

# DRAFT MINUTES

## BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS COMMITTEE MINUTES

November 17, 2010

### Call Meeting to Order

Chairman Rob Corson convened the Budget Recommendations Committee at 6:07 PM in the Nowak Room of the Town Office.

The members of the Committee introduced themselves: Bob Kelly, Harry Thayer, Allen Corey, Corey Stevens, Don Woodward, Carol Aten and Vice Chairman Don Brabant. Also in attendance were Finance Director Doreen Ravell and Town Manager Russell Dean.

Chairman Corson explained that the Budget committee will be covering the final Library budget, finish up Information Technology and Police, review Human Services, Warrant Articles, Capital Improvement Projects and lastly they will cover DPW.

Library Director Hope Godino passed a new budget to the members of the committee, which is the final budget from the Library Trustees in the amount of \$879,900. Ms. Godino reviewed the Library's mission to support and enlighten the citizens of Exeter as well as the vast services that are requested by the community and the Library's efforts to accommodate these requests. Ms. Godino and the Library Trustees believe that the budget that has been presented is the budget that is needed to continue to offer the level of services that the residents are asking for. Ms. Ravell said that because of a change in FICA, the actual Budget is \$879,028.

**Mr. Brabant moved to accept a total Library budget (Department 901) of \$879,028. Mr. Woodward seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Human Services Director Sue Benoit was available for questions from the committee regarding her budget. Mr. Brabant asked if the decline of unemployment benefits that is expected in the coming year would affect her department and she responded that it likely will. She is hopeful that with the assistance of the other community services in Exeter; they will be able to help most of the residents that request assistance.

**Mr. Thayer moved to recommend a total Welfare budget (Department 710) of \$98,138. Mr. Brabant seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

The town currently puts about 1/3 of the Human Service items on the warrant each year and use a three year cycle. Ms. Aten said that she is concerned that all of the Human Service items do not really fit into the category that they are in and used COAST bus as an example. She believes that COAST and other transportation related items should be in the budget, not in a warrant article. She would like the group of items reviewed for next year's process. Ms. Aten also recommended that the 4 agencies that have requested increases should be put on warrant articles and that Seacoast Hospice would be eliminated because it has been sold to a for-profit business.

**Mr. Thayer moved to zero out (\$0) line item 711-9004 (Seacoast Hospice). Mr. Woodward seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

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**Mr. Thayer moved to recommend \$6,300 for 711-9008 (Richie McFarland Center). Mr. Kelly seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

**Mr. Brabant moved to recommend \$7,800 for 711-9034 (Meals on Wheels). Mr. Kelly seconded. Vote: 5-3. Motion carries.**

**Mr. Brabant moved to recommend \$18,777 for 711-9042 (COAST). Mr. Thayer seconded. Motion withdrawn.**

Mr. Woodward cautioned the committee that if COAST is not fully funded, the Town loses points on any requests that they make for transportation related grant requests. Mr. Dean also told the committee that the riders are charged a surcharge if the Town is not funding them at the requested level.

**Ms. Aten moved to create a new subaccount in the budget in the amount of \$20,930 under Human Services for COAST and other transportation items that will not go to warrant articles. Mr. Thayer seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

**Mr. Brabant moved to recommend \$5,800 for 711-9006 (Lamprey Healthcare). Mr. Thayer seconded. Vote: 6-1. Motion carries.**

**Mr. Thayer moved to zero out (\$0) line item 711-9052 (NHSPCA). Mr. Brabant seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

**Mr. Thayer moved to recommend a Human Services (Department 711) total of \$86,900. Mr. Woodward seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Mr. Corson called the committee's attention to the revised Police Budget.

**Mr. Thayer moved to accept a total Police budget of \$3,395,734. Mr. Brabant seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Mr. Corson said that Capital Improvement Projects need to be reviewed. He would like to decide what CIP items the committee would like to place in the budget, which should be recommended for warrant article, or recommended to be tabled for another year. Fire Chief Brian Comeau spoke to the need for the department to update their breathing apparatus because of the recent failure of many of the units. There is a grant request pending for this item. The communications improvement CIP item did not score well with the CIP committee so the Fire Department is trying to fund this item with a regional grant in conjunction with North Hampton and Hampton and Hampton Falls.

