

Bristol Budget Committee

Public Hearing

February 4, 2015

Present: Chair- Kerrin Rounds, Vice-Chair- Paul Manganiello, Ashley Dolloff, Kevin McCaffrie, Barbara Greenwood, Carol Huber, Ron Preble, William Cote, Don Milbrand, Dave Carr, Tom Keegan, Shaun Lagueux, and Ernie Richards.

Others Present: Town Administrator- Michael Capone and Finance Officer- Melanie Shokal.

Call to Order: Chair Kerrin Rounds called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Chair Comments:

Ms. Rounds thanked Barbara Greenwood for her six years of service on the Budget Committee.

The budget was carefully considered by the Budget Committee over several meetings. There was a joint Select Board/Budget Committee meeting with Department Heads in November. This meeting will take place again next year. The bottom line of the budget presented tonight is \$5,761,586, which is 4271,747 more than last year. Some changes accounting for this include a total of \$200,000 transfer from Water and Sewer into capital reserve funds, \$70,000 in Police Details was removed from the operating budget and will be a warrant article, there is a 27th pay period which only happens once every decade or so, and there is a budget line for merit based pay raises included. The difference between the Select Board proposed budget and the Budget Committee proposed budget is \$7,279. This includes a reduction of \$1,500 to Homeland Cemetery, a net increase of \$3,460 in the Fire Department, a reduction of \$9,689 to the P/T Library Assistants line, a \$1,000 reduction to Library Copier, a net increase of \$1,450 to Social Services.

Public Comments on Operating Budget:

Paul Simard asked about the reduction in the copier lines and asked how many were in the Town. Ms. Rounds replied that the copier reduction is only in the Library budget.

Boake Morrison commented that the Town only had four Selectmen last year. Ms. Rounds commented that the actual amount in the 2014 actual expenditure for the Select Board was \$14,000. JP Morrison commented that the Town needs a 5th Select Board member or the Board should go back to three members. Mr. Lagueux replied that the 5th Board member is by state statute and the reduction in members would have to be changed at Town Meeting. A fifth

member will be elected at Town Meeting this year. Boake Morrison asked why the runner up in the past election did not fill the empty seat. Mr. Lagueux commented that the five people expressed interest in the open Board seat. All votes were 2-2 and the Board could not agree on a candidate.

Archie Auger asked if raises are only in the Merit Raise line of the budget. Ms. Rounds replied that non-contracted employee raises are in the Merit Raise line. The Water/Sewer employee raises are in the Water/Sewer department budget. Mr. Auger commented that merit raises should go in the department budgets and it's not clear by separating the money out. The total cost of the Police Department is not accurate with the merit raises taken out. Mr. Auger commented that developing an effective merit raise process needs more time to develop and if all the merit raise budget is not used the unused portion goes into accrued wages. Mr. Lagueux replied that the unused portion of Merit Raises would go to the general fund. At some point it could be transferred to the accrued wages capital reserve by a vote of Town Meeting. Mr. Lagueux commented that the Select Board was very supportive of the merit raise system.

Margaret Hoyle asked for the reason for the increase in the Workers Compensation line. Mr. Capone replied that the contract has provisions for up to a 9% increase. When the current agreement expires, the Town will go out for bid on a new Workers Compensation agreement.

Boake Morrison asked what the \$520 in the Zoning Board Postage line was for. Ms. Dolloff replied that the Zoning Board needs to mail notices to abutters. Applicants are charged a fee so there is offsetting revenue for this expense.

Paul Simard asked how many vehicles are included in the Police Department budget, there are six listed and that one is the Town car. Ms. Rounds replied that the Police Department is charged for only a portion of the Town car usage.

JP Morrison commented that it looks like the Budget Committee is in agreement with the Select Board and department heads this year and that if all three are in agreement then he feels comfortable with the budget. Mr. Carr commented that the Budget Committee in effect has agreed almost 100% with the Select Board budget. Ms. Rounds commented that this agreement happened more this year because the Budget Committee and Select Board met jointly in November with department heads and both groups got the same answers. Mr. Lagueux commented that the Budget Committee vote on the total budget was 11-2 with an 8-3 vote on the Police Department bottom line. Mr. Lagueux commented that the joint meeting in November played a big part in the agreement.

Boake Morrison stated that in his opinion the Town should do away with 1 or 2 police officers and have the state help the Town more with troopers.

Archie Auger asked what the deficit in the Police Department 2014 budget was made up of. Mr. Lagueux replied that the highest reason the Police department was over budget was due to Overtime. The 2014 Overtime actual was just under \$40,000. Overtime was reduced to \$20,000 budgeted during the budget process last year. There were major incidents in Town that ate into the Overtime budget. Overall there were no major budget constraints on the Police Department budget except for the radio issues and the Overtime. Mrs. Cote commented that another difference in the bottom line was due to grant related expenses that were brought into the budget as a line item.

Boake Morrison asked for clarification on Outside Details. Mr. Lagueux commented that Outside Details are paid by the contractors. The officers are not being paid overtime but get paid a detail rate. The Town makes a profit every hour the officers are working a detail.

