

Town of Candia Municipal Budget Committee

Approved Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: November 18th, 2021
Location: Smyth Public Library
Zoom Meeting ID# 82983992080
Attendees: Lynn Chivers
Susan Gill
Sue Young
Katrina Niles
Bob Stout
Todd Keating
Stephanie Helmig
Kaycee Vitale
Absent: Dick Snow
Jodi Hedstrom

Chairman Chivers opened the meeting at 7:00 PM

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of the Minutes from November 10, 2021

- On page 1, change; *Selectman Young Bob Stout* to *Selectman Young asked Bob Stout*
- On page 2, change; *Next year we will be better informed on how the income act to Next year we will be better informed on how much the cost will be and the income we will actually get.*
- Bob Stout motions to approve minutes as amended
- Susan Gill seconds the motion
- Dick Snow and Jodi Hedstrom absent from vote
- Katrina Niles abstains
- Motion passes 6 approve- 0 oppose- 2 absent- 1 abstains

Review of Warrant Article M

- **ARTICLE M**

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (**\$3,500**) to be placed in the existing **Smyth Memorial Building Fund**. Said funds to be expended under the direction of the Board of Selectmen.

- Chairman Chivers said that the Board of Selectman tabled the warrant article and have not made a final decision. We can still discuss it because presumably it will be brought forward.
 - Selectman Young said yes, this is the only one we tabled because we did not think it was fair to Carla (Penfield) to vote on it without hearing her input.
- Chairman Chivers said that the two issues are the \$3500 for the warrant article, and then in the regular budget we took out \$7460.
 - Carla Penfield said that we have a roof repair that we are doing right now and there is more roof work that has to be done next year. We are doing it in sections so this year we are spending \$5000 and we will be using some of the trust fund that we have because we are going to overspend our budget. There is another roof repair that needs to be done next year and the estimate is \$15,000. In the budget that was present to you, \$5000 was to be used for that roof repair, the rest of the roof repair would come out of the trust fund that has \$11,000. Then we hope to add the \$3500 from the Warrant article to bring it to \$14,500 to be used on the roof repairs.
 - Chairman Chivers asked for clarification on the trust fund, is that the one that gets the \$3500 every year?
 - Carla Penfield answered yes
 - Stephanie Helmig asked if there was a trust fund that they could use the interest from?
 - Carla Penfield said that was the Byrd fund and we used the interest from that this year to do a new walkway.

- Chairman Chivers said that the fund has been there for a few years and asked if there was any accumulated interest?
 - Carla Penfield answered that we used roughly all the money that was available in that fund.
- Carla Penfield said that it gets a little complicated because people give the Smyth Memorial Building things. We had a chimney that needed repair so we called Crown Chimney and they gave an estimate of \$2900. Then they offered to do the repair at no cost if they were able to put their sign on the lawn, so essentially, we were given a \$2900 gift. We also needed a new walkway that we planned on spending \$6000-\$10,000. We ended up getting the excavation done for free so the walkway only cost us \$2,700. We cannot plan on gifts but fortunately this year we did more work than planned because we received gifts.
 - Stephanie Helmig asked if Jesse Remington just do the well?
 - Carla Penfield answered Jesse Remington did the well, a new septic, put in hard surface floors downstairs, built a new bathroom, built a new kitchenette, and a new furnace with new ductwork and air conditioning. The value to the town is about \$150,000.
- Carla Penfield said that she has been talking about the roof for years. It is the original roof and it is about 100 years old. All of the gutters and downspouts are original to the roof and it is time to start doing some work on them. We are starting with the worst area this year and we have another serious issue we have to address next year.
 - Todd Keating asked if they were going to maintain slate?
 - Carla Penfield answered yes, it has lasted 100 years and the people that work on the roof tell us that if we keep up with everything it could last another 50-100 years. Think of it in terms of how many roofs would you have to put on a house in that time frame. If we do not keep up on it and have to do a full repair, it could cost up to \$200,000.
 - Selectman Young said that if she remembered the conversation correctly, we were looking at the budget and what was spent so far and your balance being \$5,490; you will use that for the roof this year?
 - Carla Penfield answered that we are starting a small project that will cost about \$5000 and a yard project that has not been completed yet.
 - Todd Keating said that he thinks part of the problem was that a lot of people thought that with the transfer to Jesse Remington the cost would go down or disappear.
 - Carla Penfield said that we still have to maintain the building. They have to maintain everything they did. If there is a problem with the well, they have to replace it etc.
 - Bob Stout said that he thought when we were discussing the Smyth Building, we were not opposed to any of the budget but we thought we should cover the maintenance costs in the budget and then ask for the rest of the money in the warrant article.
 - Carla Penfield said that the building maintenance improvement line is \$5,100 so when the committee took out \$7,400, you eliminated the fire alarm monitoring, the fire alarm inspection, and our fire alarm batteries.
 - Chairman Chivers said that the intent was not to eliminate those lines, our intent was that you would use the money you receive from your trust to pay for some of those items. We are not saying you do not need any of those things, just that there was income from a trust that you could use for those items.
 - Carla Penfield said that she has used up the available funds from the trust this year.
 - Bob Stout said the he agrees with everything Carla Penfield is saying. He always thought that it should be more transparent by having all the funds in one place. He said that he thinks when the taxpayers see the warrant article, they think that is all the funds we are giving to the Smyth Building. They do not always look at the budget as well.