Chief Comeau wished to discuss the prior request to extend the Health Officer's hours from 28 hours per week to make it a full time position. Assistant Chief Berkenbush said that this increase in hours for the Health Officer would enable him to concentrate on his Fire Department related duties and relinquish some of the Health related duties to the Health Officer. He feels she is very well qualified to take on these items as Judy Jervis is one of only two FDA certified inspectors in the State of NH. This change would require an increase to the 2011 Fire Department budget of \$22,086. This position would begin on July 1, 2011.

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**Mr. Corey moved to reopen the Fire Department budget to amend line item 505-1110 (Health Dept. Wages FT) to \$49,320. Mr. Thayer seconded. Vote: 6-1. Motion carries, Mr. Brabant is opposed.**

**Mr. Stevens moved to zero out (\$0) line item 505-1200 (Health Dept Wages PT). Mr. Thayer seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

The change to full time makes a change in benefits as follows:

505-2100	\$8,806
505-2110	\$ 500
505-2120	\$ 66
505-2200	\$3,058
505-2210	\$ 715
505-2300	\$3,250
Total Change:	\$16,395

**Mr. Thayer moved to change the Health Department Benefits Total to \$16,395. Mr. Woodward seconded. Vote:**

**Mr. Thayer moved to recommend a Health Department Total of \$146,923. Mr. Corey seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Mr. Corson directed the committee members back to the CIP list of proposed projects. Mr. Dean said that the items on the current list are ones that scored high enough through the CIP committee to be included in the proposed list. Mr. Corson suggested that the committee review the items and decide which ones should be recommended to be included in the budget, on a warrant article, or not recommended at all this year.

Mr. Corson asked what Human Service grants are still scheduled for warrant articles. Mr. Dean said the group is as follows:

New Generation	\$2,000
Families First	\$3,000
New Outlook	\$2,700
Sea Care	\$2,495
Seacoast Mental Health	\$8,500
RSVP	\$2,200

For a total Human Services Warrant article of \$21,695.

Mr. Brabant asked about the pool cars that are being proposed and asked why this is a pressing item in a budget year like this one where they are trying to level fund everything in the interest of saving money. Mr. Dean said that the current pool vehicle is old, hard to drive and requires a lot of maintenance. If there were two vehicles in service, it would be possible for inspectors and other employees to use the town vehicles and not have to pay mileage for the employees to use their own vehicles. Mr. Corey asked if there would be a policy in place for the employees to be required to use a town vehicle instead of their own.

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The Storm Drain Cleaning is a new item based on new EPA requirements. Mr. Kelly thinks this is a lot of money to allocate to a program that the Town has not been given guidelines to go by. He thinks it is not something that will be a requirement for the 2011 budget year. DPW Director Jennifer Perry stated that the Town has about 1300-1400 storm drains. She said that she is looking at the possibility of trying to get a better price for storm drain cleaning by combining with other towns in a bid process. Ms. Perry said that the DPW department identified the need to clean catch basins as an objective but have thus far been unable to reach their goal of cleaning about half of them each year. Mr. Kelly asked how the EPA would be able to enforce the directive in every town. Ms. Perry has seen the draft permit and it seems to say that the drains need to be cleaned one per year, some more often as the need arises. Ms. Perry would like to have the funds available to begin the work when the directive is issued.

In reference to the Portsmouth Avenue reconstruction, Ms. Perry said that she sees this as a high priority but if it is not recommended, she would like to see \$39,000 be recommended for the design of the drainage. The design numbers for the Norris Brook culvert project is too low so the total for that item should be increased to \$600,000 and Ms. Perry recommends that this project is completed in 2011. Highway Superintendent Jay Perkins says that the culvert under Water Street is much deteriorated and could collapse any time. He has a plan in place if that happens. Mr. Corson asked if there were any questions about water meter replacement and the Jady Hill project and there were none.

Mr. Kelly asked to talk about the proposition of spending \$750,000 to replace water meters and wondered if it would be worth the expense. Ms. Perry said that she believes that this project is key to the operations of the department and that there is a 30% forgiveness on it as well.

Mr. Corson suggested that the group go through the proposed projects to say what the committee's recommendations on each would be.

The Water Meter Replacement is supported as a warrant article.

In reference to the Groundwater Treatment Plant project, Ms. Perry said that this project is at a critical point and there are legal issues that must be considered.