Boake Morrison asked about the bottom line of the new fire truck and that it does not show in the budget. Ms. Rounds replied that the payments are shown under Principal L/T Debt in the operating budget and that the fire truck would show on an asset sheet.

Archie Auger commented that the recent storms will have an effect on the Highway budget and that an analysis should be done to see if the budget needs to be adjusted up. Mr. Lagueux replied that the Town is keeping an eye on this department expense and may need to be adjusted. Mr. Manganiello commented that the cost could fall under the Contingency fund.

Boake Morrison asked how much was spent on resurfacing roads. Mr. Capone replied that \$213,864 was spent on resurfacing roads.

Lucille Keegan commented that she is disappointed that the money was removed for the library assistant and that the assistant is needed because the library is being used more than anticipated. Ms. Rounds commented that the Library requested an increase to line 191: P/T Assistants/Substitutes and that the Budget Committee reduced this line by \$9,000. Mr. Auger commented that state law requires the Library Trustees to budget all funds that are needed through the year and that the income did not get translated to the revenue sheet. There was \$5,000-\$6,000 in anticipated revenues reported by the Trustees. Mr. Auger commented that the Trustees need to have authorization to spend money and if it's not in the budget the Trustees can't spend it. Mr. Manganiello clarified that there is an additional 15 hour per week assistant requested to be funded.

Boake Morrison asked how many out of town people use the library and if the other towns are charged since they don't have libraries. Ms. Rounds replied that the Library Director will track these statistics in the future. Archie Auger commented that the Trustees looked at a possible warrant article to ask towns for money but the Library receives a lot of donations of time and money by private citizens from other towns.

Paul Simard asked if the additional position was funded as he recalls that the library would not request more staff when the addition was built. Mr. Milbrand replied that the new position was not funded. Ms. Rounds commented that this has to be reevaluated at some time as the bigger building has increased needs. Mr. Auger commented that the Budget Committee can cut the bottom line, but the Select Board cannot tell the Library Trustees what to spend the money on. Ms. Rounds commented that the Library bottom line was reduced by \$10,600. Mr. Auger commented that the Library asked for additional help because people use it so often and it is the cultural center of town.

Becca Boudreau asked why the TTCC budget line did not break down salaries. Ms. Rounds replied that the salary information is broken down during their budget presentation and that the information is included in the Town report.

Paul Simard asked if what the balances were on some of the listed items under Principal L/T Debt as some should be close to getting them paid off. Mr. Capone replied that some are coming due in the next two years and a full breakdown can be provided if anyone requests this.

Archie Auger thanked the Select Board, Budget Committee, Department Heads, and the Town Administrator for all the work it took to create a budget that has a small overall increase.

JP Morrison asked about setting revenues. Ms. Rounds replied that the Budget Committee does not set revenues, the Select Board does. Mr. Capone commented that the revenue sheet presented tonight includes revenues outside of general taxation. These revenues are used to offset expenses. Mr. Morrison asked how much money was outstanding. Mr. Capone replied that the Town Clerk/Tax Collector can supply the figure for uncollected balances. Mr. Auger commented that there is over 2 million dollars in revenues. Mr. Lagueux replied that these are non-property tax revenues.

JP Morrison asked if the Town is borrowing money again. Mr. Lagueux replied that the Town has not had to borrow money.

Public Comments on Warrant Articles:

Police Revolving Fund:

Archie Auger commented that this fund is cutting out the legislative body and the money shouldn't go to one particular department. Paul Simard commented that he is against revolving funds as it takes the money out of the control of the people. Dave Hill commented that he is in favor of the revolving fund as it allows for which police details to authorize and how much to charge for the detail.

CRF for Revaluation:

Kerrin Rounds commented that the revaluation costs \$70,000 and that half that amount is being raised in 2015 and the other half in 2016. JP Morrison asked if there is software to keep the figures updated. Ms. Rounds replied that the revaluation is required by state statute every five years. The full measure and list revaluation is done every ten years.

Bicentennial Fund CRF:

Archie Auger commented that the bicentennial is in 2019 and feels that the plans for this event should be known before raising the money.

Cruiser Purchase:

Kerrin Rounds clarified that only one cruiser is being purchased. Boake Morrison asked what vehicle is the Town getting rid of. Chief Lewis replied that the 2008 Crown Victoria will go out of service. This vehicle has 171,279 miles on it. Mr. Morrison asked if anything was coming off the 2008 car. Chief Lewis replied that the radar unit, hand tools, shot gun rifle, body armor, the radio, and two rear deck lights are being removed from the 2008 vehicle. The radio is going in the new cruiser.

Dave Hill asked for the breakdown of the \$44,000 cost of the new cruiser. Chief Lewis replied that the Ford factory base price is \$27,595.24, the purchase/installation of equipment costs \$13,955.55, and the installation of the camera system costs just under \$5,000 for a total of \$43,950.99. There is a 50/50 grant that will be applied to the camera system.

