



Office of Board of Selectmen

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Budget Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 9, 2021, 6:30 p.m.

Tioga Meeting Room, Belmont Mill

Chairman Ronald Mitchell called the meeting order at 6:30 p.m., those present in the meeting room were Albert Akerstrom, Tina Fleming, Tracey LeClair, Mark Ekberg, Roland Coffin, Mark Roberts, Sharon Ciampi, Selectman Ruth Mooney, Assistant TA Alicia Jipson, Finance Director Katherine Davis, Chief Michael Newhall, Lt. Joshua Huestis, Public Works Director Craig Clairmont, and Assistant Director Brian Jackes. Present via the Zoom link dedicated to tonight's meeting were members Norma Patten, Gary Grant, Justin Borden and Ken Ellis. Also present via Zoom link was Town Administrator Jeanne Beaudin. Those members not present in person at the meeting had previously confirmed that they had a viable reason for not being able to attend in person. Chairman Mitchell noted that all votes would be by roll call. TA Beaudin noted that the agenda's included in the budget books all referenced the same Zoom link and meeting ID/Password.

Chairman Mitchell welcomed new member Sharon Ciampi and those reelected to the Committee during the 2021 Annual Town Meeting.

Election of Officers for the Ensuing Year

Tracey LeClair moved to nominate Ron Mitchell as Chairman for the ensuing year; Tina Fleming seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote with no opposition.

Tina Fleming nominated Ken Ellis as Vice Chairman; Tracey LeClair seconded the motion however Mr. Ellis pointed out that he would not be available later in the budget calendar to fill the role. Ruth Mooney nominated Tracey LeClair; seconded by Mark Ekberg. A second motion was made to nominate Mark Roberts. Chairman Mitchell called for a vote on the motion to nominate Mark Roberts as Vice Chairman, there were four votes in the affirmative; Ellis, Grant, Coffin, Patten. Chairman Mitchell called for a vote on the motion to nominate Tracey LeClair; there were six votes in the affirmative; Akerstrom, Fleming, Mooney, Roberts, Ciampi and Ekberg. Tracey LeClair was appointed as Vice Chairman for the ensuing year.

Budget Overview

TA Beaudin provided a Power Point presentation highlighting the proposed 2022 budget. A copy of the Power Point will be made available on the Town's website. TA Beaudin outlined as part of the review the joint Solid Waste RFP for Automated Curbside Collection with the City of Laconia.

Chairman Mitchell recommended that everyone take the time to review the information contained in the budget books in order to be prepared for the upcoming meetings.

Fire Department #12

Chief Michael Newhall was asked to provide an overview of the department. He noted that the department is very busy calls appear to be increasing annually by 3-5%. Call volume is approaching 2000 calls, 66% are EMS, the balance is made up of multiple types of calls, fire, hazardous material, etc. He noted that the department is currently transporting a number of calls to Concord Hospital. Discussion briefly followed regarding recalls that become necessary at times during these longer transports. He noted that the department is requesting 2 additional employees which would provide 3 on shift, busiest time is 7 pm to 7 am. He noted the department's success in attracting candidates to fill vacant positions. Tina Fleming inquired about the process for requesting to go to Concord; Chief explained the need for additional services does have an impact on where they go. Larger traumas are going to Concord. Tina inquired about water rescues; Chief outlined the calls for this type of service, noting they responded to two drownings, and a search on the lake for a missing individual.

Chairman Mitchell asked for a review of the department's equipment; this included firetrucks and ambulances. Chief noted the boat previously loaned to Belmont by the City of Laconia has been taken out of service as repairs would be too costly. Chairman Mitchell reviewed the Special Revenue Fund commonly used for the purchase of FD equipment.

Tracey LeClair asked about multiple calls, how are they handled, Chief explained the process for Emergency Recall which typically brings full time staff members back in. Chief noted that they do not typically transfer patients as a service.

Discussion of the uncollected balance due the Special Revenue Fund, the old "Comstar" is still owed amount of \$24,914 which it is likely will not collect; the amount currently due for recent activity is \$25,515. Chief talked about the overall health of the community, noting many had postponed care during COVID and we have an aging population. Chief commented on Clear Choice and Convenient MD and the number of times they respond to the facilities for transports.

