

Town of Candia Municipal Budget Committee Public Hearing on Town Budget Approved Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: December 17, 2020
Location: Town Office Building
Zoom Meeting ID# 89421424046
Attendees: Lynn Chivers
Dick Snow (attended via Zoom)
Sue Young
Susan Gill
Bob Stout
Todd Keating
Jodi Hedstrom
Kaycee Vitale
Absent: Katrina Niles
Stephanie Helmig

Chairman Chivers opened the meeting at 7:02 PM

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of the Minutes from December 3, 2020

- Chairman Chivers noted a discrepancy on page 5 with the addition of votes
- Selectman Young motions to approve the minutes as amended
- Susan Gill seconds the motion
- Jodi Hedstrom abstains
- Motion passes 6 approve-0 oppose-2 absent-1 abstention

Public Hearing on Town Budget

Chairman Chivers opened the meeting for public comment however but there were no public in attendance.

Chairman Chivers passed out a report showing the last 5 years with what was expended from the school and the town, what was expended for the warrant articles, and the totals for the year for the school and town. The current school year is not represented. The numbers could be off because the encumbrances for the school are not clearly listed anywhere.

- Bob Stout requested a list of encumbrances since 2015; the amount and what the money and the project funded.
- Jodi Hedstrom noted that the school budget has grown over 2 million dollars and declared that our town cannot sustain that type of increase. The town should look at different alternatives so we can offer the same level of education as surrounding towns.
- Jodi Hedstrom asked for clarification on why the default budget is so high.

Budget Committee Re-Vote on Specific Warrant Articles

Chairman Chivers explained that during the last vote on Waypoint and the Child Advocacy Center there was confusion on which charity did what. There was some clarity given by Police Chief McGillen and now there will be a re-vote on both warrant articles. Results are below.

- To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Thousand Two Hundred and Fifty Dollars (\$1,250) in continuation of its support of the Child Advocacy Center. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5 to 0)
 - 4 in favor (Chairman Chivers, Susan Gill, Jodi Hedstrom, Selectman Young)
 - 2 opposed (Todd Keating, Bob Stout)

- 1 abstains (Dick Snow)
- Recommended by a vote of 4-2-1
- To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Thousand Two Hundred Dollars (\$1,250) in continuation of its support of Waypoint (formally Child and Family Services). (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5 to 0)
 - 1 in favor (Selectman Young)
 - 5 opposed (Chairman Chivers, Susan Gill, Jodi Hedstrom, Todd Keating, Bob Stout)
 - 1 abstains (Dick Snow)
 - Not Recommended by a vote of 5-1-1

Further Discussion on the Budget

- Bob Stout asked Susan Gill and Todd Keating what their recommendation be on the School Budget.
 - Susan Gill said her position would be to vote for the warrant article for the school repairs but vote for the default budget.
 - Bob Stout said he believed that the school was expecting the Budget Committee to not approve the budget.
 - Jodi Hedstrom wants to know why the default budget is still so high with the school cutting out almost \$200,000 in expenses.
 - Chairman Chivers said that when the default budget is computed you use last years budget, not what was expended, add in the contractual obligations, and take out the one-time expenses.
 - Jodi Hedstrom said that even if we give them last years budget, they are over \$200,000 because of the subtraction of a teacher's salary and not paying for Manchester High School.
- Chairman Chivers noted that the final vote is at the supplemental meeting in January. She hopes to have the full budget committee there when the final vote is taken.
- Todd Keating said that he was waiting on additional information on the Town Administrator as to understand the need and if the benefit outweighs the cost. There was discussion around this topic, refer to audio for details.
 - Selectman Young and Todd Keating asked to see what grants were missed out on because we did not have a Town Administrator.
 - Bob Stout asked if at the deliberative session, if we ask for more clarity around the Town Administrator position, do we still have the option to change the budget?
 - Chairman Chivers answered she would like to have our final decisions made at the supplemental hearing on January 13th. There is a rule that says when we go to the deliberative session, if the budget committee has already voted, we can only change our vote if the warrant article changes at the deliberative session.
 - Bob Stout asked what can we change on January 13th?
 - Chairman Chivers said we can revote on anything on that day.
 - Chairman Chivers will pose multiple questions on the Town Administrator position to the Select board before the Supplemental Meeting.
 - Todd Keating would like more of the public to share their opinions at the town meetings. He would love more input on the town when voting on the budget. He believes that the biggest value we can bring to the voters this year is showing them how much voting yes on each item increases their taxes.
 - Selectman Young is in agreement and supported the town putting the cost increase right on the warrant article like other towns do.
 - Bob Stout asked why there was only 4 votes on the Selectman portion of each warrant article instead of 5.
 - Selectman Young said she was not at that meeting to vote. Discussion ensued, refer to audio for details.
 - Jodi Hedstrom asked what is the exact amount of the default budget?
 - Chairman Chivers answered \$2,940,915.00
 - Bob Stout reminded the committee that they have the ability to take out lines in the budget as it is the Budget Committees budget and we can do so with the school as well. He also asked if anyone would like

to make a recommendation to cut the budget even further with all the concerns that were discussed tonight.

- Jodi Hedstrom made a motion to reduce the budget \$2,970,795.00. Refer to audio for discussion.
 - Selectman Young seconds the motion
 - 3 in favor (Jodi Hedstrom, Todd Keating, Selectman Young)
 - 4 opposed (Dick Snow, Susan Gill, Lynn Chivers, Bob Stout)
 - Motion fails
- Susan Gill made a motion to revise the budget to \$3,009,415.00. Refer to audio for discussion.
 - Bob Stout seconds the motion
 - 3 in favor (Bob Stout, Lynn Chivers, Susan Gill)
 - 4 opposed (Dick Snow, Todd Keating, Jodi Hedstrom, Selectman Young)
 - Motion fails
- Bob Stout asked what is the plan for the supplemental meeting? We should have a plan around changing the budget.
 - Susan Gill said she would like an answer to Jodi Hedstrom's previous question which was, if the town can encumber \$150,000 from last year, that would lead us to believe that there is \$150,000 in the proposed budget that could be taken out.
 - Bob Stout said he does not see what getting the answer to that question solves. He would like to lay some groundwork around what we want to do next meeting.
 - Todd asked the committee if anyone else was against the Town Administrator?
 - Bob Stout would like to get a statement from another town about the benefits of a Town Administrator before making that determination.
- Jodi Hedstrom made a motion to reduce the budget to \$2,970,795.00.
 - Todd Keating seconds the motion
 - 4 in favor (Jodi Hedstrom, Todd Keating, Selectman Young, Susan Gill)
 - 3 opposed (Dick Snow, Lynn Chivers, Bob Stout)
 - Motion passes 4-3

Jodi Hedstrom makes a motion to suspend the meeting until January 13th

Susan Gill Seconds

All in favor

Meeting to Continue; 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Kaycee Vitale, Administrative Assistant