- Carla Penfield said she can write the Warrant Article to be more transparent.
 - Selectman Young said that the other consideration is that if the taxpayers vote the warrant article down, the building has no money at all. If we put money in the budget and it is approved, at least they will have some money to operate.
 - Bob Stout said on one case you feel bad because 77% of the money we raise goes to the school and we spent hours on the town budget nit picking.
 - Carla Penfield said this is a small amount of money we are asking for such an asset to the town and the community. I want to bring to the board that we got you \$150,000 worth of improvements for a 10-year lease. We got \$2,700 free to do a chimney and \$6,000 worth of excavation for free and I am asking for only an \$11,460 budget. Carla Penfield invited the Budget Committee to view the building and use it. Refer to audio for more details on the use of the building.
 - Carla Penfield said that she would really like the Budget Committee to give back the \$7,400 to the budget and recommend the warrant article understanding that we will use a considerable amount of that savings account next year.
 - Chairman Chivers said that we now have an understanding and we won't vote on the warrant article until we get it from the selectman, but now we have an understanding of the needs of the Smyth Building. She appreciates the explanation from Carla as the Budget Committee was going on the false assumption that there was \$11,000 to spend in a trust fund.

Budget Committee to Formulate Questions for Joint Meeting with School Board

- Bob Stout said he wanted to make an overview comment of the School Budget. He said that he started to go through sections and he thought that it was pointless to go section by section with this budget. We are looking at a proposed budget of \$9,956,513 with a default budget of \$9,797,849. The difference is only \$180,000. Unless we are going to plan on recommending a budget that is below the default budget, what are we doing for the towns people here tonight? We are going to nit pick this for not a lot of money, or we go to the default budget and offer no alternatives.
 - Questions were asked if we are allowed to go below the default budget and Chairman Chivers said that we have the authority to go as low as we want, but we do not want to be irresponsible.
- Stephanie Helmig said that the health insurance numbers came in and the increase will only be about \$20,000.
 - Bob Stout said that the salaries are up about \$130,000, is that because of buyouts? Do you have retirements?
 - Stephanie Helmig said that it is the contractual agreement.
 - Bob Stout said that we are on the Budget Committee and we have no control, participation, or negotiation over the contracts. We are paying for their pensions which are going way up, then we are getting buyouts that are higher than todays standards. Then the pay increases and we are told as the Budget Committee that there is nothing we can do because it is all contractual.
 - Chairman Chivers asked how much are the retirement buyouts this year?
 - Stephanie Helmig said that we have two retiring and she is unsure of the amount of the buyouts but she knows that they went up during the negotiated contract this year.
 - Chairman Chivers asked if teachers pay into their own retirement and what is the percentage?
 - Chairman Chivers asked if they pay social security and retirement?
 - Stephanie Helmig said yes.
- Chairman Chivers said that the school always exceeds the cost of living and they blame it on special ed. So, she took the budget and took out special ed and it still far exceeds the cost of living raises.
 - Bob Stout said if you look at the actual expenses for 2021, \$8,461,170 and you look at the proposed operating budget, that's a 14% increase over two years.
 - Chairman Chivers said she took out the special ed and it is still a 10% increase. Why do the increases always exceed the consumer price index?

