The employees will pay a bit more for prescriptions, and the co-pay has increased. Ms. Gordon asked for confirmation that these changes will cost less for the Town. Chairman Alpers stated that this change in Health Insurance Provider would save the Town a considerable amount in premium expense.

Chairman Alpers began going through the proposed budget page by page and asked the Budget Committee to ask questions as he went along.

EXECUTIVE:

2011 Budget amount: \$194,066

2012 Selectmen amount: \$194,041

New Equipment – This line item shows a decrease and provides for one PC loaded with the necessary software.

Admin Assistant-Executive – This change in salary reflects the change in responsibilities. It now handles the work as the Health Officer, the Human Resource Person, and the Administrative Assistant to the Town Administrator. Ms Gordon asked if the budget would show the respective lines as not funded. Chairman Alpers stated that they would.

ELECTION, REGISTRATION, VOTING:

2011 Budget amount: \$75,261

2012 Selectmen amount: \$88,842

Voting Machine – shows an increase of \$3500. 2012 is a Presidential Election and State Election year. The voting machine needs to be reprogrammed after each election. This is a fixed rate per election. Vice Chairman asked if we knew of this expense when we purchased the voting machine. Chairman Alpers stated that they knew there would be additional expenses with each election.

Health Insurance – Mr. Arseneau stated that this line was increased. Town Administrator stated that one of the employees requested a change in their coverage. Ms Gordon asked if the Town had a policy in place requiring a spouse to obtain Health Insurance from their workplace rather than be part of this insurance. Chairman Alpers stated that no policy like that is in place but a small stipend is offered to the employees that do not take the insurance plan offered by the Town.

FINANCIAL ADMIN/TAX COLLECTOR:

2011 Budget amount: \$159,865

2012 Selectmen amount: \$165,043

Chairman Alpers noted that the service to allow for on line payments would be offered in the near future.

Mr. Carr asked if the same auditing firm would be used. Chairman Alpers stated they would. The firm was prompt in returning calls and the Select Board was pleased with the product they supplied.

PROPERTY REAPPRAISAL:

2011 Budget amount: \$127,176 2012 Selectmen amount: \$108,368
Chairman Alpers stated that the Assessor would be working one day a week to do field work and maintaining the daily work. The Select Board presently does not plan to continue with the quarterly revaluation as was done for the most recent revaluation.

Vice Chairman Simard asked if some residents had their homes appraised twice in this billing cycle. He was informed that if a change to the home between measurements then it could create an increase in the home value.

Chairman Simard asked if there are outstanding tax bills. Chairman Alpers explained that because the tax rate was set the bills were sent out late so there are some bills still outstanding.

Chairman Alpers stated that there are new computer programs available that will allow for putting the tax maps on line and will allow the taxpayer to pay their bills online. This option will be available this year.

LEGAL:

2011 Budget amount: \$17,500 2012 Selectmen amount: \$17,500
Chairman Alpers stated that the Department heads are asked to filter any legal questions to the Town Administrator or the Select Board. The Town Administrator used the Local Government Center for legal advice prior to seeking advice from the Town Counsel.

PERSONNEL ADMIN:

2011 Budget amount: \$63,390 2012 Selectmen amount: \$77,269
Chairman Alpers explained that line 4155-250 Unemployment Comp. went to the open market. This resulted in a 15% increase or an increase of \$6000. Safety is important and will be taken seriously. A Safety Committee has been activated and is in force.

PLANNING BOARD:

2011 Budget amount: \$11,689 2012 Selectmen amount: \$9,989
Town Alpers stated that this was reduced because they have not used the amount budgeted for the last few years.

ZONING BOARD:

2011 Budget amount: \$6,694 2012 Selectmen amount: \$5,694
Town Alpers stated that this was reduced because they have not used the amount budgeted for the last few years.

TAX MAP:

2011 Budget amount: \$6,800 2012 Selectmen amount: \$3,600
The use of the Avitar program has allowed for a reduction in this area.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS:

2011 Budget amount: \$95,525 2012 Selectmen amount: \$93,160
Chairman Alpers brought to the attention of the Budget Committee the line called Maintenance Custodian. He explained this is a part time position and it will allow for the necessary repairs and upkeep of the buildings. The Select Board and the Town

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

2011 Budget amount: \$875,203 2012 Selectmen amount: \$892,977
Chairman Alpers stated that the retirement line increase is a result of the State giving more responsibility to the employer.

