

# Town of Candia Municipal Budget Committee

## Approved Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Date:** October 14, 2020  
**Location:** Town Office Building  
Zoom Meeting ID# 863-1330-8371  
**Attendees:** Lynn Chivers  
Dick Snow (attended via Zoom)  
Jodi Hedstrom  
Susan Gill  
Katrina Niles  
Bob Stout  
Sue Young  
Todd Keating  
Kaycee Vitale  
**Absent:** Stephanie Helmig  
**Guest:** Dennis Lewis  
Selectman Brian Brock  
Dean Young  
Rudy Cartier

Chairman Chivers opened the meeting at 7:00 PM

Pledge of Allegiance

### Approval of the Minutes from September 09, 2020

- Selectman Young wanted to correct an incorrect response made from the previous minutes.
  - Selectman Young was incorrect when stating that COVID stipends for the Fire Department were administered the same way as regular stipends. She would like to correct that by saying that they were paid based on training and experience.
- Correct statement by Jodi Hedstrom asking if *they would reimburse for town clerk as well to will, we be reimbursed for the salaries of the extra help due to the absence of the town clerk?*
- Chairman Chivers mentioned that at the time of the meeting we had not finalized all dates for the budget season but they have been sent via email. We are just waiting on the deliberative session from the school.
- Bob Stout motioned to approve minutes with amendments
- Katrina Niles seconds the motion
- Stephanie Helmig absent from vote
- Motion passed 8 approve-1 absent

### Questions from Last Meeting

#### Questions for the Town

*What is the assessed valuation as of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020?*

- Selectman Young answered that it was \$509,870,155.00. The MS1 is not complete so we used the number for the first issue on the taxes.

*What is the monthly ending general fund balance for the town?*

- Selectman Young answered that an email was sent to Dick Snow and Dick said was satisfied with the answer.

*What was spent on Town Clerk wages since our clerk has been out?*

- Selectman Young answered \$27,532.56 in fees for Christine over and above what we normally spent and we will be overdrawn on Deputy Clerk.

### Town Reports

Expenditure Report

- Chairman Chivers wanted to let Donna know that on pg. 9, the page that has the warrant articles, the fire truck warrant article for around \$300,000 is missing and \$200,000 for Currier Road is missing.
- Chairman Chivers asked on the comparative revenue report at the bottom, it shows a state grant, COVID gopher grant, and two first responder grants, did we actually receive that money?
  - Selectman Young answered yes. We also are anticipating a \$36,000 municipal aid grant that is not included.

### **Budget Committee to Review Budget from Selectman's Meeting and Formulate Questions**

- **General Questions- If there is a 2020 budget with no spend, and you are asking for the same money in your budget, why are you asking for the same budget? There are 90 lines in the budget that have \$0 spent through 8/28 in the 2020 budget that add up to \$176,000. If there is 0 spent in the budget this year, when does the money get spent?**
  - Selectman Young answered that it depends on what it is. If it is a licensing fee etc., a lot of times it is done at the end of the year. Seminars and training were not spent this year because of COVID. Even though we have not spent it this year we are anticipating spending it next year if things improve. If we do not spend it this year, we will use that money to offset the tax rate unless it is a large item that needs to be encumbered.
- **Animal Control – What is driving the wage growth?**
  - Selectman Young answered that there were more hours reported from the Chief. Bob Stout noted that when extra hours were used before it was due to the hand delivering of the notices. Refer to the audio for more discussion.
- Auditing Services- No Questions
- Budget Committee-No Questions
- **Building Inspection-Why is the budget up \$6000 for next year?**
  - Selectman Young answered that there a lot of houses going up in town, there are a lot more permits, and a lot more inspections.
    - Todd Keating asked if the budget could be separated out by each individual item that is being performed.
      - Selectman Young said that yes, and the information can be found by locating the most recent selectman meeting online and viewing the attachments.
      - Chairman Chivers said she would ask for the report as well.
- **Cemetery- What is happening with the gate?**
  - Selectman Young said that they have not spent the \$5000 for the gate this year simply because they cannot find someone to get it done.
    - Brian Brock said that Holly indicated that they were having a very difficult time finding someone to do that craft work but they definitely still want to get it done.
  - Chairman Chivers asked where does it show the income for the Cemetery?
    - At the bottom of the revenue report it shows 2019 revenue but none for 2020. Selectman Young said that on the front of the report it seems like she lumps all the 2020 revenue together and it is under miscellaneous.
  - Chairman Chivers asked why is Cemetery getting a 2% COLA when everyone else is getting 1.6%?
    - Selectman Young answered that they are not, that should have been deleted from the report.
  - Chairman Chivers asked what is the added employee?
    - Selectman Young answered that it is a part time seasonal position. It is for maintenance that needs to be completed that the Cemetery workers do not have time to do. It will be 10 hours a week at \$20/hour.
- Conservation Commission-No Questions
- Direct Assistance- No Questions, refer to audio for discussion around how we have decreased the line item over the years.
- Election Voter Registration-No Questions
- **Election Administration-Why are we budgeting for a special election when they are so rare?**
  - Selectman Young answered that we had one two years ago and we just never know if something will happen that will require a special election.
- Emergency Management-No Questions