- Bob Stout says that we know we have all this stuff that we have to do on the town side. We have to do something with the Police Station, we will have to do something with the Fire Department, and Ambulance service. Having this school budget go up at this percentage rate year after year is unsustainable.
 - Todd Keating agreed with Bob Stout. He said that he looked at surrounding towns that he would consider similar to us. If you look at Deerfield their percent of the overall budget is similar. The difference is they have a smaller cost per student because of their enrollment. Whenever you run a smaller business, it is hard. Scale makes things easier and Candia is on the small side of scale. The school is a considerable expense to the town but there is little we can do about it. Refer to audio about enrollment numbers and cost per student.
 - Selectman Young noted that the Moore School is a little top heavy with the number of students enrolled.
 - Todd Keating said that cannot be the make or break in a 10-million-dollar budget. It is only a one-time cost savings about \$80,000.
 - Selectman Young said that it is more than that and the Budget Committee reviewed the budget to find that the Assistant Principal salary is \$87,000 and the principal salary is \$106,000.
 - Bob Stout said not to forget retirement and insurance.
 - Bob Stout said that Todd is current, we need to look at the bigger picture. What is the long-term solution? Refer to audio around suggested solutions.
- Bob Stout said he would like to ask the board if they are still willing to put a group together to talk about long term plan?
- Todd Keating said he thinks we should recommend a budget that is slightly over the default budget and then the town can vote the default or what we come up with. He would not go below the default. The one thing that stands out is that the 20-21 budget was 8.46 million and this 21-22 budget is 9.9 million.
 - Bob Stout said that the proposed budget is up over \$600,000. That is 20% of what we spend on the whole town budget. Refer to audio for more information on ideas for the future of the school.
- Bob Stout made a motion to reduce the School Proposed 22-23 Operating Budget by 1%.
 - Katrina Niles seconds the motion
 - Refer to audio for discussion on transportation.
 - 7 in Favor (Chairman Chivers, Susan Gill, Bob Stout, Katrina Niles, Todd Keating, Stephanie Helmig, Selectman Young)
 - 0 opposed
 - 2 absent (Dicks Snow and Jodi Hedstrom)
- Motion passes 7 in favor-0 opposed-2 absent
- Chairman Chivers said she has a list of questions for the SAU and for the School Board. Some of her questions were answered throughout this meeting. One questions she has is the \$71,000 for maintenance included in the warrant article?
 - Stephanie Helmig said that it is not.
 - Chairman Chivers also would like to know how much the warrants articles will be?
 - Chairman Chivers would like to know why the budget for the SAU went up so much?
 - Chairman Chivers would like to know what is the cost of tuition for Pinkerton this year?
- Refer to audio for further discussion on recommended future plans for the school and students because of declining enrollment.
- Chairman Chivers said she would send the list of questions to everyone on the Budget Committee and then if there are no further questions, she will send them to Amy Ransom for review.

Review and Make Recommendations on Non-Petitioned Warrant Articles

- Chairman Chivers said that the Selectman have voted on the Warrant Articles and they are all recommended 5-0 except Article L (mosquitos) which was recommended 3-2.
- Selectman Young noted for the record that she has to vote the same as the Select Board on all of the Warrant Articles.

ARTICLE A: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars **(\$150,000)** for **Excess Winter Road Maintenance**, these funds will not be used unless the operating winter maintenance funds are exhausted. This will be non-transferable appropriation. Said funds to be expended under the direction of the Board of Selectmen.

- Todd Keating asked over the last few years what have we needed and what have we used?
 - Selectman Young said last year we approved \$150,000 and \$0 has been sent.
- Todd Keating said that he thinks that for a vote the full budget committee should be present.
 - Chairman Chivers said we will vote tonight and then revote after the public hearing so the full committee can have their say.
- 5 in Favor (Chairman Chivers, Susan Gill, Bob Stout, Katrina Niles, Todd Keating, Stephanie Helmig, Selectman Young)
- 0 opposed
- 2 absent (Dicks Snow and Jodi Hedstrom)
- Motion to recommend by 7-0

ARTICLE B: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars **(\$250,000)** for the Northern portion of **Tower Hill Road**. Said funds to expended under the direction of the Board of Selectmen.

