



Office of Board of Selectmen

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Budget Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 16, 2021, 6:30 p.m.

Tioga Meeting Room, Belmont Mill

Chairman Ronald Mitchell called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Also present were Chief Mark Lewandoski, Assistant TA Alicia Jipson, Albert Akerstrom, Mark Roberts, Sel. Rep. Ruth Mooney, Tracey LeClair, Finance Director Katherine Davis, Roland Coffin, and Sharon Ciampi. Mark Ekberg was absent. Russell Wheeler joined the meeting at 7:05 p.m. Also present representing the Community Action Program were Beth Hayward and Lea Richards.

Present via the Zoom link dedicated to tonight's meeting were members Norma Patten, Gary Grant, Tina Fleming, Justin Borden and Ken Ellis. Also present via Zoom link was Town Administrator Jeanne Beaudin, Ann Nichols with LRMHC, Brian Winslow with Granite VNA, Tamara Carmichael with the Partnership for Public Health, Rachel Zellem with Red Cross, and Lt. Evan Boulanger. 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. Tina Fleming left the Zoom meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Police Department #11

Finance Director Katherine Davis noted there was a small adjustment to the budget relative to the Dental Insurance line being down \$371 +/- . The budget reflects a new bottom line of \$2,425,288.11.

Chief Lewandoski provide an update on the building, noting that they are installing the elevator, and DBU is working on the exterior site work so that the binder coat of pavement can be installed next Tuesday. Most of the outstanding items are coming together and he noted that it is likely an open house will be held once the elevator is fully installed and the exterior sitework is substantially complete.

Chief provided statistics, noting that he has two officers currently in the Academy and one vacancy, he has one Detective at this time but intends to increase this to two once the vacancy is filled in mid-December, this will bring the department to full staff. It is difficult having one Detective with the number of felony cases that the Department is handling. He explained that he will be rotating officers in to assist in filling the void. He expects that next year he will be coming before the Town for another person. The department has referred 79 felony cases to the County Attorney's office, crime in Belmont is getting worse. Calls for service are as of today at 9,688, 2,923 warnings and 179 summons have been issued. The Department has arrested 950 individuals. Speeding is prevalent and it is difficult for the officers to address with so many other calls going on at the same time. Sgt.-Prosecutor David Estes is very busy. The PD is doing the best it can to address risks associated with the rising number of Covid cases in the region; staff is doing all it can to maintain safety protocols. Chief reviewed the homeless population that the department has been dealing with. He noted there are 22 sexual offenders residing in the community.

Drugs are a problem as they are in many communities in the Lakes Region; it is a difficult situation. Staff is doing the best it can to keep up with the extreme pressure of being a very busy department. Chief explained that he will be having a part time officer assigned to motor vehicle offenses which will come from the part time line.

Tracey LeClair moved line items 4210-101 through 324; the motion was seconded by Tina Fleming. Chief explained the stipend paid to the Prosecutor noting that there is to be an increase in 2022. Chairman Mitchell inquired about the use of the old building; Chief explained that the garage door at the new building is only 8' wide which is not sufficient to unload a vehicle into the space if it is necessary to hold it for investigation. The old building has a 9' door and will be used for this purpose as well as cold storage for some other items. Chairman Mitchell noted that the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote with no opposition.

Mark Roberts moved line items 4210-330 through 719; the motion was seconded by Norma Patten. Chief Lewandoski explained that he is always looking for the best bargain when purchasing supplies etc. Discussion of the EOC setup in the new building followed. Chief explained that the department would soon be outfitted with Body Cams from Axion noting that the program will provide two set of replacement cameras over the first 5-year contract, the cameras should be in within 4 weeks and training will be scheduled. TA Beaudin explained that the cameras were purchased with funds allocated to the Town from ARPA using the "lost revenue" method to determine the expense was eligible. The total cost was \$82,000; this will leave approximately \$700k for the repairs needed for Well #1 in the Water Department. Chairman Mitchell noted that the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote with no opposition.

