

Budget Committee Public Meeting
Boscawen Municipal Complex
January 23, 2019 at 6 p.m.

Present: Alan H. Hardy, Mark E. Varney, Roger W. Sanborn, Edward J. Cherian Jr., Katie Phelps, Kevin Wyman, Ray Fisher, Dean Hollins, Nicole Hoyt, Sherlene (Doddy) Fisher, Bruce Crawford, Brian Fleury, Rhoda Hardy, Barbara Randall, Gail Egounis, Kellee Jo Easler, Sarah Gerlack.

Barbara Randall opened the meeting. She has been temporarily appointed by the Select Board to find new members.

Meeting began at 6:04 pm. Roll call completed. Mark Varney noted the Minutes would be done by recording.

Nomination of Chair: Barbara Randall was nominated to be Chair by Rhoda Hardy, seconded by Doddy Fisher and passed by a unanimous vote.

Bruce Crawford was appointed as a voting member. He is an alternate.

General Government:

Executive: Alan Hardy presented. The town now has a single Administrator. This salary comes solely out of the #4130 account.

Last year they kept a separate account for donations used for loss of a family member. Any draft would be approved by the Selectmen. The Selectmen's salary is on line 111. Administrator's salary is shown on the #112 line. There is a handout of the staffing in this building and how the responsibilities are broken up. In many cases a single staff member may have 2 to 3 responsibilities. The break down is in 2 separate accounts. The overtime account is there for hourly personnel. The contracted services and agreements are in most cases related to this building. That is where they put services and agreements with subcontractors. #332 is software services and hardware, but not in the IT capital budget. Typically that is upgrades in software, etc. The contractual computer maintenance is purely maintenance of computer systems, town wide. This doesn't apply if there is a specialized project. #335 is dues and subscriptions i.e. NHMA. They have a budget for non-computer equipment i.e. fireproof storage cabinets. #338 account is maintenance that is non-computer related maintenance hours. For example, work on the large format shredder. Telephone expenses directly associated with departments, also includes Metel, which is their monthly service for telephone access and lines. Along with his cell phone in that group. Meeting, travels and training they have kept the same. Office supplies, postage and advertising. Advertising is not quite what it sounds like, but advertising for executive is for public notice. They are required by law to find a general circulation paper to put notices in.

Gail Egounis asked if the overtime is for the only person that is not salary; the Administrative Assistant. Alana Hardy said it is for two people; the Administrative Assistant and the Assistant to the Administrator. Those two are hourly.

Legal expenses are broken into two; Town Council which is for, with exception to police department, but for any other legal guidance they need town wise is in account #3320. Those numbers have been adjusted to follow expenses. They utilize the services of town Council and also the Council available to them through NHMA. A lot of time NHMA is helpful but they do tell them Town Council is final word.

Account #3321 is just for litigation. They do have a constitutional challenge which is more difficult for the town, because almost always the court will look at it. And eventually that can find its way up to the Supreme Court. They have one now in Supreme Court over the necessity to pay taxes and what form money takes. Those are issues that over time get very expensive.

Gail Egounis questioned the Supreme Court issue. Years ago she spoke to Dan St.Hilaire who was the county attorney at that point and asked if someone was taking a totally frivolous lawsuit against the town why the town has to pay the legal fees. Hardy explained.

Town Buildings: They have the buildings broken up into an expense center. The first line, building janitorial, is essentially the main complex. They are trying to look at other options for the Town Hall. It is a facility that they really don't derive much income from the Town Hall. They now have a situation where they have quite a few people playing rental fee for \$150.00. They do have a weekly renter paying \$500 a month. They should show an increase of rental income in the future. Mostly at the main office building and library, administrative and police department.

The 1913 Library is stable. The roof is stabilized, the inside ceiling is a lot better. The leak coming down the north wall and into the engraved wood is now stabilize. The temperature is kept at 50 degrees in the winter time.

Town Hall, 14 High Street. Fire Station 15 High Street. The Fire station budget is part of the Fire Department budget. That and some other operational bills are kept in the executive budget so it is not a burden on the Fire Department itself. There has been money put aside to clean windows on an annual basis and there is some money there to sand a room of hardwood floors. Maintenance is just for maintenance materials for the building. Building utilities, to the best of their knowledge, there is only a few bulbs that are not LED output. The parking lot lighting is low output. He doesn't believe the budget will go down much more.

