

BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS COMMITTEE

OCTOBER 25, 2017

DRAFT MINUTES

EXETER TOWN OFFICE – NOWAK ROOM

1. Call to Order/Introductions:

Chairman Papakonstantis called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. asked everyone to introduce themselves. Present were Committee members: Bob Kelly, Peter Lennon, Chris Soutter, Pat Ballantyne, Len Benjamin, Rob Ficara, Judy Rowan, Nancy Belanger, Nicholas Gray, Fran Hall and Niko Papakonstantis. Absent was member Steve Ramsay.

Also present were BOS members: Don Clement, Julie Gilman and Dan Chartrand; Russ Dean, Town Manager; Doreen Chester, Finance Director; Jennifer Perry, Public Works Director and Jay Perkins, Highway Supt.

Chairman Papakonstantis said they will be discussing the general Public Works sub-committee budget tonight, but before they do, they will discuss the Economic Development budget since it was tabled until tonight because Darren Winham could not be present.

Mr. Dean said that Mr. Winham was not present again this evening.

2. Economic Development Budget:

Chairman Papakonstantis said he sat on the sub-committee and was prepared to discuss the increase of \$1,000 in the salary and wages line item for Economic Development. He said that Mr. Winham is a one-man department and that he has one intern, who has been working with him, 10-12 hours per week, for some time and that he anticipates finishing the work in the next 2-3 years.

Chairman Papakonstantis said Mr. Winham told him that there is too much work for him to do alone, but not enough for him to hire a part-time employee.

Ms. Hall asked if this was an increase of \$1,000 over the previous \$1,000 already budgeted. She wanted to know if they were carrying \$1,000 with interest or \$2,000.

Chairman Papakonstantis replied it is an additional \$2,000 and that the extra \$1,000 was for the Recording Secretary.

Chairman Papakonstantis said that the \$2500 in consulting services is for legal assistance from the UNH Co-op, not only with land surveys, but also for the TIFF work.

Discussion ensued. Chairman Papakonstantis asked if the Committee wanted to do this tonight.

MOTION: Fran Hall moved that the Committee defer taking any action on the Economic Development budget until they meet with Mr. Winham, seconded by Nancy Belanger. All were in favor by a voice vote, aye, none opposed, so moved.

Chairman Papakonstantis asked the Mr. Dean to follow up with Mr. Winham to see when he can meet with the Committee, as he would like to discuss his budget. He said at the next meeting they will be discussing the Police and Fire Departments, so it should be a robust conversation.

3. PUBLIC WORKS – General Budget:

Chairman Papakonstantis turned the meeting over to PW sub-committee Chair, Fran Hall. Ms. Hall said that Pat will go over the budget line items and she will handle the CIP line items.

Administration and Engineering: Ms. Ballantyne said there were not a lot of changes in this line, but they do have benefits.

Ms. Chester said she had an updated number as of October 20th, \$483 has been spent in Education and Training.

Ms. Perry said that two more registrations have come in. She said that figure represents education for four engineers and herself. She said she is making education available as much as possible.

Chairman Papakonstantis asked if there were any other outstanding bills.

Ms. Chester replied she expected two more invoices coming due this week.

MOTION: Fran Hall moved the approval of the Administration & Engineering total in the amount of \$357,920, seconded by Len Benjamin. All were in favor by a voice vote, aye, none opposed, so moved.

Highways & Streets: Ms. Ballantyne said the benefits line item was cut and the biggest increase was in signs.

Ms. Perry showed everyone one of the new street signs with the town seal and said they are being installed within the next few weeks. She said there was a cost reduction of \$10,000.

Discussion ensued. Chairman Papakonstantis asked for the new total for general expenses in Highways and Streets. Ms. Chester responded there was a decrease of \$111,387 or 5.2%.

MOTION: Nancy Belanger moved the approval of the Highways & Streets total in the amount of \$2,010,330.00, seconded by Len Benjamin. All were in favor by a voice vote, aye, none opposed, so moved.

Snow Removal: Ms. Ballantyne said there has been an increase line items for contracted services, vehicle maintenance, and plow/spreader repair. She said there are no benefits included.

Ms. Perry said snow removal is difficult to predict, and she takes the most three years, and then takes 80% of that average. She said they have been over spending in contracted snow removal and vehicle maintenance.

MOTION: Fran Hall moved the approval of the Snow Removal total in the amount of \$314,707, seconded by Bob Kelly. All were in favor by a voice vote, aye, none opposed, so moved.

Solid Waste Disposal:

Ms. Ballantyne said there are no changes. She said we get reimbursement from other towns for household hazardous waste collection day.

