

Approved as amended at the January 16, 2012 Bristol Budget Committee meeting.

BRISTOL BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
January 9, 2012

Present:

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

Others Present:

Town Administrator Michael Capone, Fire Chief Yannuzzi, Police Chief Lewis

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 January 9, 2012 meeting. Vice Chairman Simard made a motion to accept the minutes as written and was seconded by Ms Greenwood. Mr. Thouin and Town Administrator Capone suggested minor changes to the wording for better clarification. Chairman Lagueux called for a vote to accept the minutes as amended. This passed with 12 in favor and one abstention.

Old Business:

Chairman Lagueux welcomed Police Chief Lewis and Fire Chief Yannuzzi to the meeting. He explained that the Budget Committee had voted to lower their respective budgets and had asked them to attend this meeting with an explanation of how they would make the necessary cuts to meet that new budget total. The Budget Committee also tabled an item in each department requesting more information from the Chiefs.

Mr. Chevalier stated that we, the Budget Committee, do not have the say on payroll or personnel. It is up to the Selectmen to determine pay raises, benefits, and positions. Our job is money not personnel.

Mr. Arseneau stated that we could zero out a line item. He asked what if the Budget Committee decided to zero a line item would that eliminate a position. Selectman Shackett commented that it is a bottom line budget. If the Budget Committee were to suggest zeroing out a position the Select Board could decide to keep the position and make the cuts somewhere else in the budget.

Vice Chairman Simard stated that RSA32 says we can zero out a line item and it is illegal to expend money in that line item.

Town Administrator Capone commented that we present a budget to the Town at the Town meeting. The voters then decide to accept, change, or reject our recommendations and vote on the bottom line amount. Once that bottom line budget

is passed at the Town meeting it is the responsibility of the Select Board, the Department Heads and the Town Administrator to expend money within that budget amount.

Mr. Arseneau asked if the voters have the power to eliminate a position in a warrant article at the Town Meeting. Town Administrator Capone replied that he would check into it but he believes the voters might be able to do that.

Chairman Lagueux asked Police Chief Lewis if he would explain the \$200,000 for the outside detail. Police Chief Lewis replied that the two engineers working on the Town Square renovation project determined this amount. When this amount was determined it is with the assumption that the project could take up to six months to complete the project. It is also assuming that the water/sewer pipes would be replaced and the State would work on some drainage issues along with the planned renovations. If the replacement of the water/sewer pipes were not approved at the Town Meeting then the project would be completed in a greatly reduced amount of time. Therefore the amount of money needed would be reduced.

Chairman Lagueux asked if the warrant article to replace the water/sewer pipes was not passed would the amount for outside detail be lowered by an amendment. Yes, that is what would likely happen was the response.

Vice Chairman Simard asked the Police Chief if he had officers on duty at peak hours and the contractor's flag people at non-peak hours would it be safe for the Town's people. Police Chief Lewis stated that he has the right to determine if detail is there or not. Vice Chairman Simard asked if he would work with the taxpayers by having contractor's flag people on duty at non-peak times. Police Chief Lewis stated that he would have officers on duty when necessary.

Mr. Carr stated that revenues offset this line item. Police Chief Lewis confirmed that it is and the officer receives \$40 per hour while the contractor is charged \$65 per hour.

Ms Greenwood suggested that Committee wait until the final amount is received from the engineers. Chairman Lagueux agreed and wants the amount as close to that provided by the engineers.

Chairman Lagueux asked how the Police Chief would reduce his department's budget. Police Chief Lewis stated again that what the voters raise for the Police Department he will work within that amount and give the service that is expected.

He began his summary by stating that he anticipates returning \$10,000 to \$11,000 to the general budget. The Budget Committee asked him to cut \$36,000 from the budget that the Select Board had previously cut. To reach the proposed amount of \$900,000 he would: Subtract the 2% pay raise = \$8000; cut back overtime = \$8400; eliminate the Bike Patrol = \$500; zero the Pagers = \$925; cut the Prosecutor Program = \$1000; cut gas/fuel = \$5000; eliminate the Chief's expenses = \$100; zero out New Equipment = \$4000; and reduce the Part Time hours = \$8100.