Chairman Mitchell and the Committee thanked the Chief for attending the meeting.

Health Agencies #19

Beth Hayward of the Community Action Program was present to discuss their request for \$15,000; it was noted that the Board of Selectmen had kept the line at the prior year's level of \$13,000. She highlighted the programs available to assist area residents and noted that the requested appropriation assists with items needed to maintain the program such as computers, copiers, and staff. Selectman Mooney explained that the Board had felt it was appropriate to keep the line the same as in the past two years. Chairman Mitchell recommended increasing the appropriation to the requested \$15,000. Beth explained how well the program works with the Town's General Assistance Director, Donna Cilley, noting their partnership provides full service for the community and money can be saved by both entities working together.

Norma Patten moved line 4415-335 at the \$13,000 amount; Tracey LeClair seconded the motion. Chairman Mitchell noted that the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote with no opposition.

Brian Winslow with Granite VNA noted that the agency had recently undergone a merger which resulted in the name change from the Central NH VNA and Hospice. He noted that there had been 5,814 visits to residents in Belmont during the past year which was up about 2,000 over the prior year. He explained that the organization had given \$28,000 in charity care.

Tracey LeClair moved line item 4415-333; the motion was seconded by Mark Roberts. Chairman Mitchell noted that the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote with no opposition.

Ann Nichols with the Lakes Region Mental Health Center provided an overview of the agencies work during the past year and thanked the community for its years of support. The center is designated by the State as the regions mental health center. During the last fiscal year, the center served 352 residents from Belmont of which 77 received emergency services. The requested appropriation is to help fund these emergency mental health services. She explained that during this upcoming year the center will be establishing and staffing a mobile crisis response team.

Tracey LeClair moved line item 4415-342; Norma Patten seconded the motion. Chairman Mitchell noted that the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote with no opposition.

Rachel Zellem with the Red Cross was present and highlighted work undertaken by the agency in the State of NH; she noted their request is level funded for this coming year.

Norma Patten moved line 4415-341; seconded by Ken Ellis. Chairman Mitchell noted that the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote with no opposition.

Tamara Carmichael with the Partnership for Public Health was present and provided an overview of the services provided to the Lakes Region; one of the programs highlighted was the Partnership's assistance with local COVID vaccine clinics including the recent booster clinic held today. TA Beaudin thanked the Partnership for their assistance.

Norma Patten moved line item 4415-344; seconded by Tracey LeClair. Chairman Mitchell noted that the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote with no opposition.

Selectman Mooney gave a brief overview of the request from the South Road Cemetery Association noting that the cemetery fills the Town's requirement to provide a cemetery for local burials.

Tracey LeClair moved lines 4415-330, 336, 337, 340 and 343 for action; seconded by Mark Roberts. Chairman Mitchell noted that the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote with no opposition.

Building Inspection & Code Enforcement #13

Building Inspector Russell Wheeler was present at the meeting and gave an overview of the explosion in building that is happening in Belmont noting that he has issued 240 building permits exclusive of permits for electrical, plumbing, etc. He explained that many of the line items had been increased do to cost increases across the board in things such as postage.

Norma Patten moved line items 4240-101 through 999; seconded by Mark Roberts. Chairman Mitchell noted that the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote with no opposition.

Solid Waste #16

Finance Director Katherine Davis gave a brief overview of the increases in the Solid Waste budget noting that they contractual. She pointed out that the contract with Casella has one year remaining. A question from the Committee regarding the status of the facility on Route 140 was asked; TA Beaudin did her best to explain the recent action by Casella where they are not taking 3rd party construction and

demolition waste at the facility due to limited capacity across the state for this type of waste. She noted that residents have been receiving mixed communications from the facility as to dropping items at the site and going across the scale. Selectman Mooney and Asst. TA Jipson explained that the curbside collection of bulky waste was going extremely well; Asst. TA Jipson provided the number of users over the past two years.

TA Beaudin explained that the Town is currently working with the City of Laconia on a combined RFP for automated curbside collection which would be implemented in January 2023 if a successful contract can be negotiated. Finance Director Katherine Davis noted the other line items had been level funded in the budget.

