

~~UNAPPROVED~~ APPROVED
PROPOSED 2009 SELECTMEN'S PUBLIC BUDGET MEETING
Saturday, September 13, 2008

Attendance: Chairman Fred Kelley, Vice-Chair Rick Lazott, Selectman Tom Giffen, Selectman Joe Duarte, Selectman Carleton Robie, Finance Director Beth St. Pierre, and Secretary Andria Hansen.

9:00 a.m. Chairman Kelley opened the Public Meeting and immediately followed with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Budget Committee: Budget Committee Chair Carla Penfield was present. Chairman Kelley noted they should add a line item to their budget for paper use out of the Selectmen's Office. After some discussion it was decided to add paper to the supplies line and increase the amount from \$1.00 to \$50.00. There was some further discussion on paper.

The Board briefly discussed the default budget.

Cemetery: Mr. Anderson questioned why there was a corner makers line item, it doesn't cost the Town any money. Finance Director St. Pierre noted it was a wash item. It was part of the Budget Committee's request to flag all of the wash items. She noted if Mr. Anderson knows what he will sell this year, he should try to sell it (this year) so the line item is zero. Mr. Anderson replied he already sold more than he budgeted for. Selectman Giffen stated they can always encumber it and this should accomplish the task. This line item has zero impact on the taxes. Selectman Giffen stated they should bump up the corner markers line from \$1,400 to \$2,000. It was the consensus of the Board to increase the corner marker line item. Mr. Anderson requested an increase in the wage line from \$14,000 to \$15,400. It was the consensus of the Board to increase Cemeteries wage line in the amount of \$1,400.

Health/ Welfare: Health Director Mary Hall noted based on the last three years the direct assistance line has gone up an average of 25% a year due to the economy. She added the direct assistance line could hit \$65,000 and possibly be higher. She suggested increasing her direct assistance line to \$70,000 for 2009. Health Director Hall stated she was trying to revamp everything by putting in new guidelines that are within the law. She is trying to run credit reports for all the applicants, one of the reasons for this is to check on potential fraud; another reason would be to dig deeper and see what people have and what they have access to. She has to do some further investigating to see if it's legal. Health Director Hall noted she would be calling other Towns to see what they are doing. She stated she reduced her training line by \$50.00. She reduced the copier maintenance line to \$100.00 and noted she and Treasurer Philbrick weren't using the copier up stairs. She suggested purchasing a small copier from Staples for under \$100.00. Selectman Giffen suggested purchasing a 3 in 1 (printer/scanner/copier). Selectman Giffen asked what she was currently using. Health Director Hall replied she was using the one upstairs and does a lot of work at home. Selectman Giffen stated if we got rid of the copier maintenance and toner and spent the \$100.00 to get a 3 in 1 this would enable Health Director Hall to do a lot of things. Health Director Hall noted she has