- **Fire and Forestry-What is causing the increase in the communications line?**
  - Dean Young explained in summary, that they have been trying to upgrade communications and dispatch in the department. This required in part, buying two frequencies on tower hill from a resident for \$5000. Also, some funds will be used to rent space on the tower and install a repeater and associated equipment. The department would like to leave Rockingham County dispatch and switch to Londonderry because Londonderry is dedicated to Fire where Rockingham is a police dispatch, and this switch has fees involved. One key thing is with adding the repeater to the tower, because we own the infrastructure, if any other town wanted to jump on, we could a fee and lower our overall cost. Refer to audio for full details and discussion.
    - Chairman Chives asked if this will be a multi-year contract with Londonderry?
      - Dean Young answered yes.
        - Chairman Chivers noted that multi-year contracts cannot be a part of the operating budget and must be presented as a warrant article. She will refer to the RSA to see what the rules are surrounding multi-year contracts and provide answers at the next meeting.
    - Bob Stout asked if the \$7000 increase would be an annual charge?
      - Dean Young answered yes.
    - Todd Keating revisited the question above and asked why he has not purchased Protective Clothing when the budgets are passed? Is there a season you buy protective gear?
      - Dean Young answered that he is careful with his budget in case an unexpected large expense happens before the end of the year. He will spend the money if there is no large emergency that has happened throughout the year.
- Health Officer-No Questions
- Heritage Commission-No Questions
- **Highway- What is going into the Deeds and Measurements \$5000 budget line?**
  - Dennis Lewis answered that it is for research on roads that we are unsure who owns them. The line was previously in the budget but it was difficult to find someone to do the work. He also explained that it is important that we have a history on each road and an accurate record to avoid future conflict and legal fees. Refer to audio for more discussion.
- **Legal Expenses- What is the cause of the Legal Line being higher?**
  - Selectman Young explained that there are still some people not following policy when it comes to contacting legal and there have been some cases that were unexpected. Refer to audio for information on the policy and training.
  - Selectman Young noted that they did separate legal expenses out this year for line of sight of what was spent on compliance vs. other legal items.
  - Selectman Brock said that there was a communication issue and confusion between who we contact first, NH municipal or the town attorney. This has since been addressed.
- Other Culture and Recreation- No Questions
- Parks and Recreation-No Questions
- **Planning Board- What is happening with the Master Plan?**
  - Selectman Young said it was taken out and suggested it was to go as a warrant article. At the meeting after, a selectman motioned for it to go back in and it failed for a lack of a second, and then at last night's meeting, the motion was made again and it passed 3-2.
  - Todd Keating asked what changed to make it pass the third time?
    - Selectman Brock said that Rudy Cartier came to the Selectman's meeting and gave compelling reasons to keep it in. It would be impossible for the Budget Committee to put the Master Plan budget back in without support from the Selectman so last night Rudy detailed the importance of the Master Plan which compelled the 3-2 vote. The board strongly believes it should be in the operating budget like it was last year.
- **Police-There is \$45,000 for a new officer and a budget for two part-time officers, does one replace the other or is it for both and why so much for fuel?**
  - These will be questions for the Chief.
- **Property Appraisal-** no questions. Refer to audio for discussion on change in appraisal companies and increase in fees.