Torence Station, 73 N. Main Street, is basically to keep the building stable. There isn't maintenance money, but just for the heat to be kept at 50 degrees as they do have the Model T fire trucks being kept there now.

Tax Deeded properties is an assessment. Sometimes they get that money back. But they do not know from year to year.

Property liability insurance for the town. That is a number they get annually for budget season. It went up from \$168.00. The contingency is required to be put up annually. The balance of the contingency always comes from and returns to the general fund. It's there as a protective measure.

Gail Egounis asked about the deep cleaning. Is that in the town hall line? Alan Hardy said yes.

Town Clerk: Line 1 is the Town Clerk's salary which is the same as last year with a 3% COLA. The Deputy is in there as well and 50% of her time is for clerk duties. Overtime is for the Deputy Town Clerk, who is hourly. It is for elections and motor vehicle late hours on Thursdays. Moderator and Supervisors was lowered a bit. Contracts and supplies now include the copy machines in the kitchen which is primarily used for tax bills and sewer bills. 50% is coming out of the Town Clerk's budget. Printing of town reports is kept the same. Meetings and travels will be kept the same. It was low this year but it may be due to staff changes. The rest of the election cost #620 is anything out of the moderators and supervisor's stipends. That is for coding of cards that go into ballad machines. Vital statistics and dog licenses are fees they collect that are state money. Vital records preservation is being kept the same. The \$5,000 usually is enough money to do two books. Some of the historic records are falling apart.

Question: If Nicole Hoyt is the Town Clerk and Tax Collector does she receive both salaries? They have budgeted 2 separate people right now, but if that's the case 50% will come from each account. That number is an unknown right now as the Town Clerk is her own elected position.

Administration: Katie Phelps and Paula Dill. Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer salaries. 2019 is \$15,000 and the Deputy Treasurer, who is Cheryl Mitchell, and budgeted at \$7,500. Katie Phelps: Line 112 is the Finance Director's salaries is up 8% which is because she went from hourly to salary. This includes a 3% cola. Accounting Clerk salary line #114; that position has been eliminated from her budget. Line #120 is overtime for her department which has been decreased as she is salary and there is no longer an hourly position in her department. Line 310 is annual audit services which decreased 27%. The annual audit is \$14,000. #303 is payroll service, which includes weekly processing, checks and tax documents. No change this year. #332 is equipment and software which remains the same. #571 is travel and meeting and will remain the same. New account #572 which is for mobile phones for the town and is \$500 for the year.

Barbara Randall spoke. She noted that the Treasurer salary went up considerably. Paula Dill spoke and said when she was offered the position it was much less than it is now for responsibilities. She went through her job duties as it stands now. Barbara Randall asked how many hours more it is than what was originally offered. Paula Dill said it went from once a week for 1 or 2 hours and morphed into many more hours. They are asking for minimal salary compared to others in this position elsewhere.

Tax Collector: Nicole Hoyt presented. The salary is the same with a 3% COLA. The Deputy changed slightly as her time has been used differently. Overtime is for herself or Sarah. Tax equipment and software is now where the copy machine is which does the tax bills and sewer bills. 50% of the contractor comes out of this account and 50% comes out of Administration. This includes the paper for the tax bills, which is purchased through Avitar. #334 is tax lien expenses and deed expenses. This is for recording liens and lien releases. They are the company that does their mortgage searches. #571 meetings and travel is being kept the same. #572, tax deeded property which was moved from building to this section as it relates to the Tax Collector.

Personnel: Katie Phelps presented the Personnel budget. #110 is Human Resources salary is up 8% and has a 3% COLA. #115 is Overtime which is decreased 100% as she is salary now. #120 is Health Insurance, which includes the cost of single, family and retiree plans. This is up 17% for 2019. 10.5% is the health insurance increase. #121 is employee health insurance. Public Works is down 2 full time people. #122 is drug testing. #215 is life insurance and is up for 22 full time employees. #220 is Social Security based on salary. #222 is unemployment insurance. The total premium due for 2019 is \$1,168.17. #224 is workers compensation insurance which has gone down to \$13,064.99. Total due is \$14,701.01. #225 is Medicare requirement. #230 is retirement benefits for employees which is up 7%. Midyear change in the rate. Policies and procedures unchanged. #571 is meetings and travels which is unchanged at \$500.00. #572 is a new account for this year for background checks for volunteers and staff; \$1,000. And #574 is a new program in Personnel which is for exempt vacation buyout. \$6,514.00 which includes 1 week salary for each individual. #800 is miscellaneous and is unchanged at \$1,500.00.

