

# DRAFT MINUTES

## BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS COMMITTEE MINUTES

November 1, 2011

Chairman Don Brabant convened the Budget Recommendations Committee at 6:03pm in the Nowak Room of the Town Office. The members of the Committee and Board of Selectmen present are: Carol Aten, Mark Leighton, Bob Kelly, Corey Stevens, Harry Thayer, Don Woodward, Allen Corey, Dan Chartrand, Chairman Bobby Aldrich, Selectman Don Clement, Selectman Frank Ferraro, Finance Director Doreen Ravell, Staff Accountant Laura Hill and Town Manager Russell Dean.

### Department of Public Works

#### Administration and Engineering

Mr. Kelly worked on the DPW subcommittee with Mr. Stevens and Mr. Leighton. They passed out a summary of the issues that had been identified. Public Works Director Jennifer Perry said that there are 47 employees at DPW, 39 full time, 6 part time and 2 seasonal. There were 2 open positions in the first half of 2011, one of which was recently filled and the other will be filled soon.

Mr. Stevens asked about the department's request for a new color copier. Ms. Perry said that this would save time taking print jobs to a printer and that the department makes about 55,000 copies per year. The cost would be \$2,742 for each of the next 4 years. Mr. Kelly did not think it was a good time to make this purchase, but acknowledged that they did do a lot of copying. Mr. Thayer asked if this purchase would result in saving anywhere else. Ms. Perry said that the supply line item could be adjusted by \$500. Mr. Ferraro did not see the benefit in only saving \$500 when spending \$2,742 and mentioned that the Recreation Department has a color copier, and wondered if there was a way to centralize copying. Mr. Dean said that would not lead to good productivity between buildings as Recreation is on Court Street and DPW is on Newfields Road. Ms. Perry said that the current black and white copier at DPW is failing and that the time and money being spent sending out print jobs is high. Mr. Leighton said that proposed machine would also have a color scanning feature, which could be useful. Mr. Kelly said that the subcommittee recommends the purchase of this color copier.

**Mr. Chartrand moved to reduce 601-5000 by \$500. Mr. Woodward seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Mr. Stevens said that line item 601-5446 includes a large increase to accommodate an anticipated EPA requirement. Ms Perry said that an increase is needed even though no permit has yet been received. She said that it could potentially be less because monitoring is 2 year duration and it will begin late.

**Mr. Thayer moved to reduce 601-5446 to \$50,000. Mr. Chartrand seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

**Ms. Aten moved to recommend a total DPW Administration and Engineering budget of \$345,465. Mr. Kelly seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

#### Highway and Streets

Mr. Stevens reviewed the Highway budget requests. He noted that the salary increase is because one position was only funded for 6 months last year and the increase is for full year funding of that position. Highway Superintendent Jay Perkins is in attendance to address any questions.

**Mr. Stevens moved to reduce 602-4222 to \$0. Ms. Aten seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

# DRAFT MINUTES

Mr. Clement mentioned that at the last meeting of the Budget Committee, the group discussed Conservation Commission mowing and the possibility of DPW taking over that function. Mr. Brabant said that if DPW and Conservation wanted to make a proposal at a future meeting after discussing the matter, they could come back to the committee. Mr. Stevens noted that the vehicle maintenance account was overspent, and Ms. Perry said that was a result of a lot of repairs to the sweeper. Mr. Stevens said that the tree maintenance account was not half spent and Ms. Perry said that the department did not think that item would get spent, but since last week's storm, the item will be fully spent. Mr. Stevens said that the sign budget was increased by \$10,000 last year to accommodate the expenses for the Norris Brook culvert detour. This expense will not be incurred in the coming year.

**Mr. Stevens moved to reduce 602-5561 to \$6,700. Mr. Woodward seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Mr. Stevens said that the department has requested a paving budget of \$750,000 and the subcommittee is recommending it be reduced to \$600,000. Mr. Thayer reminded the committee that they are trying to cut \$500,000 from the current budget and this request is a large increase. He believes that a warrant article would create an increase at the voter's request. Ms. Perry said that there is a new paving management program, and that there is a backlog that must be addressed. She said that the town is behind on its paving schedule and that when the roads are too far gone to simply overlay the roads, it gets very expensive. Mr. Clement said that the paving budget has been cut year after year, and we need to move ahead. Mr. Dean noted that inflation is very high in the paving business, so waiting to pave gets even more expensive. Mr. Brabant suggested putting \$500,000 in the budget and adding a warrant article for the additional \$250,000. Mr. Kelly said that adding 20% to the budget makes sense and letting the voters decide the rest. Mr. Corey said that he thinks money should be spent for maintenance when it is needed, even if it is expensive.

**Mr. Kelly moved to change 602-7503 to \$600,000. Mr. Stevens seconded. Vote 7-1, Mr. Corey opposed.**

**Mr. Kelly moved to recommend a total Highway budget of \$1,791,809. Mr. Thayer seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

## **Snow Removal**

Mr. Brabant asked how much of the plowing is done in house and how much is contracted out. Mr. Perkins said it was about half contracted out and half done by employees with town equipment, and that snow removal is 100% contracted out because the town does not have the equipment for it. Mr. Kelly addressed the salt budget and noted that actual expenses have gone down. Mr. Perkins said that salt usage has been reduced because of better equipment, but he also noted that he needed to order more salt by the end of the current year. Mr. Ferraro did not think \$85,000 is a justified amount and that probably even \$25,000 is too much. Mr. Dean said that he would hesitate to reduce snow and salt budgets because anything could happen. Mr. Chartrand said that if the department is saving money in this item due to better equipment, then the savings could be moved to a different line item where it is needed.