Chairman Alpers explained that Chief Yannuzzi stays current with the billing and it is going well. He uses every available avenue to receive the payments. He will be passing increase onto other towns to offset the increases we incur. Chief Yannuzzi prorates the cost to each community based upon their usage. The contracts are set in the summer. Mr. Thouin asked for a copy of last year and this year's usage. Vice Chairman Simard asked for a breakdown of calls showing if it was for EMS and Fire calls.

Chairman Alpers stated the generator grant was successful and the Town should take possession in about 3 months.

At a prior meeting Chief Yannuzzi asked about purchasing a new pickup to replace the Jeep. Chairman Alpers stated that the Chief is communicating with another town to take ownership of a vehicle they are giving away. Ms Gordon asked if this was an area where neighboring towns could work together and not duplicate resources. Chairman Lagueux stated that some RSA's require each town to have their own equipment.

FORESTRY:

2011 Budget amount: \$2,500 2012 Selectmen amount: \$2,500
This will remain the same as previous years.

CROSSING GUARDS:

2011 Budget amount: \$8,683 2012 Selectmen amount: \$8,855
This covers the expense of two crossing guards one at School Street and the other at Central Square.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:

2011 Budget amount: \$1,500 2012 Selectmen amount: \$5,500
During the recent hurricane it became apparent that the current communication equipment was inadequate. Therefore this increase will provide funding for updated and proper equipment.

TOTAL FOR PUBLIC SAFETY:

2011 Budget amount: \$1,806,018 2012 Selectmen amount: **\$2,045,861**

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT:

2011 Budget amount: \$515,952 2012 Selectmen amount: \$560,578
The gal/oil line is increased to cover the increase cost of fuel. Funding is provided for maintenance of the small equipment. An increase of \$10,000 is to provide funding for guardrail replacement. Paving and sidewalk repairs are included in this budget as well.

HIGHWAY PROJECTS:

2011 Budget amount: \$258,588 2012 Selectmen amount: \$220,000
Chairman Alpers stated that there would not be any reconstruction projects this year.

STREETS/BRIDGES:

2011 Budget amount: \$43,500

2012 Selectmen amount: \$53,040

This shows the start of paying back the street light installation. This is scheduled to be paid off by May 2013.

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL:

2011 Budget amount: \$246,896

2012 Selectmen amount: \$270,033

Chairman Alpers stated that this department currently has two positions and the Select Board will be evaluating this during the year. He told the Budget Committee that some changes might be made that would affect the 2013 budget. He feels the employees would be safer if they were visible to each other; which would require some physical changes at the facility. Vice Chairman Simard stated that plans to do the roof and change the road were already in place. Chairman Alpers agreed they do need repair and replacement but not this year. The Select Board will be reviewing these changes with the employees and consider their suggestions for a better traffic flow.

Chairman Alpers mentioned that the new equipment line is increased to provide funding for a new roll off container.

Vice Chairman Simard asked if the Town was still collecting the fee from the Town of Hebron. Chairman Alpers stated that they were and both Town's were pleased with the arrangement.

FIRE BETTERMENT:

2011 Budget amount: \$10,000

2012 Selectmen amount: \$0

Mr. Carr noted that funding for fire Betterment was not provided. Chairman Alpers questioned if the funding needed to be there every year. Mr. Carr stated that this is a legitimate cost every year and should be budgeted every year. It covers the cost of flushing and maintaining the fire hydrants.

TOTAL FOR PUBLIC WORKS:

2011 Budget amount: \$1,074,936

2012 Selectmen amount: **\$1,103,651**

LAND USE/HEALTH:

2011 Budget amount: \$31,020

2012 Selectmen amount: \$14,209

Chairman Alpers stated that the Land Use/Health Officer would be a part time position. It would require about 14 hours a week of fieldwork. They would be determining if orders are being followed through and they would work closely with the Town Assessing Officer.

ANIMAL WELFARE:

2011 Budget amount: \$500

2012 Selectmen amount: \$750

This is a contracted item and the price is remains very reasonable for the service provided.

HEALTH AGENCIES:

2011 Budget amount: \$33,600

2012 Selectmen amount: \$33,600

Provides funding to NANA and Plymouth Regional Clinic.

WELFARE ADMIN:

2011 Budget amount: \$14,321

2012 Selectmen amount: \$14,499

WELFARE SERVICES:

2011 Budget amount: \$47,100

2012 Selectmen amount: \$62,100

Chairman Alpers stated that when the Stated cuts back funds the Town must accept the increase in expenses. Rent was the biggest request for assistance this year.