Gail Egounis asked why the life insurance line went up. Katie Phelps said previously it was for \$50,000 life insurance for exempt employees but now it is for all employees. Gail Egounis asked about premium holidays; do they anticipate doing that going forward. Katie Phelps found out late that they were doing Premium holidays. Gail Egounis asked who the health insurance carrier is. Katie Phelps answered Health Trust.

Doddy Fisher asked who does the background checks. Katie Phelps said she does. She goes to the State of NH State Police. Gail Egounis asked what they charge. Katie Phelps said \$25.00.

Planning & Community Development: Kellee Easler presented. Assessing #113 is her assessing salary which went down 10% and part time employee shows up under #114. #312 is for the assessing services contractor. #1313 is software support with Avitar. #1315 is for the assessing kiosk. #316 is a new line item and it's for the Intents to Cut. Their town Forester is now reviewing and recommending and meeting with property owner. It's something that helps when they are doing reports.

Planning & Development: Kellee Easler presented. #110 is 80% of her time. #111 is for the part time assistant they hired at 40%. #112 is recording secretaries. That went up because they are now utilizing outside sources instead of in house people. #113 is moved from 50% employee to 100%. They took her out of her other section. Her full time position is there. #120 is overtime which decreased as she is salary. #332 is increased due to actuals. #540 is expense to be paid from the income account when applicants come in. Land use advertising is public advertisement. #550 is map bundle which includes \$745 for mapping software. #551 is town cell phone. #552 is Central NH which increased due to actuals. #554 is code manual updates and those went down a bit. Land Use regulation #555 is increased as they are increasing site plan, subdivision, and zoning ordinance into one document and master plan updates. #571 meetings and travels decreased. #572 is office service agreements; copier, etc. #610 is general office equipment and is staying the same.

Gail Egounis questioned telephones. Do they all have separate town phones? Kellee Easler said she does. Gail Egounis asked if they all have 2 phones. Kellee Easler said yes. Katie Phelps said it was to help if their phones were subpoenaed. Gail Egounis asked about the increase cost for the new copier. Are they encumbering at the end of the year? Kellee Easler said yes.

AgCom: Kellee Jo Easler presented. Administration is staying the same. The community garden is staying the same. Physical Improvements is staying the same; \$300. Conservation Commission – Professional Services staying the same at \$400.00. Mapping and research staying the same. Dues and fees are staying the same; \$700. Meetings and travels staying the same at \$200. Education is staying the same at \$400. Conservation Commission supplies are staying the same.

Gail Egounis noted that conservation has not been spent in years. Alan Hardy spoke. A lot of the work they've been doing over the past couple of years is in the Town Forest so the operating accounts for the town forest are through those accounts. Gail Egounis asked what was in the Town Forest account. Katie Phelps reported that they had a little over \$30,000. Alan Hardy said they had proceeds in that account for the last cut. Ed Cherian spoke. The Town Forest has \$37,000 in it right now. They are well funded due to land use change tax as well as from forest cuts. Gail Egounis asked if they are looking at any properties. Ed Cherian reported on what the Commission is looking at for new properties. Gail Egounis stated that purchases may be well into \$100,000 and they may need to come to the town with a Warrant Article. Ed Cherian stated that he felt that they would come up with their own funds.

Health Department: Kellee Jo Easler presented. Her job moved from hourly to salary and is 10%. Katie Phelps is her deputy. #571 is meetings and travels and has decreased. Office supplies stayed the same. Pest and dog control stayed the same. #4415 is not on there. Katie stated there will be no warrant articles for that this year.

