

Budget Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
June 13, 2016

**Present:**

Chair- William Cote, Tom Keegan, John Sellers, Dave Carr, Ashley Dolloff, Don Milbrand, , Bob Emerson, JP Morrison, and Betsy Schneider.

**Absent:** Rob Glassett, Wayne Anderson, Kevin McCaffrie, and Scott Sanschargin.

**Others Present:** Town Administrator Nik Coates.

**Call to Order:**

Committee Chair William Cote called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

**Review of Minutes:**

William Cote asked the committee to review the minutes from May 9, 2016. Don Milbrand made a motion to accept the minutes from May 9, 2016 as written, seconded by John Sellers. The Committee voted 6-0-1 in favor of the motion.

**Correspondence:**

Mr. Coates presented an updated schedule with an August 29<sup>th</sup> meeting added to present the new budget format that will be used this year.

**Old Business:**

John Sellers asked if the new budget system will show the last five years as he needs this to do his analysis. Mr. Coates replied that the software system is the best of what is out there for municipal accounting. A new system would cost in the tens of thousands. The current system can export things out. Mr. Sellers asked if spreadsheets can be sent in Excel format. Mr. Coates replied that the software can export to Excel spreadsheets. Mr. Cote asked if there are parallel systems. Mr. Coates replied that there were not parallel systems and that the committee always got the spreadsheets in Excel. Mr. Milbrand asked if an example of the Excel sheet could be emailed to the committee to see if it actually works.

Dave Carr commented that it is cumbersome to have to bring requests for information to the committee first and ask for a vote for information. Mr. Coates replied that power does not reside with one person but with the committee as a whole so if the committee wants information they would take a vote to request that information. If it is not a committee request, the individual would put in a right to know request as this follows the law. JP Morrison commented that it would be appropriate to appoint a person to spearhead questions so the same questions are not being asked by multiple people. Don Milbrand commented that the questions should be channeled through as a committee. Mr. Coates commented that the law does say that the committee needs to vote on requests. Betsy Schneider commented that opens up for a bunch of 91-A requests if the committee doesn't agree on requests. Ms. Schneider commented that she believes the committee will approve the requests as it brings more information on the budget. Ashley Dolloff suggested that requests for information be added as an agenda item.

### **New Business:**

By-Laws: John Sellers made a motion to accept the By-Laws as written, seconded by JP Morrison. The committee voted 9-0 to approve the motion. The By-Laws were signed by those members present.

Code of Ethics Policy: Mr. Coates informed the committee that the policy was approved by the Select Board and committees and employees are asked to sign it. Dave Carr commented that the previous code of ethics policy stated that accepting gifts was limited to zero dollars and now it is limited to \$50. Mr. Coates replied that the state policy is \$50 also. Mr. Coates commented that he will bring this to the Select Board at their next meeting. John Sellers commented that he questions the language shall not instead of will not in areas. Mr. Milbrand replied that shall not is legal language and is more binding language. John Sellers commented that he has questions on the conflict of interest section and when members need to recuse themselves. Bob Emerson replied that it says it's a personal decision whether it's a conflict of interest or not. Ashley Dolloff commented that the person makes the decision to recuse themselves unless they can objectively discuss the issue. Betsy Schneider commented that it's important to look at this as if the whole town is looking at you to make the right decision. Mr. Coates commented that it's not meant to be punitive and the committee needs to look at the practical experience of this and just self-identify if you should be involved in a vote. Tom Keegan commented that recusing a member from the whole discussion limits the expert advice on the subject. JP Morrison commented that the member should have a say in the discussion but just not vote.

### **Member Comments:**

John Sellers commented that the information the committee received regarding the police detail was not exactly what he was looking for as the information was just based on balance sheet. Mr. Sellers stated that he was looking for withdrawal and deposit details. Don Milbrand commented that the details would be in our budget. Mr. Sellers replied that it doesn't show what went in and what went out. Mr. Sellers asked the committee if it is okay for him to go to the town administrator and work with him on this account. The committee was in agreement that he could work with the town administrator on this. Mr. Coates commented that the Select Board has responsibility for this account as they manage the budget.

William Cote asked about the meeting that the town administrator set up with committee chairs and vice-chairs on June 28<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Coates replied that the meeting with committee chairs and vice-chairs is being held to gather information on their priorities for the budget. Mr. Cote commented that any budget member can give their input for this discussion.

### **Select Board Comments:**

JP Morrison commented that the K-9 unit was passed by the Select Board and that he asked for an accounting to see what has been spent already on the program and to see how much will be needed for the future from the taxpayers.

### **Administrator's Report:**

### **Adjournment:**

Don Milbrand made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Betsy Schneider, passed with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Wendy Costigan, Secretary

