

APPROVED

Budget Committee
Meeting Minutes
February 17, 2014

Present:

Chair-Kerrin Rounds, Ron Preble, Dave Carr, Paul Manganiello, Tom Keegan, Ernie Richards, Carol Huber, William Cote, Barbara Greenwood, Ashley Dolloff, Kevin MacCaffrie, Mark Chevalier, and Betsy Schneider.

Absent:

Others Present:

Michael Capone- Town Administrator

Call to Order:

Committee Chair Kerrin Rounds called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

Review of Minutes:

Kerrin Rounds asked the members to review the minutes from February 10, 2014. Barbara Greenwood made a motion to accept the minutes as written, seconded by Tom Keegan. Motion passed with all in favor with one abstention by Mark Chevalier.

Correspondence:

None

Old Business: Kerrin Rounds explained to the committee that a vote needed to take place to recommend a budget. The attorney for the town stated that it was not okay for a budget to be not recommended by the Budget Committee.

Mark Chevalier made a motion to accept the total budget amount of \$5,466,274 as proposed by the Budget Committee, seconded by Ron Preble.

- Mark Chevalier commented that the committee has been working on this budget since October and feels the bottom line should be finalized and moved forward.
- Paul Manganiello recommends reducing the budget because the School Resource Officer is still funded under Line 119 in the police department budget. Mr. Manganiello gave a handout to the committee that he prepared outlining the funding of line 119 in the police budget. In year 2005, the resource officer turned into a patrolman because the school didn't approve it. In 2006 a 9th officer was added. Mr. Manganiello would like to see the budget reduced by the amount in Line 4210-119, \$53,541. In past years, the school resource officer was identified by that line item.
- Barbara Greenwood commented that Chief Lewis stated at the public hearing that there is no school resource officer in the 2014 budget and that the school warrant article has no money to fund an officer either. Ms. Greenwood said that it does not exist at this time.
- Paul Manganiello said that in a right to know packet from the chief, it was stated that the position could be back filled and that Chief Lewis was going for a 10th officer. The letter included information from the Superintendent of Newfound Area School District on the funding of the

school resource officer.

- Kerrin Rounds commented that the school resource officer was reclassified as a sergeant.
- Mark Chevalier commented that without the school funding, the resource officer won't be put over there.
- Paul Manganiello commented that the 9th officer position should be eliminated. The school is enjoying a quasi-resource officer without paying for it.
- Kerrin Rounds stated that the budget committee cannot eliminate a position, only the funding for the position.
- Mark Chevalier commented that if the officer is going to the schools, the schools should be billed.
- Dave Carr gave the committee a handout he prepared showing a chart of the budget process. In 2013 the amount actually spent was \$5,267,000. The department heads came in with a 2014 budget request of \$5,646,000. This was reduced by \$158,000 by the Select Board, bringing the total to \$5,488,000. The Budget Committee reduced the budget by \$22,000, bringing the total to \$5,466,000. This is a \$198,000 increase over what was spent last year. If all the warrant articles pass, the total will be \$5,862,000.
- Kerrin Rounds commented that last year's warrant articles totaled \$193,933 which were either all paid or encumbered.
- Administrator Capone stated that line 771 the \$70,000 for lighting should be moved to the paid column. The Master Plan and Building Improvements were encumbered.
- Kerrin Rounds commented that the difference should be \$166,000 less based on the 5.2 million (total spent) doesn't include all the warrant articles but they will be spent as part of that operating budget.
- Kerrin Rounds commented that she feels that it is unfortunate that the budget committee vote will show a close to a tie vote when the disagreement is over one department budget and unfortunate that it reflects over all the other departments.
- Betsy Schneider commented that the last few votes on the \$200,000 and \$100,000 were all close votes and not indicative of one department.

Vote: 7 To Recommend 6 To Not Recommend. The budget is recommended.

Kerrin Rounds made a motion to take a new vote on article #10, which is the Kelley Park article, seconded by Tom Keegan.