Chairman Papakonstantis asked how long is the contract for solid waste removal.

Ms. Perry replied it is for five years.

Ms. Hall asked does the cost go up?

Ms. Perry responded it goes up 3% on all expenses every year, which is a significant increase. She said all rates go up 2% after June 1st.

Ms. Perry said part of the background costs associated with yard waste is special pick-up, which is scheduled twice a year.

There was a brief discussion between Committee members and Ms. Perry.

MOTION: Nancy Belanger moved the approval of the Solid Waste Disposal total in the amount of \$1,093,165, seconded by Len Benjamin. All were in favor by a voice vote, aye, none opposed so moved.

Street Lights: Ms. Ballantyne said there are not a lot of changes, and no increase.

Chairman Papakonstantis asked Ms. Perry to explain the traffic light maintenance budget.

Ms. Perry replied there are four "signal" traffic lights and the maintenance is very expensive. She said some years it has not been much, but she would have to call the vendor. She said this has been a good year, and the maintenance cost is less than average.

Mr. Ficara asked if the town has a contract for the equipment.

Mr. Perkins responded that the town owns the equipment. He said the signals are roughly 15 years old and Public Works does update them with the software they received from the vendor.

Discussion ensued on the electric rates between the Committee and Ms. Perry.

MOTION: Fran Hall moved the approval of the Street Lights total in the amount of \$150,000, seconded by Pat Ballantyne. All were in favor by a voice vote, aye, none opposed, so moved.

Stormwater:

Ms. Ballantyne said that this year Mr. Dean suggested the cost for postage and printing comes out of administration and engineering since they are more operational. She said the figures from this year compared to last year are still representative.

Ms. Perry said that stormwater aspects are very regulated. She said they do have a new permit which became effective in July, but they have had one since 2003.

Discussion ensued between the Committee members and Ms. Perry.

MOTION: Pat Ballantyne moved the approval of the Stormwater total in the amount of \$60,000 seconded by Fran Hall. All were in favor by a voice vote, aye, none opposed, so moved.

Ms. Chester said there was a decrease of 16% in the sub-total before maintenance.

MOTION: Fran Hall moved the approval of the sub-total before maintenance in the amount of \$3,986,123, seconded by Len Benjamin. All were in favor by a voice vote, aye, none opposed, so moved.

General: Ms. Ballantyne said there were not a lot of changes, just in benefits.

Chairman Papakonstantis said they did talk about snow removal and Ms. Chester can give them an updated figure on that. He said it would come under contracted services.

Ms. Perry said there should not be because they did not have enough snow to require removal last year.

Discussion ensued between Committee members and Ms. Perry.

MOTION: Fran Hall moved the approval of the Genal Maintenance total in the amount of \$470,935, seconded by Pat Ballantyne. All were in favor by a voice vote, aye, none opposed, so moved.

Mechanics/Garage: Ms. Ballantyne said *there have been a lot of big increases* (??) for this item.

Ms. Perry said the major increase was in fuel, 6260, which reflects what was more typical for expenses in that group. She said 6261, the fuel dispensing system, has two pumps both for gas, and does not reflect the cost to replace the system, which is more than \$30,000 and would be done as a part of the overall Public Works improvements.

Discussion ensued between the Committee and Ms. Perry.

Chairman Papakonstantis asked the Finance Director for a new total.

Ms. Chester said the new total is \$262,030, which represents a 1.8% decrease.

MOTION: Fran Hall moved the approval of the Mechanics/Garage total in the amount of \$262,030, seconded by Nicholas Gray. All were in favor by a voice vote, aye, none opposed, so moved.

Town Buildings: Ms. Ballantyne read the line items for a total of \$273,150.

Ms. Perry said that this amount covers all the town buildings. She said this building is under the historical society and the Committee can see that the maintenance lines are up slightly. She said the electricity is down because they have replaced the lights on the buildings with LED lights.

A lengthy discussion ensued between the Committee members and Ms. Perry.

Ms. Perry said there has been an increase in mowing at the pavilion and with maintenance at the Town Hall. She said they budgeted \$7,000 in 2017 and it has gone up to \$10,000 for 2018. She said there has been more discussion regarding ADA bathrooms as well as the heating system.

MOTION: Fran Hall moved the approval of the Town Buildings total in the amount of \$273,150 seconded by Nancy Belanger. All were in favor by a voice vote, aye, none opposed, so moved.

Maintenance Projects: Ms. Ballantyne said the projects have been prioritized based on how fast we need to have them done.