Police Department: Kevin Wyman presented. Salaries will have a COLA. The chief will have 5% on top of the COLA for a merit. The Lieutenant position is increased due to longevity plus 3% COLA. There is a decrease in #114 as an officer left to go to Concord. #116 is increased a little due to longevity and won't take effect until October. #117 increased due to salary increase last year. Overtime is the same. Holiday pay stays the same. Legal is for pay out to the Merrimack County attorney's office for court help and computer expenses has been decreased. They encumbered it last year. Telephone is decreased due to a new contract with Verizon. Uniforms were the same. Office expenses stay the same. Training stays the same. Dispatch is decreased. Fuel – they have been running full staff for 3 years but looking at the history, they decreased. Maintenance stays the same.

Gail Egounis asked if dispatch was a contract. Kevin stated it was.

Fire Department: Ray Fisher presented. #110 operating salaries. That went to \$130,000 up 37% per the Board of Selectmen. Fire Fighters insurance is \$10,000. Radio maintenance stayed the same at \$4,000. Maintenance at \$1,500 same as last year. Turnout gear is at \$5,500 same as last year. SEBA maintenance \$3,500, same as last year. Most of that is testing. Utilities \$12,000 same as last year. Dispatch and dues is \$30,211. Computers and software went to \$5,000 which is down \$1000. Fire Department training and forest fires \$5,000. They didn't use that in fighting forest fires this year. He bought something else under that line item. They bought a new exhaust system that they put in the new station. Fire Department equipment \$12,000 which is down \$1,000.

Life Safety: Salary is \$76,052.00 which is up plus 3% COLA. Meetings and travel stayed the same. Office supplies stayed the same.

Gail Egounis – Fire department equipment was budgeted for \$13,000 and \$25,000 was spent. Was that the SZBA's? Chief Fisher said yes. Did Capital Reserve stay the same? Chief Fisher stated it stayed the same. Katie Phelps said it was the ventilation system as well. Gail Egounis asked what prompted the decision to go with a 32 hour a week Fire Chief. Was it due to more calls, paperwork falling to the wayside? Mark Varney stated that right now a lot of the reports that come from the Fire Department are generated by Katie Phelps. They will now be done by the new Fire Chief. There is a lot going on with Penacook Rescue, etc. They need to modernize. The Board of Selectmen sat down and decided to go with a 32 hour position. Ed Cherian stated that he agreed with what Mark Varney stated. Mark Varney noted that for several years Salisbury has not been a contributor and going forward they will move forward with their own Warrant Article to contribute. Gail Egounis stated that she feels it is a lot of money for a small town. Ed Cherian stated that if they went to a municipal rescue service or municipal run rescue service it will be costly.

Rhoda Hardy noted that the reason the budget has been this low in large part is because Chief Fisher has wanted to keep it this low. He's done a lot for the town. The fact that we're going from last year's budget to this much more, is because it's long overdue.

Ed Cherian said that it's not just for the Chief, they have a stipend line in the budget for the volunteers. Mark Varney, said Chief Fisher's initial salary line was \$95,000 and that is based on 26 fire fighters, one chief, one deputy, etc. and they figured the stipend out based on how many calls. They are budgeting for what the potential would be, not based on an unknown.

Chief Fisher noted that now they are going to pay the new chief out of that salary line and really the budget that he has for the rest of the people hasn't changed. Mark Varney said they increased that line to \$130,000.

Emergency Management: Shawn Brechtel is not here so Mark Varney spoke. #4290300 which was the Director went up 3%. Emergency Management Deputy Director went up 3%. The equipment stayed the same. Meetings and travel stayed the same. Vehicle maintenance went up \$1,000.00. The Police Department Humvee is now an emergency management vehicle for the town.

Public Works: Dean Hollins presented. Cemeteries #442 equipment maintenance is basically lawn mower repairs, etc. and will remain the same. Highway and streets; the Public Works pay scale; the Board agreed to raise the pay scale up 1 pay bracket of 5% plus 3% COLA. General laborer is split between highway and solid waste so the remaining pay is in solid waste budget for him. Overtime is the same. Utilities are the same. Uniforms and safety equipment is the same. Salt remains the same. Based on the weather. Road signs – cost has gone up \$20 a sign to replace them. Road resurfacing is decreased based on bid prices. Meetings and dues remains the same. Road oil is the actual prices. Patch material is the actual price. General supplies is the same.