**Mr. Stevens moved to put the Groundwater Treatment Plant on a warrant article. Mr. Thayer seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

**Mr. Thayer moved to put the Self Contained Breathing Apparatus on a warrant article. Ms. Aten seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

On the subject of supplemental paving, Mr. Kelly thinks that \$550,000 is too much but perhaps \$300,000 is more reasonable. Ms. Perry said that without proper funding, the road conditions in town will continue to deteriorate. Mr. Brabant is concerned with the amount of spending in the current economic climate and he plans to vote against it. Mr. Perkins said that a complete analysis was done going back 26 years and put together a paving plan. Mr. Perkins said that putting the paving off could result in having to fully reconstruct the roads instead of the regular maintenance of repaving.

**Mr. Stevens moved to support Supplemental Paving in the amount of \$250,000 on a warrant article.** The committee agrees.

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Mr. Corson agrees that the \$36,000 design portion of the Portsmouth Ave project is reasonable. Ms. Perry agrees and said that the Jady Hill project is the preferred project over the Portsmouth Ave project, so she would also agree with the committee's support of the design portion here.

**Mr. Corey moves to include the \$36,000 design portion of the Portsmouth Ave project as a warrant article. Ms. Aten seconded. Vote: Motion carries.**

**Mr. Corey moved to include the \$2,900,000 Jady Hill Utility project. Ms. Aten seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

The Town Office HVAC project is next. Mr. Thayer wondered if this is taking the proposed office changes into account. Mr. Dean said that there is no intent to move walls or any other items that would affect the actual office setups. Mr. Corson said he sees this as a compliance issue, and Maintenance Superintendant Kevin Smart said that it is not an air conditioning project; it is air exchange which will bring fresh air into a building that is mostly closed up.

**Mr. Thayer moved to include \$253,715 for Town Office HVAC as a warrant article. Ms. Aten seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Water Sewer Engineer Michael Jeffers suggested that \$55,500 for Main Sewer Pump Repair should be moved to the budget because this is an important item that should not be left up to the public to decide; rather it should be prioritized as a maintenance issue by the committee.

**Mr. Corey moved to add \$55,500 to the budget for Main Sewer Pump Repair. Ms. Aten seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Mr. Jeffers said that implementation of the Waste Stream Reduction project would save about \$43,250 per year almost immediately and Ms. Perry said that this project also had about 30% forgiveness from the State. Mr. Kelly thinks this item also belongs in the budget as opposed to a warrant article item. This project would also result in a budget decrease in subsequent years.

**Mr. Kelly moved to move \$150,000 to the budget for the Waste Stream Reduction project. Mr. Corey seconded. Vote: 6-1. Mr. Woodward would prefer it as a warrant article.**

Mr. Corson said that as it is after 9:30pm, the committee should decide whether they want to finish everything tonight or schedule another night. It appears that another night is needed to finish up. The committee will continue with the CIP items and DPW will need to be rescheduled.

Mr. Corson asked for an update of the Raynes Barn Improvements and Mr. Aldrich of the Conservation Commission said he did not have final numbers yet on that item. Mr. Aldrich has an estimate planned for the security system and if the quote comes in less than the NOCHAR, he thinks that may be a good alternative. Right now the estimate stands at \$44,000.

Mr. Brabant moved to support putting \$44,000 in a warrant article for the Raynes Barn Improvements. Ms. Aten seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

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On the subject of Storm Drain Cleaning, Mr. Kelly thinks that supporting \$50,000 in the first year would make more sense. Mr. Stevens ran a few numbers and came up with about \$110,000 for all of the drains. Mr. Perkins said that jetting of pipes is also included in the price that was quoted. Mr. Thayer is more comfortable with funding half of the request.

Mr. Thayer moved to support \$75,000 for Drain Cleaning and to add that to the budget. Mr. Woodward seconded. Vote: 6-1.

Fire Department Communication- Based on earlier discussion, the committee felt this was not important for this year.

**Mr. Stevens moved to not recommend the Fire Department Communication project for a warrant article. Mr. Woodward seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Sewer Lagoon Aerator project- Mr. Dean said this item has already been moved to the budget.

Train Station Baggage Building- Mr. Dean stated that the Town portion of the project is \$125,000 to match the grant that has been secured. The grant is \$289,000.

**Ms. Aten moved to recommend the Train Station Baggage Building project in the amount of \$403,200 as a warrant article. Mr. Woodward seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Fire Hydrant Replacement- Ms. Perry said that this item has already been moved to the budget.