asked for an email address for 3 or 4 years and hasn't been able to get one from the Town. All of her email is received through her personal email and everything she prints is printed on her home printer. Selectman Giffen thought it would not be a lot of money to set her up with a Town email address. He further stated he would like to get Health Director Hall an email address and a printer/ scanner/ copier for less than \$150.00 that she can use with her lap top. This will eliminate a need for a copier and won't have much of impact on the budget. After some discussion it was decided to eliminate the service agreement and increase the miscellaneous/ office supplies line from \$300.00 to \$450.00. Selectman Lazott noted there was a decrease in the insect born disease control line from \$600.00 to \$1.00. Health Director Hall noted she had an ongoing issue that she's paying \$400.00 for her telephone line and doesn't know how to resolve it. She stated she's inquired in the past to have it taken out and was told it was not feasible. She further stated she doesn't use the phone that much and using it a couple times a month isn't worth \$400.00. Health Director Hall stated she doesn't have regular office hours so it doesn't make sense to leave a message, because no one will get the messages anyway. She questioned if she really needed a phone in her office. Selectman Giffen asked how she handles calls now. Health Director Hall stated she gets a page and then returns the calls on her own cell phone. Selectman Giffen asked if it impacts her phone bill. Health Director Hall replied no, but it did when she was spending a lot of time up in Lebanon. She noted with her home phone she can call anywhere in the United States. Selectman Lazott stated in the future maybe they should consider a town cell phone and eliminate the pager and roll everything into one. Selectman Giffen mentioned getting rid of the phone line and have Health Director Hall work off the cell phone. Selectman Lazott stated Health Director Hall should keep track of her minutes and if she goes over get reimbursed from the Town. It was the consensus of the Board to eliminate Health Directors Hall's telephone line. Supervisor of the Checklist Stamatelos asked if Health Director Hall could have just an extension in her office to call out, since she's often there at night by herself. Selectman Lazott stated that should be easy enough to do. Chairman Kelley noted it would be a service call and probably cost around \$100.00. Selectman Giffen stated it would be a safety precaution to have a phone up there night. Health Director Hall noted she reduced her mileage line. Selectman Giffen stated one of the Budget Committee members worked for Social Security and mentioned a SSI Disability Reimbursement Agreement that's available to the Towns. If someone goes on disability and the Town has provided assistance, the Town can get reimbursed for the assistance they have provided. The Town can get reimbursed if there is an agreement in place. Health Director Hall believed only one of her clients has applied for disability, but she would look into the reimbursement agreement. She was aware of the opportunity and hasn't had the chance to use it. Selectman Giffen stated the Budget Committee would like a detailed break down of how many people receive a specific type of assistance each year (i.e. rent, fuel, etc.); they would like to go back 3 or 4 years. Health Director Hall noted the food pantry is done by donations and she would like to break it down for the Budget Committee so they understand it. She further added food vouchers are taken out of food pantry donation money and it's no cost to the tax payer. Selectman Giffen thought the voucher expense was incorporated in direct assistance. Health Director Hall replied the voucher expense comes directly out of the donations that are made to the food pantry. The bills are paid out of a food pantry account. Selectman Giffen stated it's not the Towns money in a sense, there is no budget impact. The normal way of doing this would be budgeting the expenditure and receive the funds. Chairman Kelley noted they should just leave it the way it is. Health Director Hall noted if there was no food panty money left, she would have to take it out of direct assistance.

Building Inspector: Selectman Lazott stated he would be speaking for Building Inspector Hallock. Selectman Lazott reviewed the Building Departments budget. He noted the books and clothing line item was lowered from \$150 to \$50. He lowered his dues/ fees/ and certifications line by \$50, telephone line by \$100, and postage line by \$250. Selectman Lazott commended Building Inspector Hallock on trying to conserve. Selectman Giffen note the Budget Committee would like to see a comparison of the amount of time the Building Inspector spends in the office versus in the field on a monthly basis. They are aware the revenue from the building permits is down. He would like to justify (to the Budget Committee) BI Hallock's wages by showing them how many inspections are done and how many hours per week are spent doing inspections. He noted some of the Budget Committee members are questioning why the Town needs a full time Building Inspector when things have slowed down. Selectman Giffen stated they can't keep a qualified Building Inspector part time and the Town should be prepared for growth. Selectman Lazott stated they won't be able to find someone with BI Hallock's expertise and qualifications to do the job part time. He noted they have some big projects coming up. Selectman Lazott stated the Budget Committee can use BI Hallock's monthly reports for any information they need. It explains how many inspections are done per month. Selectman Lazott stated he is against having the Building Inspector account for his time. Selectman Duarte noted BI Hallock is extremely well qualified and you get what you pay for.

COLA Discussion: Selectman Lazott stated a lot of the departments factored in a 4% COLA increase. Selectman Robie stated they should try to not have any lay offs and hold the line, because having a job without a raise is better than no job at all. Selectman Duarte stated he had no problem rewarding employees with a little something rather than nothing at all. It tells them they are doing a good job and it's important to let the employees know we care and recognize it. Chairman Kelley stated there is a limit on what the tax payers can handle. We have a good crew of people, who bend over backwards for everyone who comes through the door. He thought they should start at 4%. Selectman Giffen mentioned there hasn't been a merit increase in Town for over 2 years. There has been minimal COLA, with the exception of the Police Department who has matrix increases. He went on to explain its tough economic times and there will be cuts but he would prefer not cut the help. We have a good effective crew and retention is good, recruiting and training is an expense. Selectman Giffen stated he's inclined to go for a modest realistic COLA. He thought it would be in the 3 - 4% range. He felt the Town could not afford merit increases at the moment. He didn't think lay offs were possible. Selectman Robie felt that tax bills come people won't be able to pay them. He felt he couldn't support the increase when the general public isn't getting an increase. Selectman Lazott clarified with Chief McGillen that some of the officers have reached the end of their step matrix. Chief McGillen questioned what the Town will do and will the officers stay where they are or just get COLA. He thought having a study done was a good idea. Selectman Giffen stated one of the Town's goals was to stay competitive. Selectman Robie stated other Towns have a lot of income we don't have. Selectman Duarte stated they have to look out for the best interest of the Town, but they need to keep good employees. He felt COLA won't crimp the citizens, but it will reward the employees. Selectman Giffen thought a COLA in the range of 3 - 4% would be reasonable and fair. We need to demonstrate that we care about the employees, but felt there isn't money for a merit this year. It was the consensus of the Board to have a 4% COLA for next year.