Gasoline is the same. Equipment repairs is the same. Equipment is for the band shovels, rakes, brooms and will remains the same. Street lighting is the actual cost. That will be up 5%. Care of trees will remains the same. Trimming storm damaged trees, etc. Sidewalk repairs are actual cost.

Sanitation/solid waste is the other half of laborer salary. He has an open position and he has 7 or 8 applicants for it. #112, Solid Waste Operator went from 1 day a week to 2 days a week. He also had a longevity pay raise. Overtime remains the same. Utilities have increased a little. Tipping fees stays the same. Recycling is picking up again. Tires is strictly replacement tires on roll off truck. Equipment maintenance stays the same. Membership/dues stayed the same. Solid waste clean-up and ground water sampling is based on real numbers. Landfill maintenance is in preparation of 2020. This will be going into a dumpster and hauled off. That is the preparation to get ready to revamp the backside of the transfer station. They will be meeting with DES in the near future to see what's expected from the town once the landfill is closed in 2020.

Barbara Randall asked about recycling being up. Is that the amount being recycled? Dean Hollins said yes. Price of aluminum is good right now so they are making money there. There is no market right now for glass and plastic. Cardboard is up.

Gail Egounis asked about ground water sampling. Wasn't one of them supposed to no longer be monitored? Dean Hollins explained.

Other Sanitation and storm drainage is for repair of catch basins. Sewer agreement is a bill that goes to City of Concord every year. Engineering Services is a requirement by DES to do maintenance on their sewer system.

Parks and Recreation: Alan Hardy presented with Nicole Hoyt. Penny was unable to make this meeting. Park and Rec program is well received. Minor repairs, maintenance painting is \$2,000. Nicole Hoyt spoke regarding program fees. They charge \$25.00 per kid not to exceed \$50.00. Fees have been kept this way for a while. No changes for another year. The program runs with 50-60 kids. Not all of them there every day. Sometimes as many as 80 kids. They have a few situations where people have donated for families who may not be able to pay that fee. Hardy noted that they carry expenses in this budget for the summer concert series. That program is a good one. From an operating standpoint, the budget is remaining essentially the same as last year.

Gail Egounis asked if they are all getting a 3% COLA, including the summer councilors? Hardy said yes. Nicole Hoyt corrected her statement that it is \$50.00 per child not to exceed \$100.00. She misspoke.

Library: Alan Hardy noted that the town doesn't manage the library budget. The Library trustees manage the budget. There will be someone here for the hearing. But what you see is the amount of money that is transferred to their control on an annual basis. The budget is supplied by the town, but not managed by the town.

Old Home Day: Ed Cherian spoke. There is a Warrant Article to establish a revolving fund for Old Home Day. It raises money and spends money throughout the year on a fluctuating basis. None of this is town money. It is raised by the Old Home Day committee. It is a line item in another department for \$7,500 which is what the old home day committee requested the town to pay for the fireworks.

Welfare: ?? spoke. Salary is increased is due to the fact that she is doing welfare 50% of the time. Deputy Welfare officer is a new line; it is 12 hours a week. Meetings and travels was low last year. This year it is for 2 people. Welfare phone is for a cell phone she has to use for emergency contact.

?: She can see the need for 32 hours a week in the winter. Is 32 hours a week consistent? Welfare person said yes they are busy every single day. There is a need due to their new programs and time spent with clients. She also helps the Health Officer out.

Alan Hardy asked Barbara if she could explain the backpack program. She stated that they service 38 children in Boscawen Elementary School. It ensures that those 38 children have breakfast, lunch, dinner and a snack for their weekend. It's their first year doing this program and it's been received positively.

Welfare Assistance: They did get dangerously close this year. A mobile home park displaced 4 families. They helped with that. The cost of living has gone up so they asked for \$5,000 more increasing it up to \$50,000.

Alan Hardy said there was a cover sheet with individual budgets in it. He wanted to speak about 2 separate line items.

#4130 executive (Katie said under tab 4). Alan Hardy noted that the 3rd and 4th line item from the budget #4583831 is for \$7,500 for old home day. Town beautification, which doesn't have any other place #4583803 and there is \$1,250 there. That totals up in the 2019 budget \$3,878,979.00.

