

Budget Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 12, 2016

Present:

Chair- William Cote, Tom Keegan, John Sellers, Dave Carr, Rob Glassett, Wayne Anderson, Bob Emerson, JP Morrison, Scott Sanschagrin, and Betsy Schneider.

Absent: Ashley Dolloff, Don Milbrand, and Kevin McCaffrie.

Others Present: Town Administrator Nik Coates (left early) and Les Dion.

Call to Order:

Committee Chair William Cote called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Review of Minutes:

William Cote asked the committee to review the minutes from June 13, 2016. Betsy Schneider made a motion to accept the minutes from June 13, 2016 as written, seconded by Rob Glassett. The Committee voted 9-0-1 in favor of the motion.

Correspondence:

Letters were received by the committee.

Old Business:

John Sellers commented that he is still waiting for the police detail report. Nik Coates replied that the town is getting a new finance person up and running. The auditors have looked at this report. John Sellers asked for the printout. Nik replied that it will take some time to go through all the details. Bill Cote commented that he will follow up with the finance officer.

Bill Cote commented that he expects that committee members will respect everyone's ideas and comments.

Bill Cote asked for the committee to vote on three starting times. Four members voted for 6:00, five members voted for 6:30, and four members voted for 7:00. The new start time for the budget committee is 6:30PM.

New Business:

Bill Cote informed the Board that the recording secretary will no longer physically be at the meetings and there are three options for this position. The committee can hire a new secretary, the committee can take their own minutes, or the present secretary can do the minutes from the video tapes. John Sellers asked if the minutes will still get out in a timely manner. Tom Keegan asked if there will be enough time for preparing the Select Board minutes, the budget committee minutes, and the administrative duties. Nik Coates replied that this is part of the job. Betsy Schneider commented that funds have been budgeted for the secretary position and that the funds will not need to be budgeted for in the coming budget season. Nik Coates replied that if it is done this way the town won't need to fund the budget secretary. The committee voted 10-0 to have the administrative assistant prepare the minutes from the video tapes.

Bill Cote commented that he would like to make a rule that people turn off electronic devices during meetings. Tom Keegan asked if the fire department members can turn off their radios. Rob Glassett

replied that there is a way to silence the radios. The committee voted 10-0 to silence electronic devices during meetings.

Bill Cote asked if there was a list of warrant articles for next year. Nik Coates replied that there is no list yet and the Select Board has not discussed this yet.

Bill Cote asked if there is a list of grants that have been applied for as the 50/50 grants impact the budget. Nik Coates replied that there is not currently a list but the Safe Routes to School grant is 100% and a grant approved through a warrant article is a 50/50 grant.

John Sellers commented that he received a YTD expenditure budget in Excel and he was able to convert it. It was not very user friendly but he can work with it. He would like to have 3-4 years of actuals to look at in this report. JP Morrison commented that the revenue portion was incomplete. Nik Coates replied that the office is getting the numbers up to date and cleaned up. Dave Carr asked if the committee was going to get an expense spreadsheet every month. Nik Coates replied that is the plan and he understands the committee's need for this. Bill Cote asked how accurate the report is. Nik Coates replied that some account lines need to be moved to the appropriate account and that the office is working on making sure the numbers are correct in each line.

Betsy Schneider asked why there is 100% left in the Merit Raise line. Nik Coates commented that is one of the lines that need to be distributed out. Betsy Schneider commented that on the August 18th budget report that line reflected what was in the budget at Town Meeting. Then on September 9th the line went down \$17,298. Betsy Schneider asked how this changed without showing that anything was expended. Nik Coates replied that the office is trying to get to the bottom of this. William Cote commented that it is expected to be correct for the next meeting. JP Morrison commented that it is getting into the budget season and the committee is hobbled without correct information. Rob Glassett commented that this should be taken to the Select Board to address and work out with Nik. Betsy Schneider asked if the town had someone hourly working on this. Les Dion replied that the town hired someone to do the day to day work to get caught up as months of bills were not paid. Now the finance office can go back and fix all the errors. Les Dion commented that the Select Board and the budget committee should all have correct information and they need to establish a timeframe for this.

Bill Cote informed that committee that he will get the non-profits presentation schedule and response from the non-profits.

Dave Carr commented that he feels the committee should start the budget process in April as he feels they are not spending enough time on budget preparation. Wayne Anderson commented that the committee can hear from the non-profits every two years instead of presentations every year. Dave Carr commented that the committee should meet every month and be looking at the budget a lot more than they have been. Wayne Anderson commented that he ran for the budget committee last year because he felt the product the committee put out last year was not competent and below the skill set of the committee. Rob Glassett commented that he doesn't think the committee has a lot to work on in those early months as departments don't have new budgets yet. Dave Carr replied that the committee can meet with department heads during those months and look at trends over the last 3-4 years.

John Sellers commented that at past meetings the committee talked about a Code of Ethics and he wants it made clear who can vote, especially when there is a member who has family employed by the town or the committee member is employed by the town. JP Morrison replied that he was told that you need to recuse yourself if you think there is a hint of impropriety, that you can be part of the discussion and not vote. Rob Glassett commented that who gets recused from a vote is open to interpretation and is a gray area. Wayne Anderson commented that a defining factor is if you have a personal interest. Rob Glassett commented that he is here to represent the town not the fire department. John Sellers commented that he feels that if a committee member has a family member who gets any money from town can't vote on that department. Rob Glassett commented that the Select Board should make the determination on the Code of Ethics. Betsy Schneider commented that the document was run by the

town attorney.

John Sellers made a motion that if a budget committee member is employed or has a family member employed, they will not be able to vote on that section of the budget, seconded by Betsy Schneider. Rob Glassett commented that he is an elected official and he will vote on everything since he is not a full time employee. JP Morrison commented that if the member is making any money off any vote there is a conflict.

Rob Glassett made a motion to table the Code of Ethics decision until the town talks to an attorney of gets legal advice, seconded by Bob Emerson. Betsy Schneider commented that the town can talk to the NH Municipal Association as this doesn't cost any money. Wayne Anderson suggests asking the town moderator to speak to the committee regarding this. The committee voted 10-0 to table the discussion. John Sellers rescinded his motion and Betsy Schneider rescinded her second.

Wayne Anderson commented that if there is extra money in the budget is it possible to get an experienced person to help the Finance officer get the work that needs to get caught up done.

Member Comments:

John Sellers commented that he has been waiting since June to get requested documents and hopefully he will get them soon. Bill Cote replied that he will work on getting the documents to him.

Select Board Comments:

Administrator's Report:

Adjournment:

JP Morrison made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Betsy Schneider, passed with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Costigan, Secretary