RECREATION:

2011 Budget amount: \$97,748

2012 Selectmen amount: \$97,748

This item remains the same as previous years.

BEACHES:

2011 Budget amount: \$16,205

2012 Selectmen amount: \$16,204

This item provides funding for three attendants.

KELLEY PARK:

2011 Budget amount: \$44,658

2012 Selectmen amount: \$42,657

Chairman Alpers stated some of the items in the Master Plan include installing a walking path and there is a need to make the park wheelchair accessible. The Police Department is aware of the ongoing vandalism situation and they are taking measures to stop further incidents.

LIBRARY:

2011 Budget amount: \$142,937

2012 Selectmen amount: \$145,870

PATRIOTIC:

2011 Budget amount: \$11,200

2012 Selectmen amount: \$11,200

This department schedules the summer concerts that are a big hit with the Town's people. It was also noted that appreciation was given to Bristol Shop N Save for sponsoring the summer concerts.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION:

2011 Budget amount: \$2,310

2012 Selectmen amount: \$810

Chairman Alpers stated that this provides funding for testing of the Plankey Well.

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION:

2011 Budget amount: \$1,198

2012 Selectmen amount: \$1,198

SOCIAL SERVICES:

2011 Budget amount: \$14,300

2012 Selectmen amount: \$14,300

TOTAL FOR PUBLIC SERVICES:

2011 Budget amount: \$457,097

2012 Selectmen amount: **\$455,146**

PRINCIPAL L/T DEBT:

2011 Budget amount: \$139,763

2012 Selectmen amount: \$142,862

INTEREST L/T DEBT:

2011 Budget amount: \$51,349

2012 Selectmen amount: \$46,296

TAX:

2011 Budget amount: \$5,000

2012 Selectmen amount: \$3,000

Chairman Alpers stated that due to the delayed completion of the property revaluation there is a need for a TAN.

Ms Gordon stated that she has heard comments regarding an over surplus of funds. Town Administrator explained that it is recommended by the State Department of Revenue Administration that the Towns maintain a 5% in surplus.

TOTAL FOR DEBT SERVICE:

2011 Budget amount: \$196,112

2012 Selectmen amount: **\$192,158**

CAPITAL PROJECTS:

2011 Budget amount: \$65,000

2012 Selectmen amount: \$25,000

Chairman Alpers stated that the Select Board recommends \$10,000 for the Master Plan project and \$15,000 for the Town Building Maintenance Fund. This fund would give emergency money to cover the costs for a repair to the Town's buildings. Mr. Thouin asked if this included the Old Town Hall Building. Chairman Alpers stated that the Select Board is forming a committee to do a feasible study of the Old Town Hall. They will determine what is its worth to the town, what use does it get, what will it cost to bring it up to code and make it more energy efficient.

CAPITAL EQUIPMENT:

2011 Budget amount: \$96,350

2012 Selectmen amount: \$184,200

Chairman Alpers stated that funding for a new police cruiser (\$34,200) and a new ambulance (\$150,000) is included in this increase. The cruiser is a 6 cyl. Ford Interceptor. He was asked if we could get by with 4 cruisers rather than 5. Chairman Alpers stated that all 5 are used and needed. The ambulance is partially financed with Capital Reserve funds in the EMS and Fire Equipment Fund. The Town will need to raise \$70,000 towards this purchase. Chairman Alpers that this will deplete this capital reserve fund and it will not be continued. Vice Chairman Simard stated that it would make sense to keep it going. Chairman Lagueux asked if the ambulance should be a warrant article. The \$150,000 swings the numbers too much from year to year and it would allow the people to vote on the purchase. The Select Board will take this into consideration.

When asked about the Sewer to Lake project, Chairman Alpers stated that the contract with the lobbyist was cancelled and would not be renewed. Currently grant money for this project is impossible to find.

When asked about the Library addition it was stated it would be a warrant article and would be presented at a later date to the Budget Committee.

TOTAL FOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURES:

2011 Budget amount: \$181,350

2012 Selectmen amount: **\$209,200**

BUDGET TOTAL:

2011 Budget amount: \$4,546,997 2012 Selectmen amount: **\$4,845,597**
Chairman Alpers explained that if the Outside Details, the ambulance and the retirement adjustment are taken into consideration the Select Board level funded the town's portion of the tax rate.