Tracey LeClair moved line 4220-101 through 4220-120 including the lines for the two new employees; Norma Patten seconded the motion and discussion ensued. Chief Newhall provided an explanation that the two new hire lines are based on eight months. Discussion of the need for the personnel followed. Mark Ekberg inquired about the part time call line; Chief confirmed it is the call company payroll. A roll call vote was taken and there was no opposition.

Mark Ekberg moved line 4220-125 through 4220-999; Tracey LeClair seconded the motion for discussion. Mark asked about Special Duty Pay; Chief explained it is for details that are billed back to the requesting entity. Chief also explained training pay and training expense, one being payroll and the other for the actual training program. Chairman Mitchell inquired about the OT line; Chief responded that when we discussed the two new firefighters, he was asked to find areas in the budget that could be flatlined or reduced to assist in covering the added cost. Tracey inquired about vacation buyback; Chief responded that it has been traditionally underspent and it was felt monies could be reduced from this line. Several other line items were reviewed. He explained that Lt. Huestis who was present at the meeting does the purchasing of medical supplies and they have noted there have been some delays. Chairman Mitchell inquired about fuel and whether the Town has a locked in price; Chief and TA Beaudin noted that we are using the WEX Card system and that the Town does not pay the tax on the fuel which helps keep the cost lower than the pump price. Chairman Mitchell called for a roll call vote and there was no opposition.

Emergency Management #14

Tina Fleming moved line item 4290-999; Ruth Mooney seconded the motion. Chief Newhall gave an overview of the numerous grants that Sarah Weeks had obtained on behalf of the department relating to FEMA. Chief also noted this line item has been the same for several years and is used as an offset for grants when necessary. Chairman Mitchell called for a roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously as presented.

Chief Newhall and Lt. Huestis left the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Highway Administration, Highways & Streets #15

DPW Director Craig Clairmont introduced Brian Jackes as the department's Assistant DPW Director; he has been a fantastic asset and we are pleased to have him. Craig also highlighted new hire Bradley Jameson. Craig went on to thank TA Beaudin for her service to the community and noted she will be missed upon her retirement; Jeanne thanked him for his kind words. Craig also thanked the other town departments for their excellent cooperation and teamwork.

Craig reviewed the projects that had been undertaken in 2021 including paving projects and maintenance of ditches, etc. He noted that Lyman is about a week away from putting a binder coat on Plummer Hill Road. Discussion of Seavey Road followed and he noted there are plans to reconstruct the other end of Seavey next year. He provided an overview of existing equipment in the department. He reviewed plans to replace one of the trucks in 2022. Craig highlighted the increased cost of salt for the coming year noting it is up about 17%. Discussion of the yard at the highway garage took place, everyone noting the improvements to organization, etc.

Tracey LeClair moved line 4311-101 through 4311-505; Mark Ekberg seconded the motion. A brief discussion followed regarding the increases in occupational testing noting that this covers mandatory DOT testing. Chairman Mitchell noted the Director's salary is split with Water and Sewer. Chairman Mitchell called for a roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously as presented.

Tina Fleming moved line 4312-102 through 4312-710; seconded by Mark Ekberg. Chairman Mitchell asked about the exhaust system in the garage, was it still operational, Craig responded yes however he did note that it needs to be cleaned which he hopes to do this coming year. It is laden with dust. Chairman Mitchell asked about the mechanic; Craig offered positive comments on the quality of his work, noting he had been with the department for four years. Craig expects the downtown to be a bit more difficult this winter with the new construction of the PD. There was discussion of the line titles relative to Heavy Equipment and Vehicle Repairs. Chairman Mitchell called for a roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously as presented.

Tina Fleming moved line 4312-711 through 4312-999; seconded by Tracey LeClair. Mark Roberts inquired about money for tires, Craig noted that the tires are in pretty good shape and the funds should be sufficient. Discussion followed regarding equipment hire, including the large mowers; Craig noted that the department had purchased a new trackless that we can attach our mower to it so that we can do some of the in-house trail mowing ourselves. Discussion of paving adjacent roads in a short distance to facilitate saving the edges of the road including Rogers Road potentially this coming year. Chairman Mitchell called for a roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously as presented.