Vice Chairman Simard asked if it made sense to lose some of the part time. Chief Lewis stated that it does not make sense but he does not want to lose any full time officers.

Chief Lewis continued by explaining the impact these cuts would have on the department. He stated that the employees give a good service not just in his

department but all of them around the town. When his officers heard that the Budget Committee had eliminated the pay raise they all stated that they would still do the job needed for the Town.

Regarding overtime, the Chief works 10 to 15 hours per week in overtime. This line item is usually lower than asked for because it is a difficult item to control. He will make the adjustment using salary personnel as much as possible. The reduction will effect some of the ongoing investigations.

Bike Patrol is a welcomed service by the kids at school and at the concerts. It allows for a quiet presence and gives some limited surveillance. The benefits of this service outweigh the cost of \$500.

The Prosecutor requested this increase and the Police Chief is not sure what the reaction will be when he hears of the reduction. The Prosecutor is busier with the increased number of arrests.

Chief Lewis stated that the reduction in fuel is a hope. It is lower than last year and with the cost of fuel and other factors involved he does not know if this is a realistic number.

The elimination of the Chief's Expenses line item is of little effect. He did not use it in the past and will not use it this year.

The new equipment line is important but to reduce the budget it is one that has to be eliminated. The Police Chief had expressed a need for video equipment in a cruiser and some cameras in the Police Station. He also wanted to purchase a radio system to improve communications during an emergency. The lack of the cameras in the Station is a liability to the Town and he feels that at least one should be installed in the interview room.

The reduction of Part Time wages could mean no evening coverage. The part time employees help to cover for sick leave and other scheduled leave time.

Vice Chairman Simard noted that some voters would like to see the Police Department gone and go to the State Police for coverage. He stated that other communities similar to ours have a police department with a smaller budget. The Town of Bristol can no longer afford the Police Department. Vice Chairman Simard stated that he just wanted the Police Chief to know how the voters feel.

In response Police Chief Lewis said that he looked at the various budgets line by line from the communities mentioned. He stated that he would love to have their budgets. When compared line by line the budget for the Bristol Police Department is less than \$300,000 and his department provides coverage 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Chairman Lagueux thanked Chief Lewis for his response and for coming to the meeting. He then asked Fire Chief Yannuzzi to discuss his proposed budget cuts.

Chief Yannuzzi asked how this new amount of \$850,000 was determined. Chairman Lagueux stated that in general discussion a motion was made and passed. It was also decided that the Fire Chief could determine where the reductions would be made. Mr. Arseneau added that he made the motion and then asked what the Fire Department expense total was for this year. The number was very close to the new reduced amount.

Fire Chief Yannuzzi stated that he is currently 26,000 under budget due to an unexpected personnel change. This is an uncontrolled reduction in his department and went most of the year without that position filled.

He explained that he uses three principals when developing his budget: Training/Education of personnel; Maintenance of equipment and the Fire Station; and Personal Safety for firefighters and public. He could not reduce his budget to meet the amount requested but he did make cuts to bring the budget down to \$861,021.

Fire Chief removed any proposed pay raises, including his own. He noted that he is contracted to receive a 3% pay raise. However, he feels that if his firefighters do not receive a raise then he would not.

He reduced line 4220-190 (Call Payroll) to \$50,000; reduced line 4220-350 (Medical Expense) to \$2200; Reduced line 4220-391 (Training) to \$8000; reduced line 4220-430 (Equipment Maintenance) to zero; reduced line 4220-432 to \$5000; reduced line 4220-565 (Public Education) to zero; reduced line 4220-561 (Fire Codes and Standards) to zero; reduced line 4220-610 (Supplies) to \$1200; reduced line 4220-620 (Office Supplies) to \$1200; reduced line 4220-660 (Chevy Suburban) to \$1000; reduced line 4220-668 (Tires) to \$1400; reduced line 4220-817 (Radio Equipment) to zero. These reductions would result in a total budget of \$861,021.