SEWER SURPLUS TRANSFER:

2011 Budget amount: \$10,453 2012 Selectmen amount: \$803

SEWER CAPITAL PROJECTS:

2011 Budget amount: \$6,851 2012 Selectmen amount: \$3,851

SEWER OPERATIONS:

2011 Budget amount: \$322,158 2012 Selectmen amount: \$323,631

TOTAL FOR SEWER:

2011 Budget amount: \$339,462 2012 Selectmen amount: **\$328,285**

WATER SURPLUS TRANSFER:

2011 Budget amount: \$12,521 2012 Selectmen amount: \$8,395

WATER CAPITAL PROJECTS:

2011 Budget amount: \$68,516 2012 Selectmen amount: \$62,316

WATER OPERATIONS:

2011 Budget amount: \$290,284 2012 Selectmen amount: \$345,907
Chairman Alpers stated that rates have not changed for several years and this is an area that needs to be looked at in the next couple of years. He stated that any changes would require a public meeting.

TOTAL FOR WATER:

2011 Budget amount: \$371,321 2012 Selectmen amount: **\$416,618**

TOTAL FOR ENTERPRISE FUNDS:

2011 Budget amount: \$710,783 2012 Selectmen amount: **\$744,903**

OVERALL BUDGET TOTAL:

2011 Budget amount: \$5,257,780 2012 Selectmen amount: **\$5,590,500**

Chairman Lagueux thanked the Select Board for their hard work and for this time to review their proposed budget.

A few town residents attended the meeting and Chairman Lagueux asked if any of them had a comment.

Mr. Paul Mangonellis owner of Basic Ingredients stated that as a result of social networking he has become the voice for the nonvoting taxpayer. They are concerned about the new tax rate and what to do about it.

Eric Rottenecker noticed that the Select Board did not include any money for replacing the water and sewer lines in the New Town Square project. He was told it will be a warrant article and the Select Board is still receiving reasonable figures to use in the article. Mr. Rottenecker asked what happened if it was defeated and the pipes burst, and then we will be tearing up the new pavement. He felt it was poor planning. He also asked why did we pay a lobbyist and why did we purchase the Millstream property. Selectman Denning explained that the Board spent about a year on the sewer to lake project and realized they needed help finding grant money. It has proven to be unsuccessful and the contract was not renewed.

Bonnie recently received her tax bill and assessment. The assessment went down but the tax bill went up. She asked the Budget Committee to find a way to lower the budget. Chairman Lagueux encouraged her to attend the Town Meeting and vote to change the line items and the total budget. Ms Greenwood added that she needed to look at the school district's budget as well and attend those meetings.

Janet Cote stated that the Select Board and the Budget Committee need a reality check with issues regarding the economy. The house values in the town make it impossible for many to sell their homes but they cannot afford the taxes to keep them. She understands everyone does their best but if the various departments and groups don't come together and cut the budgets then she is afraid that Bristol will decline in population rather than grow. Chairman Lagueux encouraged her to attend the public meeting and statements made by the public at that meeting have an impact on final decisions regarding the final budget presented to the Town for voting.

It was also stated that people need to stay for the entire meeting, many items get passed at the end when several have left. A resident noted that last year the warrant articles were tabled before any discussion could take place. Another resident stated that the Town provides way too many services and the Police and Fire Departments need to be cut back.

Chairman Lagueux thanked the Town residents for their comments and encouraged them to come to the public meeting.

Chairman Lagueux asked the Committee for a vote regarding the next meeting. It was scheduled for January 2, which is the holiday. After a brief discussion Mr. Preble made a motion to have the next meeting on Tuesday, January 3, 2012. Vice Chairman Simard seconded the motion. This passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Member Comments:

Mr. Carr referred to the letter that was given to each member at the last meeting. The author of the letter stated that the Budget Committee is responsible for the budget that is given to the people. Mr. Carr added that although some of the writer's facts were slightly inaccurate he was absolutely correct in that statement. The Budget Committee is responsible for the budget that is presented to the committee. Mr. Arseneau agreed and questioned if we could cut the budget more. Mr. Carr added that we have some of

the best Departments in the State but he wonders if some of the departments are leaning toward the Cadillac side when a Chevy is what we need to get the job done.

Town Administrator Comments:

Town Administrator Capone did not have any additional comments.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be January 3 at 7:00 pm. It will be the first deliberation meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Chevalier made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Vice Chairman Simard. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Emily Hemingway
Recording Secretary