- Kerrin Rounds stated that she was the 1 abstention in the original vote. After hearing Les Dion speak at the public hearing, from a financial standpoint it makes sense to spend the \$25,000 for new playground equipment if the cost to repair is \$15,000. Ms. Rounds would like to change her abstention to an In Favor vote.
- Barbara Greenwood commented that people are very appreciative of having a park that offers so much and that it has been too many years, over 20, since the equipment has been looked at.
- William Cote asked if the elementary school is charged \$8,000 a year for use of the park or if the TTCC is charged for use of the park. Administrator Capone stated that the school district is charged for use of the park. Barbara Greenwood stated that the community center is not charged a fee. William Cote felt that the TTCC should be looked at to pay fees also as the TTCC is not a Bristol only entity.
- Dave Carr commented that the \$8,000 has been in effect for quite a number of years and an increase could be justified.
- Kevin MacCaffrie commented that the plan is still fluid and not fixed. The woodchips have to be done regardless and he is not sure enough money is being asked for. Mr. MacCaffrie has not

seen the plan or the money that has been raised. The donated money is not in hand yet.

- Les Dion commented that the KaBoom grant is a reality and that some funds have been raised. She is confident that the money will be raised through donations. Other grants are being pursued. A solicitation letter will be sent out next week to raise donations, the playground plan will be included in the letter.
- Ernie Richards asked if there was any progress with the solicited bids. Les Dion commented that bids have been requested from three playground equipment companies. The committee did start out with quotes, now with the design day completed the bids can be done. They have been given a budget.
- Ernie Richards asked if the bids could come in lower. Les Dion commented that it is a possibility but the scope of the plan includes benches and landscaping. Donation of labor and materials is being looked at also. Mr. Richards commented that a plan to look at would help with understanding the project.
- Paul Manganiello commented that article 10 and 15 can't be separated, but would like to know the scope of the project based on square footage. Les Dion stated that the playground dimensions do not change.
- Kevin MacCaffrie asked if the project included site work and installation. Les Dion stated that the grant is a community build and the labor will all be donated.

Vote to take a new vote on article #10: 9 In Favor 3 Opposed 1 Abstention. Motion passes.

Vote on article #10: 6 To Recommend 4 To Not Recommend 3 Abstentions. Article #10 to be recommended.

Paul Manganiello made a motion to take a new vote on article #15, seconded by Kevin MacCaffrie.

Vote to take a new vote on article #15: 10 In Favor 1 Opposed 2 Abstentions. Motion passes.

- Paul Manganiello commented that based on the discussion around article #10, he would change his vote and support article #15 because there was good faith for everything to be repaired in the park.

Vote on article #15: 13 To Recommend 0 To Not Recommend. Article #15 to be recommended.

New Business:

Member Comments:

William Cote thanked Administrator Capone for meeting with him and Ernie Richards to explain the tax rate calculation.

Kerrin Rounds thanked Administrator Capone for all his help with the Budget Committee this year.

Barbara Greenwood expressed concern about the budget, but felt that the committee tried hard to keep it low. She is also concerned about the school budget that keeps going up, especially regarding the new teacher contract. She commented that the biggest problem with the tax rate is the school portion not the town portion and that the school rate impacts tax dollars tremendously.

William Cote commented that the school portion for Bristol is close to being exactly the same as the town budget, around 6 million dollars.

Ernie Richards commented that the tax base has been staying about the same for the last several years and that the town keeps going back to the same people for more money.

Paul Manganiello commented that focusing on one department is a macro situation, but it cannot be ignored that the police department budget has doubled.

Kerrin Rounds asked Paul Manganiello if he did this focus on other departments. Mr. Manganiello stated that he did not, but that it would be helpful.

Kerrin Rounds thanked the Budget Committee for their hard work this budget season. Next season Ms. Rounds would like to look at a different process for creating a budget and to create bylaws for the committee.

Kevin MacCaffrie commented that as a new member, he felt the process was really extended and long with some confusing parts. He has seen other places have budget meetings with the Select Board and department heads at the same meeting to all work on the budget together. He commented that this would cut the length of the budget season down.

Carol Huber thanked Kerrin Rounds for running a great meeting.

Administrator's Report:

Administrator Capone will make some changes to the MS7 based on the new votes on the warrant articles. A majority of the Budget Committee members' signatures are needed by the end of the week to post the MS7 with the warrant.

Adjournment:

Ron Preble made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Kevin MacCaffrie, passed with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Costigan, Secretary