The changes would reduce the training of the firefighters to two nights per month from the four nights of training. It would reduce some EMT refresher classes. Service to the heavy equipment should be done once a year and the ladder truck should be tested, that would be eliminated or reduced. He currently has a cycle to replace old equipment with new equipment reducing a spike in the budget. This reduced budget would interfere with that cycle. His department will not request any new large equipment this year.

Vice Chairman Simard stated that a warrant article was presented last year at the Town Meeting to go to a volunteer Fire Department. He believes a similar article will be presented this year. He asked the Fire Chief if he would participate in a subcommittee to discuss the ambulance service and a volunteer fire department. Fire Chief Yannuzzi stated that he has invited Vice Chairman Simard to come in and meet with him and see how the fire department runs. He even invited the Vice Chairman to participate in a live training exercise. Vice Chairman Simard responded that his concern was regarding money not how the department runs. Fire Chief Yannuzzi personally feels that it is not within the Budget Committee's realm to discuss safety of the Town. Vice Chairman Simard stated that any information he receives from the Department heads should be in a public keeping the information transparent. He does not want to dictate how the Fire Department is run. The Select Board made cuts to his budget and now the Budget Committee is suggesting cuts however the budget still shows an increase and it needs to be reduced.

Ms Greenwood commented that the voters need information regarding what the result would be if these proposed cuts were to be passed. She feels that to reduce the fire department to a volunteer department would be a liability to the town, there would be slower response time, and the firefighters would be poorly trained. Ms Greenwood stated that such a change would be a disaster for everyone. The voters that she has

talked with are in support of the Fire Department and opposed to a volunteer system. Ms Greenwood would never vote in favor of returning to a volunteer fire department.

Mr. Keegan noted that the department heads are taking responsibility for covering the budget by using their own salaries to cover some of these cuts. He added that local towns that have a volunteer fire department are finding it difficult to find volunteers and are considering hiring firefighters. Mr. Keegan is not in favor of a volunteer fire department.

Chairman Lagueux thanked Fire Chief Yannuzzi for coming to the meeting and explaining the budget cuts to the Budget Committee.

Selectman Shackett made a motion to adopt the Select Board's proposed amount of \$936,029 less the adjusted wage amount as previously voted for the Police Department. Mr. Chevalier seconded the motion.

Mr. Chevalier stated that he spent some time to see the activity of the police department. The number of arrests has increased the number of calls have increased and to cut the budget more would mean a loss of officers. He feels that the Police have reduced in areas that should not be reduced and it makes no sense to ask for these reductions. Selectman Shackett explained that at the previous meeting he voted in favor of the reduced budget because it was more than was previously presented. He is not in favor of the \$900,000 proposed amount.

Mr. Carr agrees with what was said but encouraged the Committee members to look at the big picture. He does not want to see the tax rate increase.

A discussion regarding the surplus fund and borrowing followed this comment. Town Administrator Capone and Selectman Shackett explained the need to borrow and their goals to make changes to avoid borrowing in the future but these changes cannot be done in one year.

Ms Greenwood asked the Police Chief how many times they were called to the school. Chief Lewis stated that he did not have the exact number with him but an officer is called out to the High School or the Middle School quite often. He has asked the School District to pay for an officer. This request has not been acted upon.

Chairman Lagueux called for a vote on:

The motion from Selectman Shackett to adopt the Select Boards amount of \$936,029 less the adjusted wage amount as previously voted and was seconded by Mr. Chevalier. The motion **passed** with 7 in favor and 6 opposed.

Selectman Shackett made a motion to adopt the Select Boards proposed amount of \$892,977 minus the pay raises for the Fire Department. Ms Dolloff seconded the motion.

Selectman Shackett explained that the department needs the items as listed and the Fire Chief brought in a fair budget.

Vice Chairman Simard stated that this amount is \$20,000 over last years budget. He feels that if the Fire Chief could live with the \$861,021 amount then the Budget Committee

should go with that number. Selectman Shackett stated that the Fire Chief came in with a lower amount at the request of the Budget Committee not because he wanted to.

Vice Chairman Simard amended the motion adopt \$861,021 as previously outlined by the Fire Chief for the Fire Department's budget. Mr. Arseneau seconded the motion. The amendment **failed** with 5 in favor and 7 opposed.

