

Draft Minutes

Budget Recommendations Committee

August 28, 2013

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chairman Corey Stevens called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Offices building. Others present were Allan Corey, Donald Woodward, Harry Thayer, Bob Wentworth, Bob Kelly, Rob Corson, Nikki Graney, Nelson Lourenco, Bill Campbell, Anne Surman, Nancy Belanger, and town manager Russ Dean. Also present were BOS members Don Clement, Matt Quandt, Dan Chartrand, and Frank Ferraro. Mark Leighton and Phil Johnson were absent.

2. Election of Chair, Vice-Chair

Mr. Clement opened the floor for nominations. A Motion was made by Mr. Thayer and seconded by Mr. Corson to appoint Corey Stevens for the 2014 Budget Recommendations Committee Chairman. Motion carried – all in favor.

Chairman Stevens talked about what was going to be discussed at the meeting.

A Motion was made by Mr. Wentworth and seconded by Mr. Corson to appoint Harry Thayer for the 2014 Budget Recommendations Committee Vice Chair. Motion carried – all in favor.

3. Process Overview/Subcommittees

Mr. Dean put together a sheet of information for newer members which talks about the overview of the Budget Recommendations Committee process, the proposed subcommittees, and some other important notes. Mr. Dean went on to talk about the order of how the budget goes. He talked about who to meet with during the budget process. He said the full committee meets October 23 for an all day meeting starting at 8:30 am. Police, fire and Public Works makes up 70% of the budget.

Mr. Thayer said the Board took a vote to meet with the town assessor first, saying he should come prepared. Mr. Dean said he could do that. Mr. Dean went on to tell everyone that while they are planning for the all day meeting, all budget requests will be known. He said the full committee will come together again in November. All department heads will be in attendance. After deliberating, the Budget Rec Committee votes and sends requests to Board of Selectmen to be finalized.

Mr. Dean went over some more notes, saying all subcommittees meetings must be posted. All meetings should be cleared through the Town Manager's Office. BOS are part of the Budget Rec Committee process and act as a resource. He said the make sure all papers are distributed to everyone which is done through the subcommittees. He said all papers/agendas need to be posted 24 hours prior to a meeting with the date/time/place. Mr. Dean wants anyone who does not get any of the information to let him know. With 15 members, business will conduct as long as 8 are in attendance.

Mr. Dean went on to talk about the four subcommittees: Public Safety (including fire/police), Library/Social Services/Parks & Recreation, Public Works General Fund (Highway, Solid Waste, Administration/Engineering, Street Lights, etc.), and Public Works Water/Sewer Enterprises.

Mr. Stevens gave Mr. Dean last years' format for the budget to use as a template. Mr. Dean informed everyone that there will be a contact sheet with everyone's emails. Mr. Clement said that NH Municipal Association is having two sessions on budget finance committee training. Mr. Dean will send that information around.

Mr. Dean reminded everyone to be cautious about discussing committee business via email. Discussing Board business over email is not allowed. Mr. Ferraro added in, saying things that lead to a decision are not permitted, but notices and such are fine to do through email. He said most things need to be public. Mr. Lourenco asked how to get information requests, if it should go through Mr. Dean? Mr. Dean said to go through the subcommittee chairman. He said if you ask for info he can get it, but you cannot take that information and have a discussion. Everyone should have the same information. He said the lack of coordination will slow the process down if one person doesn't have all the information. Mr. Dean went on to say that all emails are public information. Mr. Lorenzo asked if one person in the subcommittee asks for info from the Chair, is the Chair obligated to get it. Mr. Clement said the subcommittee should work as a unit. Mr. Quandt said that if you want information, however, you have a right to it. Mr. Dean said consistency to flow of requests of info will help get things done quickly. He went on to say that most things are public, including wage & salaries, taxes, most expenses. However, some things are HIPPA protected, including health insurance plans. Disclosing information during collective bargaining negotiations is prohibited.

Mr. Stevens talked about the schedule for meetings. He said collaborating is key. He went through the dates and times.

Mr. Dean said that everyone will have the budget requests by the third week in September. Mr. Stevens asked to get narratives a week before the all day 10/23 meeting. Mr. Thayer said they will have the info from last year and can see why budgets are up or down. Mr. Corson would like revisions to be bolded and easy to see. Mr. Dean said he they are using PDF format for the budget, saying that numbers change a lot in this process. Mr. Stevens recommended a column for spent YTD.

The Committee moved on to talk about breaking up into the following subcommittees:

Police & Fire- Allan Corey-Chair, Harry Thayer, Fran Hall, Nelson Lourenco

Public Works- Rob Corson-Chair, Anne Surman, Bill Campbell

Library/Social Services/Parks & Rec- Donald Woodward-Chair, Nikki Graney, Phil Johnson

Water/Sewer- Bob Kelly-Chair, Nancy Belanger, Bob Wentworth, Mark Leighton

Mr. Stevens said everyone is responsible for their subcommittees, but anyone can attend any meeting. All meetings are public. Mr. Woodward said Parks & Rec will meet at the office with Hope and she will have some information. Mr. Stevens said there will be a night dedicated to CIP. Mr. Woodward said the building department can supply a draft of the CIP plan. Mr. Dean talked about the CIP process. He went on to talk about the numbers as of June 30, saying revenues are trending fairly consistent with estimates.

YTD 2013 and FY14 Budget Overview

Mr. Dean said motor vehicles permit fees are up over last year. Building permits are consistent. State Highway Block Grant will be lower due to the elimination of the thirty dollar surcharge, meaning less money in the Highway Fund and less aid to the Town. Mr. Dean continued through revenues. He said 95% of the surplus from the ambulance fund will be returned back to general fund. Sale of town property is way up, with one \$100,000 sale and one \$80,000 sale of tax deed property being revenue. Water/Sewer revenues are consistent. They bill to three districts, with the largest bill being in December. Demolition of mobile homes has raised the expenses in the general fund. Snow and ice funding is a concern, as 92.5% has already been spent. Mr. Thayer asked if the BOS have the ability to use the snow and ice reserve fund. Mr. Dean said he did not think so, he thinks it's up to the town. Mr. Dean said overall, expenses are tracking fairly consistent.

Mr. Dean said the new ladder truck will be here next Spring.

Mr. Dean said there are some challenges for 2014. One of them being there is a 53rd payroll week. It happens once every 6th year. That will have to be factored into the budget. He said it is about \$190,000. Another challenge is insurance costs. Police & Fire retirement costs continue to increase. They have increased significantly over the last three years. On the capital improvement side, the wastewater facility bond is \$6 million. The waterline replacement program around Lincoln Street is \$1.4 million. The proposed fire station at Epping Road is around \$2.4 million. Also, \$50,000 is requested for the town wide facility plan. Mr. Dean said \$125,000 is spent annually for maintenance projects on town owned buildings.

Other Business

Mr. Stevens said the subcommittees will get budget requests in a few weeks. Mr. Dean will get around all email addresses. If anyone has any questions, they can email Mr. Dean or their subcommittee Chairman.

Mr. Stevens adjourned the meeting at 7:30 pm.

Respectively submitted,

Nicole McCormack
Recording Secretary