

TOWN OF DEERFIELD, NH
MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEEMEETING

George B. White Building
8 Raymond Road, Deerfield, NH 03037

6:30pm Tuesday 1 December 2015

MINUTES

Call to Order 6:32pm

1. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

2. Moment of Silence/Prayer

3. Roll Call

Present: Kevin Verville, Chairman; James Spillane, Vice Chairman; Carol Levesque, David Carbone, Karen Cote, and Troi Hopkins, members; Andrew Robertson, Select Board Rep Member; Peter Menard, School Board Rep Member

Excused absence: Fred McGarry, member

Unexcused absence: Steve Giovinelli, Brendan O'Donnell, members

Also Present: Jan Foisy, Town Administrator; Penny Touchette, Financial Director; Don Watts, Chairman of the Board of Cemetery Trustees; Evelyn DeCota, Philbrick-James Library Librarian; Kevin Barry, Town Clerk; Denise Greig, Welfare Commissioner

4. Approval of the Minutes

Motion: Chairman Verville moves to approve the MBC meeting minutes from Tuesday 15 September, 2015 as written.

Second:

Vote to approve the minutes as written from the MBC meeting from Tuesday, 15

September, 2015: Yay: 3, Nay: 0, Abstained: 3 - Motion Carries

Motion: Chairman Verville moves to approve the MBC meeting minutes from Tuesday 24 November, 2015 as written.

Second:

Vote to approve the minutes as written from the MBC meeting from Tuesday, 24

November, 2015: Yay: 5, Nay: 0, Abstained: 1 - Motion Carries

5. Citizen's Comments

None seen.

Chairman Verville informs MBC members who do not yet have an MBC email need to email the web@townofdeerfeldnh.com to request one. All emails are sent to the MBC email addresses. Typically minutes to be approved will be emailed prior to the following meeting.

Chairman Verville has located a document online published by the New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) which has the important dates for local officials for SB2 March 2016 town meeting towns. Members can request an electronic copy from Chairman Verville or it can be found online. Vice Chairman Spillane asks if the Deerfield schedule is still aligned with those published dates, Chairman Verville will check if the dates are aligned.

6. Discussion and Review of 2016 Town Budget

Chairman Verville explains that there were requests made to move some items that previously had been scheduled for a later date. Therefore some items originally scheduled for tonight may be pushed to a later date.

a. Cemeteries, page 21

Discussion was tabled at the November 24, 2015 meeting. Don Watts, hairman of the Board of Trustees of the Cemeteries is present tonight to answer questions. C. Levesque asks D. Watts what work the proposed additional \$5000 in the Tree Care line item (01.4195.01.390) was planned for. C. Levesque comments that there is a least one pine tree at the Old Centre Road Cemetery which is creating a nuisance/hazard. D. Watts comments that dangerous situations or dangers to headstones from falling limbs need to take precedent. There are 111 cemeteries in town. The \$5000 is to do the best possible to see which trees cause the most danger and tend to those first. There is not currently a priority list to work from.

C. Levesque inquires if a citizen could ask the Cemetery Trustees for permission to volunteer to trim limbs or do other similar work at a cemetery. A. Robertson responds that volunteers from contractors with proof of insurance is acceptable. However, citizen volunteers for this type of work cannot be encouraged.

Motion: Vice Chairman Spillane moves the proposed Cemeteries budget in the amount of \$21,452.00

Second: A. Robertson

Vote to approve the proposed 2016 Cemeteries budget in the amount of \$21,452.00: Yay: 8, Nay: 0 - Motion Carries

b. Library, page 55

A. Robertson notes that Evelyn DeCota, town librarian, is the current longest hired town employee of the town of Deerfield. This is the start of her 35th year.

Motion: A. Robertson moves the proposed Library budget in the amount of \$93,553.00.

Second: Vice Chairman Spillane

Discussion: A. Robertson notes that there is a board of trustees that the library reports to more so than the Board of Selectmen.

Chairman Verville notes a small increase in the Professional Development line item. E. DeCota explains that this is due to the \$55 professional dues for herself as librarian, \$30 dues each for 7 trustees, 2 trustees attended the Library Association Conference at \$65 each. Total was nearing the current budget and therefore she proposes the increase.