Tracey LeClair moved lines 4323-470 through 4325-450; seconded by Mark Roberts. Chairman Mitchell noted that the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote with no opposition.

Insurance Not Allocated #10

Finance Director Katherine Davis noted that the Worker's Compensation and Property Liability lines would be increasing for 2022 with the approximate percentage of increase noted in the explanation section of the budget. She noted that there was a reduction in the premium amount for unemployment; insurance deductible line was level funded, this line is used to cover the Town's \$1,000 deductible on property liability claims.

Mark Roberts moved lines 4196-326, 616, 624 and 626 for discussion; seconded by Tracey LeClair. Chairman Mitchell noted that the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote with no opposition.

Property Taxation #5

Discussion followed regarding the current assessment of property noting that square foot rates are still based on rates established during the 2019 revaluation. Asst. TA Jipson noted the next revaluation is due in 2024. Selectman Mooney pointed out that the voters had not funded the request to do annual sales updates. Finance Director Davis noted that the wages in the budget were solely for the anticipated new staff Assessing Assistant to be hired in the spring.

Ruth Mooney moved lines 4152-102 through 324; seconded by Mark Roberts. Chairman Mitchell noted that the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote with no opposition.

Long Term Interest & Principal #25 and #26

Finance Director Davis highlighted the existing debt schedules. TA Beaudin noted that there is debt repayment amounts in the water and sewer departments previously approved.

Tracey LeClair moved 4711-004 through 006; seconded by Mark Roberts. Chairman Mitchell noted that the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote with no opposition.

Ruth Mooney moved 4721-004 through 006; seconded by Mark Roberts. Chairman Mitchell noted that the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote with no opposition.

Tracey LeClair moved 4723-001; seconded by Mark Roberts. Chairman Mitchell noted that the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote with no opposition.

Ruth Mooney moved the minutes of the meeting held on November 9th as written; seconded by Tracey LeClair. Chairman Mitchell noted that the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote with no opposition.

It was noted that the Committee's next meeting is November 30th.

Tracey LeClair moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 p.m.; seconded by Mark Roberts. Chairman Mitchell noted that the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote with no opposition.

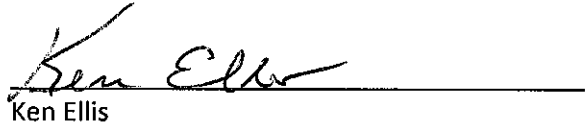


Ronald Mitchell, Chairman

Tracey LeClair, Vice Chairman



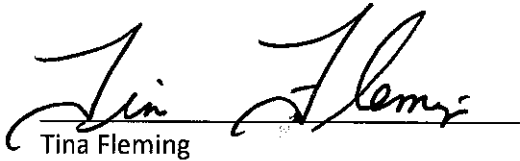
Albert Akerstrom



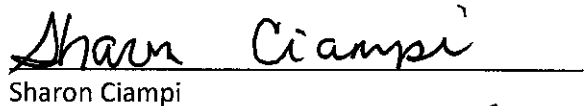
Ken Ellis

Roland Coffin

Norma Patten



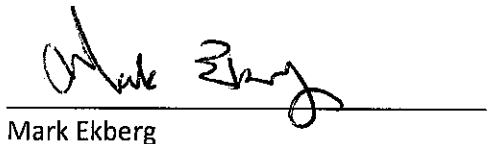
Tina Fleming



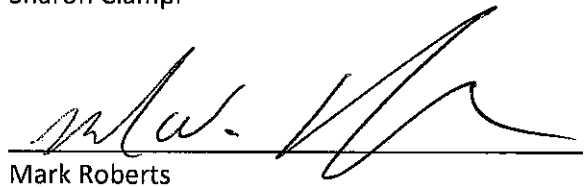
Sharon Ciampi

Justin David Borden


Mark Roberts



Mark Ekberg



Gary Grant



Ruth Mooney, Sel. Representative