Ms. Perry said she will give the Committee a quick overview on a couple of projects, but the top priority is public safety. She said that the ice gets jammed by the front entrance of the town office due to the multiple roofs.

Secondly, Ms. Perry said is rot between the silo and the back side of the barn at Raynes Farm, which needs to be addressed. She said the rust is always more than they can handle in a year.

Ms. Perry said as emergencies arise, they have to be able to modify the project list.

MOTION: Bob Kelly moved the approval of the Total Maintenance Projects in the amount of \$100,000, seconded by Peter Lennon. All were in favor by a voice vote, aye, none opposed, so moved.

MOTION: Fran Hall moved the Town Buildings/Maintenance total in the amount of \$373,150, seconded by Pat Ballantyne. All were in favor by a voice vote, aye, none opposed, so moved.

MOTION: Bob Kelly moved the approval of the Total Public Works Maintenance budget in the amount of \$1,106,116, seconded by Peter Lennon. All were in favor by a voice vote, aye, none opposed, so moved.

MOTION: Bob Kelly moved the Total Public Works Budget in the amount of \$5,092,238, seconded by Peter Lennon. All were in favor by a voice vote, aye, none opposed, so moved.

4. Warrant Articles:

Sidewalk Program: \$120,000

Ms. Hall said this is an on-going five-year program, and the first year was last year, and we put it in as a line item.

Ms. Perry said that Public Works estimated \$120,000 per year to maintain the existing sidewalks in town. She said it cost \$70,000 to construct the sidewalk on High Street. She said they use concrete for sidewalks in the main area of town, and continue to use asphalt for sidewalks in the residential areas, which includes curbing. She said maybe they can use funds from the reserve account to save up money year-to-year for larger projects.

Discussion continued between the Committee and Ms. Perry.

Ms. Perry said they will need to focus on a couple of different areas, but they are concentrating on heaving travelled areas in town.

Intersection Improvements Program: \$50,000

Ms. Perry said they are recommending \$50,000 to start an analysis of the problematic intersections in town – referring to roads that do not have traffic signals. She said they have quite a few that are challenging and they want to look at everything to make them safer and compile a list. She said they have not done anything of this nature and it makes sense to have a plan to move forward.

A lengthy discussion ensued between the Committee members, Town Manager and Ms. Perry.

Replacement Vehicle:

Ms. Hall said the vehicle is on the list given its age.

Ms. Perry said we have a 2008 Ford Crown Victoria from the Police Dept. that has over 140,000 miles on it used by the engineer for field work. She said they would like to replace it with a Chevy Equinox, which is a smaller SUV and is fuel efficient. She said the old vehicles are beginning to get expensive to maintain.

Highway Loader #43 \$56,340

Ms. Hall said the sub-committee initially approached the front loader proposal as a replacement for a leased purchase with an annual amount for five years.

Ms. Hall said since they submitted their report, additional data has come in. She said they requested the cost to refurbish the existing vehicle.

Mr. Kelly said he would like to discuss what is the condition of the vehicle. He said his concern is that if it is upgraded, would it be big enough to haul our snow blower we purchased a couple of years ago.

Ms. Hall said the SnoGo is a gigantic blower with a huge chute and the snow gets dumped into the truck.

Mr. Perkins said there is a little bit of misinformation here. He said they purchased the snow blower because it is more powerful. He said they did try it and that loader will carry the snow blower, it's slower, but it will work.

Ms. Hall said the Committee has two issues on the table – how the equipment would work together and the condition of the front loader.

Mr. Lennon suggested holding off and not doing anything for a few years. He said they should review refurbishing it rather than buying a new one.

Ms. Perry said the 2005 loader has 6,000 hours on the transmission and has rust issues. She said it has been used during the winter for plowing and ice control at the transfer station. She said it has the potential to do the job, but it doesn't move fast.

A lengthy discussion ensued between the Committee members and Ms. Perry, Mr. Perkins and Mr. Dean.

Mr. Kelly apologized for trying to micromanage but he said he wanted to make sure it is the right machine and that everyone is comfortable with it. He said he would like to see an updated quote from last year on the trade-in value before they vote on the CIP.

Ms. Hall said they have not had a conversation about refurbishing the vehicle.

Chairman Papakonstantis said the Committee will not be voting on this tonight. He thanked Ms. Perry and Mr. Perkins for coming to the meeting. He also thanked Ms. Hall, Ms. Ballantyne and Mr. Benjamin for their report.

5. Adjournment:

MOTION: Fran Hall moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:19 p.m., seconded by Rob Ficara. All were in favor by a voice vote, aye, none opposed, so passed. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Boggiano
Recording Secretary pro tem