Vote to approve the proposed 2016 Library budget in the amount of \$93,553.00: Yay: 8, Nay: 0 - Motion Carries

c. Town Clerk/Tax Collector, page 3

Motion: A. Robertson moves the proposed Town Clerk/Tax Collector budget in the amount of \$116,240.00

Second: Vice Chairman Spillane

Discussion: Kevin Barry, Town Clerk, comments that there were some increases in the budget such as postage and mileage. A. Robertson notes the increase in the Part Time Employee line item. This is to better serve the residents of Deerfield. Vice Chairman Spillane points out that there is a request to increase the Mileage line item when the actual spent from this line item has never reached the current budget of \$300. K. Barry explains that the proposed increase of \$100 for the Mileage line item is to allow for the Deputy Town Clerk to attend more conferences/training sessions. Previously the town has not been charged for the all of the mileage. Vice Chairman Spillane asks A. Robertson if the proposed increases in the Employee line items were based on a town vote of wage scale adjustments made by the Board of Selectmen and how these wages compare to area towns. A. Robertson responds that these were wage scale adjustments that were based on information from the NHMA relative to similar-sized towns in NH and aim to not be at the top nor the bottom of those ranges while taking into

consideration longevity and experience. Vice Chairman Spillane asks if during comparisons are the hours of operation taken into account. A. Robertson responds that they are when applicable. C. Levesque notes that Kevin Barry and Kelly Roberts do an excellent job. They are very helpful and deserve the money.

Vote to approve the proposed 2016 Town Clerk/Tax Collector budget in the amount of \$116,240.00: Yay: 8, Nay: 0 - Motion Carries

d. Town Meeting/Elections, page 6

Motion: A. Robertson moves the proposed Town Meeting/Elections budget in the amount of \$11,961.00.

Second: P. Menard

Discussion: K. Barry explains that the biggest reason for the increase is due to the additional elections- presidential primary, state primary, state and local elections.

Chairman Verville asks what the Equipment line item is for. K. Berry explains that it is for replacing votin both part as necessary (shelves, curtains, etc).

Vote to approve the proposed 2016 Town Meeting/Elections budget in the amount of \$11,961.00: Yay: 8, Nay: 0 - Motion Carries

e. Emergency Management, p 33

Motion: A. Robertson moves the proposed Emergency Management budget in the amount of \$7,863.00.

Second: C. Levesque

Discussion: K. Barry explains that the town pays for fuel for the generator at the school when it is used as a shelter.

Motion: Vice Chairman Spillane moves to reduce the Diesel line item (01.4290.02636) by \$250.00.

Second: Chairman Verville

Discussion: Chairman Verville notes that the current proposed budget for 2016 for the Diesel line is budgeted for 500 gallons based on \$3.75 per gallon. If budgeted on the \$3.50 per gallon as recommended by the Select Board, 500 gallons would be \$1750.00. So, a reduction by \$250.00 for this line item would budget for less than 500 gallons. Vice Chairman Spillane states that based on the current actual cost of diesel, a \$250,00 reduction is reasonable. P. Menard notes seeing rising diesel prices in Connecticut and does not support this motion. A. Robertson does not support this motion. He would support using the \$3.50 per gallon basis for diesel. 500 gallons of diesel is consumed during approximately two days when the generator is used for the shelter at the school. Denise Greig notes that there have been times when the shelter has been open for periods of 2 to 5 days. Chairman Verville notes that the difference between the proposed \$250 reduction and the \$125 reduction is 35.7 gallons or 7% decrease in diesel fuel. A. Robertson is unclear about why the use of diesel fuel previous years is not shown.

Vote to decrease the proposed 2016 Diesel line item (01.4290.02.636) by \$250.00: Yay:2, Nay:6- Motion Fails.

Motion: Based on the discussion, Chairman Verville moves to reduce the proposed 2016 Diesel line item (01.4290.02.636) by \$125.00 to bring the line to \$1750.00 to bring it inline with the Select Board's recommendation of \$3.50 per gallon.

Second: Vice Chairman Spillane

Discussion: C. Levesque asks who pays for the diesel, the school or the town? A. Robertson responds that the school pays for diesel when the school uses the generator. The town pays for it when the generator is in use when the school is used as a shelter. The school own the fuel in the tank and if the town uses it, the town pays to refill it.

Vote to approve the proposed 2016 Emergency Management budget in the amount of \$7,738.00: Yay: 8, Nay: 0 - Motion Carries

f. Agencies- Health and Social, page 50

Motion: A. Robertson moves the proposed Agencies- Health and Social in the amount of \$34,186.00.

Second: P. Menard

Discussion: Denise Greig, Town Welfare Commissioner explains that the Employee Physical and Testing line item has increased due to cost increase. D. Greig states that there is a requested increase of \$400 by the Seacoast Mental Health Center due to the increase in use by Deerfield residents. Also, a Coordinated Access is a new program for single point access to homeless shelters and programs. Vice Chairman Spillane notes a discrepancy on the line for Coordinated Access funding in 2015. It is noted that this was a typographical error and for 2015 this line should read \$0 instead of \$566. A Safe Place and SASS merged and their combined 2015 line item should read \$3066.