- Todd Keating asked how many people live on Tower Hill? He likes the fact that Dennis would explain the cost benefit of spending so much on fixing a road and how much it would save over time. Todd asked Jeff that question and he has not received an answer yet.
 - Selectman Young said he probably does not have the experience but he could look it up for you.
- 5 in Favor (Chairman Chivers, Susan Gill, Katrina Niles, Stephanie Helmig, Selectman Young)
- 2 opposed (Bob Stout, Todd Keating)
- 2 absent (Dicks Snow and Jodi Hedstrom)
- Motion to recommend by 5-2

ARTICLE C: To see if the town will raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars **(\$100,000)** for the wear course application to **Adams Road and Healey Road**. Said funds to be expended under the direction of the Board of Selectmen

- The vote was tabled until the Budget Committee receives more information. Refer to audio for more information.

ARTICLE D: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars **(\$50,000)** to be deposited in the **Fire Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund**, established under RSA 35:1 at the March 1991 Town Meeting, for the future purchase of the fire apparatus and equipment with the Selectmen appointed as agents.

- Selectman Young asked if an Ambulance is needed can they use this fund to pay for it?
 - Refer to audio for discussion.
- 7 in Favor (Chairman Chivers, Susan Gill, Bob Stout, Katrina Niles, Todd Keating, Stephanie Helmig, Selectman Young)
- 0 opposed
- 2 absent (Dicks Snow and Jodi Hedstrom)
- Motion to recommend by 7-0

ARTICLE E: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars **(\$50,000)** to be deposited in the **Fire Station Infrastructure and Grounds Capital Reserve Fund** under the provisions of RSA 35:1 at the March 2017 Town Meeting, for the purpose of providing for major capital investments in the fire station building infrastructure and grounds to keep the building and property sound, functional and safe well into the future with the Selectmen appointed as agents.

- 7 in Favor (Chairman Chivers, Susan Gill, Bob Stout, Katrina Niles, Todd Keating, Stephanie Helmig, Selectman Young)
- 0 opposed
- 2 absent (Dicks Snow and Jodi Hedstrom)
- Motion to recommend by 7-0

ARTICLE F: To see if the Town will vote to establish a **revolving fund** pursuant to RSA 31:95-h for the purpose of the **Candia Fire Department** providing ambulance services. All of the revenue received from fees, charges and other income derived from the Candia Fire Department providing ambulance services will be placed in the fund. The money in the fund shall be allowed to accumulate from year-to-year and the money will not be considered part of the Town's general surplus. The Town Treasurer shall have custody of all of the money in the fund. Upon request of the Fire Chief and by order of the governing body, The Town Treasurer shall pay out

money from the fund for expenses associated with purchasing, operating and equipping ambulances and with providing ambulance services. No further approval by the legislative body is required to pay money from the fund.

- There is no vote on this Warrant Article as there is no monetary value attached.

ARTICLE G: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars **(\$20,000)** to be placed in the existing **Revaluation Capital Reserve** fund for the Future Revaluation of the municipality. Said funds to be expended under the direction of the Board of Selectmen.

- 7 in Favor (Chairman Chivers, Susan Gill, Bob Stout, Katrina Niles, Todd Keating, Stephanie Helmig, Selectman Young)
- 0 opposed
- 2 absent (Dicks Snow and Jodi Hedstrom)
- Motion to recommend by 7-0

ARTICLE H: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Thousand Dollars **(\$4,000)** for the operation and maintenance of the **Fitts Museum**. Said funds to be expended under the direction of the Trustees of the Fitts Museum. (By request of the Trustees of the Fitts Museum).

- 7 in Favor (Chairman Chivers, Susan Gill, Bob Stout, Katrina Niles, Todd Keating, Stephanie Helmig, Selectman Young)
- 0 opposed
- 2 absent (Dicks Snow and Jodi Hedstrom)
- Motion to recommend by 7-0

ARTICLE I: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars **(\$2,500)** to be placed in the existing **Town Office Building Maintenance Fund**. Said funds to be expended under the direction of the Board of Selectmen.