Heritage Commission: Finance Director St. Pierre noted the Heritage Commission wanted to reallocate some money for a septic system design for the old library. Town Clerk Dupere stated the Heritage Commission has discussed this. They felt the best way to preserve the building would be starting with the septic system design. The building can't be used until this is done. Selectman Duarte asked if there were grants available. Town Clerk Dupere replied they were looking into grants; there may be some L-Chip grants available. Chairman Kelley noted it costs \$4,500 a year to heat the old library and it can't be used. Selectman Lazott stated he didn't have a problem with the Heritage Commission's request. Chairman Kelley stated he would like to see the building utilized. It was the consensus of the Board to grant the Heritage Commissions request to reallocate the money from the 2008 budget.

Conservation Commission: CC Chair Fowler explained last year they asked for \$2,900 and this year they are asking for \$2,400. He explained there was an increase in the secretarial wage line from \$700 to \$825. They have taken out some line items. The Board approved the budget as presented.

Zoning Board: ZBA Chairman Chivers was asking for \$1,400 for the 2009 budget down from last years requested \$2,000. The Board approved the budget as presented.

Election & Registration: Supervisor of the Checklist Stamatelos explained they purchased a lap top in 2000. In 2006 the Supervisors of the Checklist were required to have their own lap top. The office used to be in charge of updating the software because it was BMSI. They are no longer using BMSI; they are on the State internet program. They have to access the internet to run the program, the Supervisors of the Checklist no longer spends any office time updating. Supervisor of the Checklist Stamatelos stated their lap top recently died. She received a quote from Devine and noted it includes everything they would need. Selectman Giffen stated they should get quotes from 3 vendors and it would be nice if they were broken down into more detail. Selectman Giffen reviewed Supervisor of the Checklist Stamatelos quote from Devine. After some review it was the consensus of the Board to obtain 3 quotes for a lap top and keep the cost under \$1,200.

Planning Board: Chair Mary Girard questioned whether \$100 was needed in the microfilming line. She wasn't aware of anything being microfilmed. Selectman Lazott felt that microfilming was outdated and the minutes and other documents could be archived on CD's. Town Clerk Dupere stated she was told by the state archivist that microfilming was the best method of archiving; CD's have a shorter shelf life and not a permanent method of storage for records. Selectman Lazott asked what records we are permanently storing. Town Clerk Dupere replied records that are permanently part of the Town. Chair Girard stated they didn't use all of the money for the law lectures, but they may. The Board approved the budget as presented.

Regional Planning Commission: Chair Girard noted it was important to retain the Regional Planning Commission. She added they do go get some assistance from them. The Board approved this budgeted item as presented.

Tax Collector: Tax Collector Sanders noted an increase in the postage line from \$2,000 to \$2,500, because postage will be going up next year. In addition, the increase reflects a 10%