Vote to approve the proposed 2016 Town Meeting/Elections budget in the amount of \$34,186.00: Yay: 8, Nay: 0 - Motion Carries

g. Welfare Administration, page 51

Motion: A. Robertson moves the proposed Welfare Administration budget in the amount of \$69,777.00.

Second: P. Menard

Discussion: Vice Chairman Spillane asks how the Part Time Employee line item increase was determined. A. Robertson states that the increase for the part time employee was based on a wage adjustment made by the Select Board. Chairman Verville asks about the increase in the Mileage line item even though nothing has previously been spent from this line item. D. Greig responds that previously mileage expense reports have not been completed.

Vote to approve the proposed 2016 Welfare Administration budget in the amount of \$69,777.00: Yay: 8, Nay: 0 - Motion Carries

f. Ambulance, page 26

Motion: A. Robertson moves the proposed budget for the Ambulance in the amount of \$11,000.00.

Second: C. Levesque

Discussion: A. Robertson states this is a multi-year contract in this amount.

Vote to approve the proposed 2016 Ambulance budget in the amount of \$11,000.00: Yay: 8, Nay: 0 - Motion Carries

h. Animal Control, page 49

Motion: A. Robertson moves the proposed budget for Animal Control in the amount of \$10,602.00.

Second: P. Menard

Discussion: A. Robertson notes that the Animal Control Officer is a part time employee who reports directly to the Police Department. The charge is \$40 per call that he responds. There is fluctuation each year due to what incidents occur in the town that year. Vice Chairman Spillane points out that budgeted \$7,100.00 for the Part Time Employee line item has not been reached in the past two years.

Motion: Vice Chairman Spillane proposes a \$1,500.00 reduction in the Part Time Employee line item (01.4414.01.11).

Second: Chairman Verville

Discussion: A. Robertson asks J. Foisy if there is additional information about the use of \$7,100.00 as the budget for the part time employee figure. J. Foisy suggests tabling discussion until the Police Chief can be asked for further information.

Motion: P. Menard moves to table the Animal Control budget until the Police budget.

Second: D. Carbone

Vote to table the Animal Control Budget until the Police budget: Yay: 8, Nay: 0-

Motion Carries

i. Town Hall, page 19

Motion: A. Robertson moves the proposed Town Hall budget in the amount of \$35,263.00.

Second: Vice Chairman Spillane

Discussion:

Motion: A. Robertson moves to table the Town Hall budget until the Building Manager is available.

Second: Vice Chairman Spillane.

Vote to table the Town Hall budget until the Building Manager is available:

Yay: 8, Nay: 0- Motion Carries.

j. Town Administration, page 2

Motion: A. Robertson moves the proposed Town Administration budget in the amount of \$204,514.00

Second: Vice Chairman Spillane

Discussion: Vice Chairman Spillane asks if the Full Time Employee line item increase was due to a town vote or a wage adjustment. A. Robertson responds that this increase was due to a wage adjustment. Vice Chairman Spillane asks if employees intend to attend more meetings/seminars this coming year. J. Foisy responds that they plan to attend more training/seminars. Vice Chairman Spillane points out that the actual spent on the Meetings/Seminars/Training line item has not come close to the budget yet there is a proposed increase to this item. The current Financial Director plans to attend the New Hampshire Government Financial Office Association (NHGFOA) seminar and the Town Administrator plans to attend the NHMA conference. The previous Town Administrator did not attend these proposed conferences/seminars

Vote to approve the proposed Town Administration budget in the amount of \$204,514.00: Yay: 8, Nay: 0 - Motion Carries

k. Financial Administration- Information Technology, page 8

Motion: A. Robertson moves the proposed Information Technology budget in the amount of \$49,725.00.

Second:

Discussion: J. Foisy states that the major increases are due to the printing and mailing of the newsletter/voters' guide. There are also some pieces of equipment that need to be replaced. Chairman Verville states that the current plan is to have the three most recent meetings posted on the town website. There is not enough server space to house more meetings. Chairman Verville feels that accessibility to recorded meetings is very important. Chairman Verville wants to know what the cost would be to allow a greater number of recordings to be available on the website. Vice Chairman Spillane asks if the town uses its own server space or if it is leased somewhere. J. Foisy explains that Information Technology (IT) is looking to replace the current server. Shre will find out what the cost would be to replace the current server. Vice Chairman Spillane asks that IT also look into leasing server space as

another option. Vice Chairman Spillane asks if the increase in the Part Time Employee line item, was based on a wage adjustment or vote by the public. J. Foisy responds that it was a wage adjustment.