- 7 in Favor (Chairman Chivers, Susan Gill, Bob Stout, Katrina Niles, Todd Keating, Stephanie Helmig, Selectman Young)
- 0 opposed
- 2 absent (Dicks Snow and Jodi Hedstrom)
- Motion to recommend by 7-0

ARTICLE J: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seven Thousand Five Hundred Dollars **(\$7,500)** for the purpose of review and update of the current **Hazard Mitigation Plan Update** as required by FEMA. These funds are expected to be reimbursed through federal grant funding.

- 7 in Favor (Chairman Chivers, Susan Gill, Bob Stout, Katrina Niles, Todd Keating, Stephanie Helmig, Selectman Young)
- 0 opposed
- 2 absent (Dicks Snow and Jodi Hedstrom)
- Motion to recommend by 7-0

ARTICLE K: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Thousand Dollars **(\$4,000.00)** for the purpose of review and update of the current **Emergency Operations Plan Update** as required by FEMA. These funds are expected to be reimbursed through federal grant funding.

- 7 in Favor (Chairman Chivers, Susan Gill, Bob Stout, Katrina Niles, Todd Keating, Stephanie Helmig, Selectman Young)
- 0 opposed
- 2 absent (Dicks Snow and Jodi Hedstrom)
- Motion to recommend by 7-0

ARTICLE L: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-Eight Thousand Eight Hundred Dollars **(\$28,800)** for the implementation of a **Mosquito Control Program** designed to reduce the risk of exposure to mosquito-borne diseases such as Zika, EEE, West Nile Virus and the Jamestown Canyon Virus.

- 4 in Favor (Susan Gill, Katrina Niles, Stephanie Helmig, Selectman Young)
- 3 opposed (Chairman Chivers, Todd Keating, Bob Stout)
- 2 absent (Dicks Snow and Jodi Hedstrom)
- Motion to recommend by 4-3

ARTICLE M: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (**\$3,500**) to be placed in the existing **Smyth Memorial Building Fund**. Said funds to be expended under the direction of the Board of Selectmen.

- 7 in Favor (Chairman Chivers, Susan Gill, Bob Stout, Katrina Niles, Todd Keating, Stephanie Helmig, Selectman Young)
- 0 opposed
- 2 absent (Dicks Snow and Jodi Hedstrom)
- Motion to recommend by 7-0

Charity Warrant Articles

- Chairman Chivers said that most of the charities are asking for the same amount as last year with the exception of Meals on Wheels which went up.
- The Budget Committee decided to vote on all the Charity Warrant Articles as one group. The vote is as followed:
 - 1 in Favor (Selectman Young)
 - 6 opposed (Chairman Chivers, Susan Gill, Bob Stout, Katrina Niles, Todd Keating, Stephanie Helmig)
 - 2 absent (Dicks Snow and Jodi Hedstrom)
 - Not recommended by 1-6
 - Todd Keating and Bob Stout said for the record the voted against the charities because if you want to donate as a taxpayer that is fine, it should not be the towns' responsibility.
- Chairman Chivers also presented a Warrant Article from Judi Lindsay. It is presented as an FYI as the budget committee will not vote on it because there is no monetary value.
 - To see if the Town will vote to remove the existing cap to the annual contribution to the Conservation Fund established by Article 31; and on the ballot for March; the 25% limit of each land use change tax going to the conservation commission to remain unchanged.
 - Selectman Young said they just want to remove the cap. If the 25% is over the cap, they want to receive all of the funds.
 - Refer to audio for more discussion.

Other Business

- The next meeting is on Thursday December 2nd. This is a joint meeting with the SAU and School Board and we will vote on the preliminary recommendation for the school. This meeting will be held in the Media Room at the Henry Moore School.
- The Public Hearing on the Town Budget is Wednesday December 8th
- The Public Hearing on the School Budget is Thursday December 9th

With there being no further business,
Bob Stout moves to adjourn the meeting
Todd Keating seconds the motion
All in favor
Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm

Submitted by: Kaycee Vitale, Administrative Assistant