Ms Gordon stated that the Committee made progress in reducing the budget and should not simply use Select Boards numbers. She feels the voters would have a hard time accepting that at the Town Meeting. Mr. Lagueux agreed and said that it is reasonable and appropriate to consider a small decrease.

Mr. Arseneau stated that somewhere in the middle is the right way to go. There needs to be some reasonableness in determining the right amount.

Mr. Keegan amended the motion of adopting the Select Boards amount of \$892,977 minus the 2% pay raise but including the Chief's contracted raise. The Fire Chief responded that in good conscience he couldn't take a raise if personnel do not receive one. The amended motion **failed** with 6 in favor and 7 opposed.

Vice Chairman Simard amended the motion to adopt the amount of \$861,021 inclusive of pay raises and concessions. Mr. Arseneau seconded the motion. Fire Chief Yannuzzi stated that he is not in favor of that amount. This amended motion **failed** with 6 in favor, 6 opposed and 1 abstention.

Mr. Chevalier made a motion to adopt \$875,203 inclusive of pay raises. Ms Dolloff seconded the motion.

Mr. Chevalier explained that this is last year's amount and the Fire Chief did a good job with that budget amount.

Mr. Arseneau would like the Committee to go line by line. Ms Gordon stated that the Committee needs to come up with the line item amounts to show where the money is allocated. Mr. Chevalier stated the Fire Chief could make those decisions. The Chief stated that if given the amount of \$875,203 then he would go line by line to allocate the funds.

Chairman Lagueux called for a vote on the amended motion stating:

Mr. Chevalier amended the motion to adopt \$875,203 inclusive of pay raises. Ms Dolloff seconded the motion. This **passed** with 10 in favor and 3 opposed.

Mr. Thouin asked Fire Chief Yannuzzi to give the changes to the Budget Committee. He will have them ready for next week's meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chairman Lagueux resumed the deliberation of the proposed budget.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT:

Ms Dolloff made a motion to adopt the Select Boards amount of \$560,578 less the adjusted wage amount as previously voted for the total Highway Department budget. Mr. Preble seconded the motion.

Mr. Preble commented that they came in under budget and feels this is the right amount for this department. Vice Chairman Simard stated that if the Department head can save money he will.

Mr. Thouin made a motion to remove \$5000 from line 4311-810 (New Equipment). This is the cost of the snow blower for the Kubota. Ms Greenwood seconded the motion.

Mr. Thouin explained that the Kubota is scheduled for replacement in a couple of years and he does not want to spend this amount of money on a piece of equipment that may not be able to fit the new tractor. If the Town purchased a new Kubota tractor then the snow blower could be transferred, but it is uncertain if the Highway Departments wants to purchase another Kubota.

Chairman Lagueux called for a vote:

Mr. Thouin made a motion to remove \$5000 from line 4311-810 (New Equipment). This is the cost of the snow blower for the Kubota. Ms Greenwood seconded the motion. This motion **passed** with 8 in favor and 5 opposed.

Chairman Lagueux called for a vote on the motion

To adopt the adjusted amount of \$555,578 less the adjusted wage amount as previously voted for the total Highway Department budget. This **passed** with 12 in favor and 1 opposed.

HIGHWAY PROJECTS:

Mr. Chevalier made a motion to accept the Select Boards proposed amount of \$220,000 for the total Highway Projects budget. Ms Dolloff seconded the motion.

Mr. Carr asked why the Select Board cut the paving by \$100,000. Selectman Shackett explained that the Board looked at the roads suggested and the amounts needed. They felt that the \$200,000 was a reasonable amount. Mr. Chevalier agreed that paving needs to be done but this is an area that can be cut without affecting the department. Vice Chairman Simard stated that we keep doing this and we need to maintain the infrastructure of the Town.

Chairman Lagueux called for a vote on the motion:

Mr. Chevalier made a motion to accept the Select Boards proposed amount of \$220,000 for the total Highway Projects budget. Ms Dolloff seconded the motion. This **passed** with 9 in favor and 4 opposed.