**Mr. Chartrand moved to recommend move \$20,000 out of 603-5007 and move \$10,000 to 603-4220 and \$10,000 to 603-4221. Mr. Woodward seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

**Mr. Kelly moved to recommend a total Snow Removal budget of \$305,785. Ms. Aten seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

# DRAFT MINUTES

## Solid Waste

DPW is requesting an increase in this budget to allow for a bulky waste container to be placed at the Transfer Station. Currently, if people live on private roads, they are unable to have bulky items picked up by Northside Carting. This would give them an option of disposing these items. Mr. Kelly thinks the fee for bulky disposal should go up if the town is going to provide this service. Ms. Aten notes that this added expense should show revenue to offset it.

**Mr. Kelly moves to reduce 604-5833 to \$13,500. Mr. Leighton seconded. Vote: 5-3, motion carries.**

**Mr. Kelly moved to recommend a review of fees for bulky waste. Mr. Woodward seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Mr. Thayer asked if the cost of blue bags are covered by the price of them. Ms. Perry said that the money covers the bags themselves but not the disposal contract, and it never did. Mr. Kelly said that the landfill monitoring budget should be watched for a year possibly and reconsidered, but Mr. Brabant thinks it is too high and needs to be reduced.

**Mr. Thayer moved to recommend a total budget of \$855,118. Mr. Woodward seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

## Traffic Lights

Mr. Kelly said that the subcommittee thought about recommending a reduction in the repair line item, but Mr. Perkins said that you never know when repairs will be needed.

**Mr. Thayer recommended a traffic light total of \$107,000. Mr. Kelly seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

**Mr. Kelly moved to accept a Public Works General Fund Total of \$3,405,177. Mr. Thayer seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

## Maintenance

Maintenance Superintendant Kevin Smart is available for questions. Ms. Perry said that the Fleet and Facility Maintenance software in line item 606-5680 has been a great tool for the department. They spent \$10,000 last year to buy the software and it must be maintained to help in management of properties and projects. Mr. Kelly said that this year's project list is about \$200,000. Last year the request was cut to \$100,000. He recommends \$125,000 this year.

**Mr. Kelly moved to accept the total of \$548,709. Ms. Aten seconded.**

Mr. Brabant asked why the generator projects are not in the DPW budget, and Mr. Kelly agreed that this is a CIP item. Ms. Perry agreed to take 2 generator items off of the Maintenance list. Mr. Brabant believes that this line item should remain at \$100,000. Ms. Aten is concerned about the overlap between capital projects and maintenance. **Mr. Kelly withdraws his motion.** Mr. Chartrand suggested that 606-7501 may need to be named differently to allow for the projects it covers. Mr. Aldrich suggested that Ms. Perry and Mr. Smart to discuss this further and bring the issue back to the committee. Mr. Leighton thinks there is \$125,000 worth of projects that must be completed, so the line item should be funded and the department should work out the actual projects.

# DRAFT MINUTES

**Mr. Leighton moved to leave line item 606-7501 at \$125,000. Ms. Aten seconded. Vote: 6-3. Motion Carries.**

**Ms. Aten moved to accept a total of \$548,709. Mr. Woodward seconded. Vote: 8-1, Mr. Brabant opposed.**

## **Mechanics**

Mr. Thayer noted that the maintenance budget also has a line item for mechanics, and suggests a change in the name of the line item to avoid confusion.

**Mr. Chartrand moves to recommend a total of \$205,236. Ms. Aten seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

## **Recreation Center**

**Mr. Thayer moved to recommend a total of \$19,300. Mr. Chartrand seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

## **Town Hall**

Mr. Thayer noted that the natural gas prices are very high, and Mr. Dean confirmed that there have been 4 increases in that cost over the past year. Mr. Smart said that he is looking into locking in rates for fuels and electricity for next year.

**Mr. Chartrand moves to recommend a total of \$29,200. Mr. Kelly seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

## **Town Office**

**Ms Aten moved to recommend a total of \$28,600. Mr. Chartrand seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

## **Senior Center**

**Mr. Thayer moved to recommend a total of \$14,150. Ms. Aten seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

## **Safety Complex**

**Ms Aten moved to recommend a total of \$69,800. Mr. Chartrand seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

## **Public Works Building**

**Ms Aten moved to recommend a total of \$42,800. Mr. Kelly seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

## **Train Station**

**Ms Aten moved to recommend a total of \$11,000. Mr. Chartrand seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

## **Other Structures**

Mr. Brabant asked why the town has kept the Simpson Estate, and Mr. Dean said that he believes it is in the deed that the town must keep it. He will research and report back.

**Mr. Thayer moved to recommend a total of \$11,200. Ms. Aten seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

# DRAFT MINUTES

**Ms Aten moved to recommend a DPW Maintenance total of \$979,995. Mr. Woodward seconded.  
Vote: Unanimous.**

**At 9:16 PM, Mr. Kelly moved to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Woodward. VOTE: Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Geis  
Recording Secretary