Gail Egounis asked if they had a chance to look over the salary increase comparisons she submitted. Alan Hardy said no. She noted that there is significant increases in the administrative payroll every year. Ed Cherian said there were a lot of changes this year. They had a clerk resign and they had to cover for that. They had 2 Co-Administrators that changed to one full time Administrator. They have stepped up and are paying staff appropriately. Once that happened it opened up a job which created a promotion. A lot of it reflects that the complexity of the jobs have changed a lot. Boscawen has grown a lot. There are a lot of new houses, a lot of new apartment buildings. The increase reflects busier staff and more people in town that need more services. Ed Cherian stated that it means that in order to retain staff, they need to pay them appropriately. Mark Varney stated that the reason why executive went up is that they went to a single administrator. Katie Phelps' position became a salary position instead of hourly. They did the same for Kellee Easler. They gave merit increases for the work load increase. Community Development has 2 full time positions and one part time. Last year they had 3 full time positions. Alan Hardy noted that they increased responsibilities for positions.

Bruce Crawford noted that it's difficult for instance with Dean Hollins people. They are trying to compare them with what GMI pays. They will get overtime in the summer but will be laid off in the winter and no benefits. Will the town be better off to contract this out because of the increase due to benefits. It wasn't that long ago that when you walked in the town hall building there were only 2 people here. And the whole town ran fine. The town hasn't grown that much. They do have a tremendous amount of growth it seems like. There were one shot expenses quoted like closing Kesavan Mobile Home Park. Some of the percentages are out of kilter too. The Fire salary budget shows a 20% increase. That is a huge percentage change. He is concerned with what affect this will have on the tax rate. Gail Egounis asked Katie Phelps if there was a revenue budget. Her bottom line concern is the increase in the operating budget, coupled with the loss of revenue. What will that do to people's tax bills?

Much discussion ensued regarding school budgets and how that reflected on the town budget. Rhoda Hardy stated that she had her first federal government employee come to the food pantry this week.

Warrant Articles. Ed Cherian stated that there was no one here to defend any of the Warrant Articles. Alan Hardy said that for any of the donation Warrant Articles, the people were asked to come and speak.

Barbara asked if the Red Cross asked for a donation. Alan Hardy said they didn't. What's not on the Warrant is a request for \$5,000 from Riverbend. They won't come and talk about it so it isn't supported. The TAP grant would be the completion of .6 mile of rail trail to the other side of Hannah Dustin. They have put in for the grant but the organization started out the meeting with the town saying it wouldn't cost the town a penny. Mark Varney said in subsequent meetings they came in and said they'd do a lot of fund raising but the Town would need to be

willing to put up \$380,000. The Town said what about no cost to the town? They came back and said that on the Concord end they will pave the rail trail. That would shut it down for the snowmobilers, etc. They were asked to come in and talk to the Town about that but to date they haven't come in. Subsequently the town decided not to put it on a Warrant.

Warrant Articles:

Alan Hardy explained. This is the evolution of the portal from the Department of Revenue Administration. They plugged the information in and it brings out a DRA correct warrant. If there is any conflict, they can work out the wording.

Article I is regarding the election.

Article II is the sum of the operating budget.

Article III is the Contribution to town capital reserve funds.

What's not here is what was discussed. There won't be a \$60,000 contribution to the fire truck capital reserve fund. The fire department safety equipment is the same amount. He suggested they pull out the combined budget because on the back side you can see the combined contributions. Within the last adjustment you can see the number 42403920 – that will change one more time. Ed Cherian noted that a number of these articles have not been voted on by the Board yet. Katie Phelps noted that a number of Warrant Articles have changed.

Discussion regarding meeting again to discuss the Warrants before the next meeting. Katie Phelps was asked to work up a little revenue budget. February 6th at 6:30 pm is the next meeting. Ed Cherian asked if they could move it up earlier. The Board of Selectmen would get through this at the next meeting. 6:00 pm was the suggested meeting time. It was agreed upon. They can go through the Warrants before the hearing.

Next meeting will be February 6th at 6 pm.

A motion to adjourn by everyone, seconded by the rest.

Respectfully submitted by Rose Fife