Motion: Chairman Verville moves to table the Information Technology budget.

Second: Vice Chairman Spillane

Vote to table the Information Technology budget: Yay: 8, Nay: 0- Motion Carries

k. Revaluation of Property, page 11

Motion: A. Robertson moves the proposed 2016 Revaluation of Property budget in the amount of \$84,060.00.

Second: Vice Chairman Spillane

Discussion: A. Robertson states that a reassessment is not planned for 2016 therefore the budget is decreased. P. Touchette states that the town will be on a four year cycle to complete reassessment.

Vote to approve the proposed 2016 Revaluation of Property budget in the amount of \$84,060.00: Yay: 8, Nay: 0- Motion Carries

l. Insurance, page 22

Motion: A. Robertson moves the proposed Insurance budget in the amount of \$424,893.00.

Second: P. Menard

Discussion: A. Robertson points out that there was a change in health insurance plans to Harvard Pilgrim. Vice Chairman Spillane asks how the 2015 actual is so low compared to the 2014 budget. J. Foisy responds that the town changed property liability companies and paid an 18 month premium therefore there was nothing budgeted or actual in 2015. 2014 and 2015 were not completely staffed or employees didn't take the insurance and instead took a lower stipend. Chairman Verville asks if there are still vacant positions to be filled. A. Robertson states that there are not currently any open positions relative to insurance. Vice Chairman Spillane notes that Insurance in 2014 and 2015 were both over budgeted. P. Menard asks if the reduction in the Worker's Compensation line item is due to fewer claims. A. Robertson responds that having fewer worker's compensation claims helps adjust the insurance rate.

Vote to approve the 2016 proposed Insurance budget at \$424,83.00: Yay: 7, Nay: 1- Motion Carries

m. Legal, page 12

Motion: A. Robertson moves the proposed Legal budget in the amount of \$23,572.00.

Second: Vice Chairman Spillane

Discussion: A. Robertson states that expenditures vary year to year.

Vote to approve the proposed Legal budget in the amount of \$23,572.00: Yay: 8, Nay: 0 - Motion Carries

n. Personnel Administration, page 13

Motion: A. Robertson moves the proposed Personnel Administration budget in the amount of \$79,465.00.

Second: P. Menard

Discussion: A. Robertson states that this budget is made up of primarily FICA and Medicare which are required through payroll. Performance pay is available for an occurrence of an employee going above and beyond.

Vote to approve the proposed Personnel Administration budget in the amount of

\$79,465.00: Yay: 8, Nay: 0 - Motion Carries

Chairman Verville asks to discuss the second warrant article on the page of draft warrant articles. Last year there were questions about the plan for the Highway budget. Its understandable that it is difficult to work road repairs in to an operating budget. He voices concern about wording for road related warrant articles. A. Robertson states that roads are prioritized based on traffic pattern or other critical need. Chairman Verville feels that the proposed amount is too small and should be increased or doubled. Vice Chairman Spillane points out that vaguely written warrant articles often have difficulty passing as do warrant articles that are written too specific.

7. School Budget Update

P. Menard states that the School Board will be finalizing the School Budget tomorrow (Wednesday December 2) to prepare and deliver to the MBC as scheduled.

8. Old Business

The MBC meeting originally scheduled for December 15 had been moved to December 10 which turns out to be the school concert for the upper grades.

Motion: Chairman Verville moves to move the December 10th meeting to Thursday December 17th at 6:30pm.

Second:

Vote to move the December 10th meeting to Thursday December 17th at 6:30pm: Yay: 8, Nay: 0- Motion Carries

9. New Business

None seen

10. Citizen Comments

Harriet Cady expresses concern over wage increases that have not been voted up by the town residents. The salary for Welfare Commissioner in towns with like populations is considerably less than Deerfield. She objects to the Health and Social Services line item for the American Red Cross. The manifest approved at last night's (December 1) Select Board meeting shares the purchase of a new server. H. Cady states that RSA 33-A requires that recording for public use must remain in place for a number of years. Last year at least \$200,000.00 was over budgeted. It is important to see what parts of the budget are over budgeted or under budgeted. She asks that the Social Services budget be looked at closer to see what services are actually being used in Deerfield. The abulance service in town is excellent. The MBC needs to do more investigation. When looking at salaries for town employees compared to similar towns, Deerfield is on the high end.

12. Adjourn

Motion: Vice Chairman Soillane moes to adjourn.

Second: P. Menard

Vote to adjourn: Yay 8, Nay: 0 - Motion Carries

Next Meeting: Saturday 5 December, 2015