WWTP Upgrade- Ms. Perry thinks this is a very important item.

**Mr. Woodward moved to recommend the WWTP project for a warrant article. Ms. Aten seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Mr. Corey believes that this item should go in the budget, which other members of the committee agreed to make that recommendation.

Norris Brook Culvert- The committee agreed that this item is too expensive to put in the budget and that it should be a warrant article.

**Mr. Corey moved to recommend the Norris Brook Culvert as a warrant article. Mr. Thayer seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Arterial Shoulder Widening- Mr. Woodward said that there was a grant application for this item but that Exeter did not quite get it this year. Mr. Dean said there are matching funds in an account for when the grant comes through.

**Mr. Corey moved to not recommend the Arterial Shoulder Widening project for a warrant article. Mr. Stevens seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Public Safety Boiler/HVAC- Mr. Smart reported that there will be about a 30% savings on energy cost with this project and that the payback time is about 3 1/2 to 4 years.

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**Ms. Aten moved to support the Public Safety Boiler/HVAC project as a warrant article. Mr. Brabant seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Water Treatment Plant Upgrade- Mr. Jeffers said that this has already been moved to the budget.

Renewable Energy Grant Fund- Already funded at \$5,000, this \$20,000 is to add to the grant matching fund.

**Mr. Woodward moved to reduce the amount of the Renewable Energy Grant Fund to \$20,000 as a warrant article. Ms. Aten seconded. Vote: 5-2. Motion carries.**

WTP Roof- Mr. Smart said that this item includes all three buildings at the site, taking into account the insurance repairs that have already been done. Mr. Perry thinks that the main building was built in 1972 and that the current roof is original to the building.

**Mr. Kelly moved to recommend \$150,000 as a warrant article for the Water Treatment Plant Roof. Mr. Woodward seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

DPW Generator- Mr. Smart, Ms. Perry and Mr. Perkins all cited examples of emergency crews navigating through the buildings during power outages as they attempt to deliver emergency services to the Town.

**Ms. Aten moved to recommend the DPW Generator as a warrant article in the amount of \$80,000. Mr. Corey seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Historical Society Boiler and Roof- Mr. Stevens asked for the breakdown of costs. Mr. Smart said the roof is \$117,900 and the HVAC part is \$26,780. Ms. Aten reminded the committee that this building is a historic property and the Town should spend the money to take care of it properly. Mr. Smart said that with recent roof repairs, it is not currently leaking.

**Mr. Stevens moved to fund the HVAC portion in the amount of \$26,780 and then revisit the roof next year. Mr. Woodward seconded. Vote: Motion carried. Mr. Thayer abstained from the vote.**

Mr. Smart asked if the committee would add some funding to this for building maintenance. Mr. Dean said that there is money in maintenance accounts for other buildings and those funds could be added to another line item to cover annual maintenance for this building. Mr. Smart will return to the next meeting with a plan for this.

Master plan Overview- Mr. Dean said that this is not currently in the budget and it is not a statutory requirement, but it has not been done in a long time and should be done.

**Mr. Thayer moved to include the Master Plan Overview into the budget in the amount of \$25,000. Mr. Corey Seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Little River Walking Bridge- Mr. Aldrich said that this will be the third bridge that will be constructed in this area since the first two, built by volunteers, have washed out.

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Mr. Woodward moved to recommend the Little River Walking Bridge project as a warrant article in the amount of \$48,000. Ms. Aten seconded. Vote: 4-3. Motion carries.

Land Acquisition- This reflects \$40,000 of new money, 13% from Exeter and \$45,000 in conservation funds.

**Mr. Corey moved to recommend \$85,000 as a warrant article for Land Acquisition. Ms. Aten seconded.**

Town Hall brick repair- Mr. Smart said that there is extensive water damage from years of not repairing the brick in years past.

**Mr. Kelly moved to recommend the Town Hall brick repair as a warrant article in the amount of \$147,000. Mr. Corey seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Parks and Recreation buildings repair-

**Mr. Thayer moved to recommend the Parks and Recreation buildings repair as a warrant article in the amount of \$40,000. Ms. Aten seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

The committee agreed to meet again on Tuesday, November 30 at 6pm to finish the budget.

**Ms. Aten moved to adjourn at 10:35pm. Mr. Stevens seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Geis  
Recording Secretary