Betsy Schneider asked if a maintenance plan is included. Chief Lewis replied that a five year 100,000 mile powertrain warranty is included but a maintenance plan is not included. Ms. Schneider commented that a standard warranty is included but it is not clear what the \$13,995 is being paid for in the cost of the cruiser. This is the reason why she did not recommend the article.

Paul Manganiello asked if this vehicle is a marked cruiser and if that needs to be stated in the warrant article. Ms. Rounds replied that this decision is the purview of the Select Board and the Chief.

Communication Equipment:

Betsy Schneider asked if this includes a radio for one of the cruisers. Chief Lewis replied that it did. Ms. Rounds commented that the article is for a radio, police station upgrades, and a repeater on Hemp Hill.

One Ton:

JP Morrison asked what type of vehicle this is. Mr. Lagueux replied that it is an F-550. Mr. Morrison asked if the Town plans to replace the six wheelers. Mr. Lagueux commented that the Town bought one last year. Dave Hill commented that the CIP plan is to replace a six wheeler every 15 years. Mr. Morrison asked what vehicle is being replaced. Mr. Lagueux replied that the 2008 truck with 89,000 miles on it is being replaced. The truck is beat up. Mr. Lagueux commented that the goal of the article is to spread the cost out and not ask for the full amount at once.

Hydraulic Tools:

Kerrin Rounds commented that the 1985 set is being replaced and that the new set will meet the new standards for vehicles up to 2019.

JP Morrison asked if the old set works and do they get a lot of use. Chief Yannuzzi replied that the old set does not have enough pressure to cut through the metal on newer cars. This is the backup set that is being replaced. The newer set the Town owns now will then become the backup set.

Kerrin Rounds asked how many times the tool is used on average. Chief Yannuzzi replied that the primary 2006 set is used about 10-15 times per year. There are some broken blades on it.

Dave Hill asked why the Town needs a second set of tools. Chief Yannuzzi replied that there are times when two sets are needed either at two separate accidents or two cars at the same accident.

Command Vehicle:

Kerrin Rounds commented that the 2002 vehicle that is being replaced has severe rust problems and cannot pass inspection. There needs to be \$3,500 in repairs to the vehicle in order for it to pass inspection.

Back Up Generator:

Paul Simard asked what the purpose of the generator is. Ms. Rounds replied that the generator will be a mobile unit at the Town Offices building. Mr. Lagueux commented that the generator is a 400 amp unit with an automatic transfer switch. Chief Yannuzzi commented that a 50/50 grant is available for this generator. Mr. Auger asked why there was a dissenting vote on the Select Board recommendation. Betsy Schneider replied that she voted in the negative because at some point she had to say no to things and felt the Town might be able to go one more year without it. Ms. Rounds commented that the Fire Department is the emergency management

center for the Town and that frozen pipes at the Town Offices would be more expensive than the generator. Kevin McCaffrie commented that the Town Offices lost power twice this year.

Contingency Fund:

Kerrin Rounds commented that the legislature requires this fund to be voted on from year to year. The money in the fund from last year was not spent and lapsed into the unreserved fund balance. Paul Simard asked if this raising money for this article has an impact on taxes. Mr. Lagueux commented that yes the \$25,000 is being raised through taxation. Before the law changed, the money was in the operating budget every year. The money in the contingency fund is used for roof repairs, furnace replacement, or other emergency work needed on Town buildings. JP Morrison commented that there was \$200,000 left over in the budget last year, yet the Town is asking to raise this \$25,000 again this year. Dave Hill asked if the \$25,000 could come from the unreserved fund balance. Ms. Rounds replied that this is a good suggestion and that the Select Board can change the warrant article to say that is that is their purview.

Additional Funds for Accrued Wages Reserve:

Kerrin Rounds commented that there were expenditures paid out of this reserve last year and the money being raised is to build up the balance. Accrued wages are paid out for unused vacation time and other expenses when an employee leaves. JP Morrison asked how much money is in there now. Mr. Capone replied that the balance is \$41,254.26 as of December 31, 2014.

By Petition: Old Fire Station:

Lucille Keegan commented that she heard a comment that the petition should have been turned in earlier but the petition was turned in by the date that petition warrant articles were due. Mrs. Keegan commented that there are two quotes for the work needing to be done, but that it has been difficult to find quotes. This is a Town building that has been neglected for many years and the building is in disrepair and needs to be kept up. The Fire Department and Police Department use the building for storage. Ms. Rounds commented that many Budget Committee members want the article to go through the CIP committee and have the Select Board vet it. They want to see it part of a larger process. JP Morrison asked what the recommendation votes were. Ms. Rounds replied that the Select Board hasn't vote on this article yet, but will at their next meeting. The Budget Committee voted 2 to recommend, 10 to not recommend, and 1 abstention.

The meeting was closed to public comment at 9:13pm.

The meeting opened for Budget Committee deliberations at 9:20pm.

There was no revote on any warrant article.

Kevin McCaffrie moved to accept the total budget at \$5,761,586, seconded by Carol Huber.

- **Vote:** 10 In Favor 3 Opposed. The motion was approved.

Shaun Lagueux made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Don Milbrand. The motion passed with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:22pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Costigan, Secretary