- **Solid Waste-There is a budget for Part Time wages this year and it was not used, why is it in the budget for next year?**
  - Chairman Chivers said that they just hired a part time person and it is not reflected on this budget as he has only been there 4 weeks.
- **Tax Collector-Why are the wages to the deputy going up so much?**
  - Selectman Young said she was not sure but that would be a question for the board.
- **Town Building Expenses- What are the details of the Jessie Remington and Smyth Building deal? Why was there not a deal proposed to the whole town? Would the town be expected to pay all expenses while Jessie Remington used the building at no cost? Is there a liability issue?**
  - Selectman Young said that Jessie Remington and the Smyth Memorial Committee had a meeting where a proposal was presented. The Select board have not seen the proposal but understand it to include that Jessie Remington would put in a well, septic, and get the bathroom working. It would not be ADA accessible. A lease has not been discussed because they did not want to go through all the work of pricing it out if they did not think the board would approve the idea. Also, they did not want to go to a town meeting and according to the attorney, they would have to attend a town meeting.
  - Brian Brock said that Jessie Remington would bring the basement up to code and only use it for certain hours of the day, allowing towns people to use the building as well during the off hours. They had no plans of making the upstairs accessible. Based on the cost of all the upgrades, Karla would go to a real estate firm to get a reasonable estimate for rent or lease. This is how they would formulate the lease agreement. During the last meeting they did agree to go to a town meeting. Refer to audio for further discussion.
- **Town Clerk-Is the potential assistant similar to this year where the assistant is running the building?**
  - Selectman Young said the Donna has been absolutely unbelievable but she needs help. We need a Deputy for the Deputy Clerk but the Selectman cannot ask for that, only Cristine can go to the state and ask for the Deputy for the Deputy Clerk. What we would like to see happen is that Donna gets a Deputy Clerk so if the situation changes and Donna moves into the clerk position, we have someone to fill her role.
    - Chairman Chivers asked why can't we just hire a part time employee?
      - Selectman Young said we have but there are certain certifications that are required and that can only be done if they are a deputy clerk.
  - Selectman Young said that we are considering going from Fee Based to an hourly rate so we avoid this situation in the future of being overdrawn.
  - Bob Stout said that we are creating a position may be resolved if the clerk comes back. Then we have too many people if that is the case.
    - Brian Brock said for budgeting purposes, this is the worst-case scenario. We would rather resolve the current issue of the Town Clerk getting paid but not performing any job duties. However, we still have a workload and have to prepare for the future. Refer to audio for further discussion.
- **Town Officer's Expense- Please explain the new employee and increase in the town wages.**
  - Selectman Young answered that a town administrator was suggested. After consulting with Donna, we decided to remove the Human Resources consultant. If we have a town administrator, we would expect that position to cover the human resources. The other lines that increased were due to software but it supports multiple areas of the town but this line item is used as a catchall. Nothing has been finalized on what that is going to cost.
    - Jodi Hedstrom asked if there was another position hired because the town wages line went from \$87,000 to \$129,000 to now \$172,000.
      - Selectman Young answered that we only have a financial position, the selectman's assistant and the part time employee. Now we are adding the Town Administrator to increase the line to \$172,000. Discussion ensued on how we got to the \$172,000 mathematically. Refer to audio for details.
- Treasurer-No Questions
- Welfare-No Questions
- Zoning Board-No Questions

- **Final Questions for the Selectman- Do the Selectman have any concerns proposing this budget to the town?**
  - Selectman Young shared concerns with the budget going up 9% because of the current environment. She believes these are wonderful ideas and hopes that the town can get caught up on much needed items.
  - Jodi Hedstrom asked why the tax bill was negative \$19,000? Is that normal?
    - Selectman Young yes and the first run was not bad. She is more worried about the December tax bills because of our current environment.
  - Chairman Chivers said that this is why she was looking closely at the warrant articles because it is the town budget + the warrant articles. Last year we had 1 million dollars in warrant articles. If this year we only have \$500,000, that makes a big difference. Even if this budget passes, if we keep our warrant articles within reason, we will end up with the same budget or possibly less.
    - Selectman Young noted that even when we increase the budget due to paying for large items, we never reduce it when we finish paying for those large items. So, we will look at the budget and think it is ok because it is the same as the previous year but she believes that it is unfair to the taxpayers not to reduce the budget by those large items that have been paid the previous year.
    - Todd Keating would like a way to show the increase in taxes for each proposed budget, school, town and warrant articles so people are well informed during voting time. It would be a value to the town of what the Budget Committee provides.
      - Chairman Chivers said that we can provide that going forward. Discussion ensued. Refer to audio for more details.

## School Reports

### Enrollment Reports

- *Chairman Chivers asked if you look at 1<sup>st</sup> grade this year compared to Kindergarten last year, we are down 5 kids, why?*

### Revenue Report

- No questions

### Expenditure Report

- Very hard to read
- **Bob Stout asked about rental of equipment line. It is budgeted at \$2520 and there is around \$5500 encumbered. Why are we encumbering more than what is budgeted?**

## Questions for the School

- **Can we please have a high school enrollment report?**
- **How are we handling Zoom? Which line item is it reflected in?**
- **Why are there no transportation costs as of October 1<sup>st</sup>?**
- **Special Education has encumbered \$37,560 with nothing budgeted, what is causing that?**

## Other Budget Committee information

- Selectman Young asked to take a seminar cost out of the budget committee budget and that was approved
- Dick Snow provided everyone with CD's that refer to his previous email to the budget committee.
- Next meeting is 10/28 at 7 p.m. in the town office building. It is a joint meeting with the Selectman and we will vote on the budget if time permits. 11/10 meeting will be cancelled if we vote on the budget on 10/28.

Bob Stout moves to adjourn the meeting

Katrina Niles seconds the motion

All in favor

Meeting was adjourned at 9:18 pm

Submitted by: Kaycee Vitale, Administrative Assistant