STREET/BRIDGES

Vice Chairman Simard made a motion to accept the Select Boards proposed amount of \$53,040 for the total Streets/Bridges budget. Mr. Chevalier seconded the motion. This **passed** with all in favor.

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL:

Ms Greenwood made a motion to accept the Select Boards proposed amount of \$270,033 less the adjusted wage amount as previously voted for the total Solid Waste Disposal budget. Vice Chairman Simard seconded the motion. Mr. Chevalier noted that the transfer station would be open two more hours per week from Memorial Day through Columbus Day. Vice Chairman Simard asked about the increase in usage and if the fees offset this increase. Town Administrator Capone that there is a small increase and the costs are covered.

It was noted that the tipping fees have increased and this is a contracted item. It was also noted that the new equipment amount would purchase a new roll out container if needed.

Chairman Lagueux called for a vote on the motion:

Ms Greenwood made a motion to accept the Select Boards proposed amount of \$270,033 less the adjusted wage amount as previously voted for the total Solid Waste Disposal budget. Vice Chairman Simard seconded the motion. This **passed** with all in favor.

FIRE BETTERMENT:

Mr. Carr stated that if this were a true line item budget there would be \$20,000 in this line. It is an actual expense item. Mr. Chevalier stated that it pays for the water to maintain the fire hydrants and the expense is included in departments budget. Mr. Carr feels that it is a legitimate cost to the Water Department.

Vice Chairman made a motion to adopt the Select Boards proposed amount of zero for the total Fire Betterment budget. Mr. Arseneau seconded the motion. This **passed** with 11 in favor and 2 abstentions.

LAND USE/HEALTH:

Selectman Shackett made a motion to accept the Select Boards proposed amount of \$14,209 for the total Land Use/Health budget. Mr. Chevalier seconded the motion. This **passed** with all in favor.

ANIMAL WELFARE:

Mr. Chevalier made a motion to adopt the Select Boards proposed amount of \$750 for the total Animal Welfare budget. Ms Greenwood seconded the motion. This **passed** with all in favor.

HEALTH AGENCIES:

Mr. Arseneau made a motion to adopt the Select Boards proposed amount of \$33,600 for the total Health Agencies budget. Mr. Keegan seconded the motion. This **passed** with 12 in favor and 1 opposed.

WELFARE ADMIN:

Mr. Chevalier made a motion to accept the Select Boards proposed amount of \$14,499 less the adjusted wage amount as previously voted for the total Welfare Admin budget. Mr. Arseneau seconded the motion. This **passed** with all in favor.

WELFARE SERVICES:

Mr. Chevalier made a motion to adopt the Select Boards proposed amount of \$62,100 for the total Welfare Services budget. Vice Chairman Simard seconded the motion. This **passed** with 12 in favor and 1 opposed.

RECREATION:

Ms Greenwood made a motion to adopt the amount Select Boards proposed amount of \$97,748 inclusive of any wage adjustments for the total Recreation budget. Vice Chairman Simard seconded the motion. This passed with all in favor.

BEACHES:

Ms Greenwood made a motion to adopt the Select Boards proposed amount of \$16,204 inclusive of any wage adjustments for the total Beaches budget. Vice Chairman Simard seconded the motion. This **passed** with all in favor.

KELLY PARK:

Ms Greenwood made a motion to adopt the Select Boards proposed amount of \$42,657 inclusive of any wage adjustment for the total Kelly Park budget. Mr. Chevalier seconded the motion. This **passed** with all in favor.

Vice Chairman Simard asked if the Town Administrator had a copy of the current master plan and when would it need to be updated. Town Administrator stated that he has a copy and look into when it should be updated.

Next Meeting:

Earlier in the meeting it was decided that the Budget Committee needed one more deliberation meeting and the public hearing would be in two weeks. The next meeting will be January 16, 2012 at 7:00 pm. It will be the third deliberation meeting.

The public hearing will take place at the Old Town Hall on January 23, 2012.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Chevalier made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Vice Chairman Simard seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:45.

Respectfully submitted,
Emily Hemingway
Recording Secretary