Street Lights & Highway Block Grant

Norma Patten moved line 4316-220 Street Lighting; Tracey LeClair seconded the motion. A brief discussion took place regarding the streetlights on Church Street, Chairman Mitchell noted that they had been replaced. She also updated the Committee on Craig's conversation regarding LED conversion, noting the one where the children were hit this past fall. Chairman Mitchell called for a roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously as presented.

Tracey LeClair moved line item 4319-001 Highway Block Grant; seconded by Tina Fleming. Chairman Mitchell noted this comes from the State. Chairman Mitchell called for a roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously as presented.

Sewer Department #17

Norma Patten moved line 4321-101 through 4321-888; seconded by Tina Fleming. Craig asked TA Beaudin to update the Committee on an Asset Management grant to be received by the Town for the sewer department. She also updated the Committee on the two-line breaks along Route 140 over the past two months, she explained that Belmont will be paying 95% of the repair costs while Northfield will be cover 5%. The repair ran about \$39k and she will be asking the Board of Selectmen to consider paying the invoices from capital rather than spreading it out over a 10-year period. Sharon Ciampi inquired about the fees for the WRBP; TA Beaudin explained the WRBP costs for the Town's participation in the program. Discussion followed regarding the SRF program that would improve the Coons Point Pumpstation and provide a generator for the Shaker Road Pumpstation, the town could be eligible for up to \$222000 of principal forgiveness. Discussion of who pays for water and sewer infrastructure, users v. taxpayers will be discussion for the Board. The Committee wanted to be sure the Town highlights how much is being received through grants and principal forgiveness. Chairman Mitchell called for a roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously as presented.

Water Department #18

Tina Fleming moved line 4331-101 through 4331-875; seconded by Mark Ekberg. The charges paid to Pennichuck were discussed, Asst. TA Jipson highlighted. Craig commented on the funds we will be using from ARPA to repair and reline Well #1. He noted this will take care of our supply issues however treatment is still very likely in our future due to high levels of iron and manganese. TA Beaudin highlighted the meter reading program and how much it has improved. Money is being set aside to paint the tank which is an expensive process. Chairman Mitchell called for a roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously as presented. Craig thanked the Committee for their time and departed the meeting.

Executive #1


Tracey LeClair moved line 4130-101 through 4130-999; seconded by Mark Ekberg. Asst. TA Jipson gave an overview of the budget, explaining the wages and howe they were determined for the staff changes resulting from Jeanne's retirement. Ruth Mooney commented on the monies the Selectmen had included in the budget to provide consulting services with Jeanne for 24 hours per month for a 6-7-month period if questions or needs arise after her retirement. Chairman Mitchell called for a roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously as presented.

Legal #6

Tracey Fleming moved 4153-275 and Tina Fleming seconded the motion. Asst. TA Jipson explained that it was level funded as proposed, that expenses were tracking at approximately 49% and that union negotiations are planned for the spring of 2022 which will impact this budget. It was also noted that Code Enforcement actions are paid through the legal budget.

Asst. TA Jipson outlined the Committee's next meeting to be held on November 16th. Discussion followed regarding those who plan to Zoom or be present at the meeting. Chairman Mitchell reminded everyone that a quorum of members must be present.

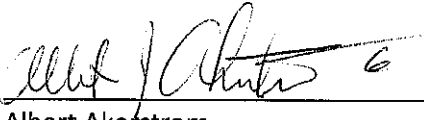
Tracey moved to adjourn at 8:55 p.m., seconded by Tina Fleming and the motion passed unanimously.



Ronald Mitchell, Chairman



Tracey LeClair, Vice Chairman



Albert Akerstrom

Ken Ellis



Roland Coffin

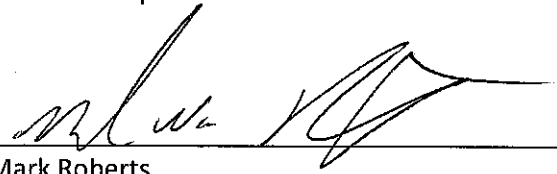
Norma Patten

Tina Fleming



Sharon Ciampi

Justin David Borden



Mark Roberts

Mark Ekberg

Gary Grant



Ruth Mooney, Sel. Representative