increase in delinquencies which means sending out more certified letters. Selectman Giffen asked about the identifying mortgages line. He mentioned they decided recently they would have Tax Collector Sanders do the searches for a flat fee of \$350. Tax Collector Sanders noted she is up for re-election in the spring and is planning to run. She stated she has to be realistic and this is why she budgeted \$950. Tax Collector Sanders reviewed the attached reports. She then discussed removing fixed fees and making the Tax Collector a salaried position. She noted it would have to be by the vote of the Town by warrant article. Selectman Giffen stated they couldn't budget for that at this point because they don't know if the article would pass. He asked what a sufficient amount would be (for the fees line). Tax Collector Sanders stated an increase of \$600. Selectman Giffen noted if she would like to change the way the position is paid by warrant article than that's up to her. Tax Collector Sanders replied if the Board thought it was appropriate she was thinking \$10,000 for a salary was appropriate. The Tax Collectors Association would still dictate the fees. The Town would still collect the fees and they would go into the general fund. Supervisor of the Checklist Stamatelos asked if she would have posted hours if she went to salary. Selectman Lazott believed the Tax Collector could still set her own hours because she is elected. Supervisor of the Checklist Stamatelos asked if she would get COLA or merit if her position becomes salaried. In addition, she wouldn't have to increase her hours. Selectman Lazott stated she would receive COLA/ merit on an annual basis. There was some discussion about the Deputy Tax Collector. Selectman Lazott stated he would like to see the Deputy Tax Collector wage line cut back to \$3,000 (instead of \$3,750). Tax Collector Sanders noted she has spent a lot of time training and the deputy is there only one day a week. Selectman Giffen asked if Tax Collector Sanders had a range of budgeted hours for the deputy (for 2009) that can justify the additional \$750. Tax Collector Sanders noted that the deputy has been working out well and seems to enjoy the job. She would like to give her an increase on her anniversary date. Selectman Lazott stated that would be a meritorious increase when all of the other employees would just be getting COLA and that wouldn't be appropriate. Selectman Giffen stated she may get the 4% COLA, if it is to happen. There was some discussion on how Tax Collector Sanders came to Deputy Tax Collector line item number. Finance Director St. Pierre questioned whether the Deputy Tax Collector gets a COLA increase when the Deputy Town Clerk hasn't in the past. She further stated the election workers would be eligible as well. Finance Director St. Pierre thought it was just for the Town employees. There was some discussion on the Deputy Tax Collectors hours. Selectman Giffen asked Tax Collector Sanders if she could live with a 10% decrease in the deputy's hours. Tax Collector Sanders replied she would have to. After some discussion it was the census of the Board to decrease the Deputy Tax Collectors line from \$3,750 to \$3,000.

Town Clerk: Town Clerk Dupere explained the wash items. She explained there was an increase in the mileage line due to the cost of fuel and she will start charging for mileage. She increased the deputy's wage, because she didn't get an increase last year. She proposed a \$.25 increase. There was an increase in the dog license supply line, due to the cost of aluminum. Town Clerk Dupere increased the election material and the motor vehicle supplies line. There was some discussion about the overnight seminars. The Board approved the budget as presented.

Election: Town Clerk Dupere explained the booths are in pretty good shape this year. It was decided to decrease the program voting machine and booth repair line from \$2,200 to \$1,800.

Town Clerk Dupere felt they should budget \$500. Selectman Giffen noted they should budget for the Supervisors of the Checklists laptop for 2008, since they will need for the November Presidential elections. This brought the computer upgrade line down to zero dollars.

Highway Department: Road Agent Lewis noted that all the increases were basic cost increases of materials, other than the hourly rate change for the hired plow trucks. They haven't set a rate yet of how much to pay them, but this summer it was \$16.00 per hour. Selectman Giffen asked if the winter warrant article would be increased. Road Agent Lewis replied at least \$25,000. There was some more discussion on increases in materials. Road Agent Lewis noted there is an unexpected expenditure on Horizon Lane. He has to replace the culvert and it will have to come out of his budget. Selectman Giffen noted they will have to try to put off any other expenditures until next year. Road Agent Lewis stated if he could doctor it up he would, but it needs to be fixed right. Selectman Duarte asked where the money was spent on specific line items. Road Agent Lewis replied a lot of the money wasn't spent on there specific uses due to all of the snow plowing. The Board was okay with the budget that was presented.

Solid Waste: Finance Director St. Pierre stated she added \$780 for PSNH and Comcasts anticipated fees. Facility Operator Chuck Witcher stated he didn't increase the wage line at all. He factored in a 4% COLA increase. There was discussion about the hauling of recyclables. Facility Operator Witcher stated NRRA did a study and they are looking at 30 tons a year. He noted it's not a huge amount. There was some discussion on the clothing line. It was decided to decrease the clothing line from \$1,500 to \$1,000. Chairman Kelley asked what the \$4,000 would be used for in the special projects line. Facility Operator Witcher explained they were looking to buy a grapple attachment to load cardboard and paper. He thought it could be covered under a grant and the SWC was looking into it. The other thing it would be used for is an oil containment system. There was some discussion on the price of steel. Facility Operator Witcher noted they were looking into purchasing a bale scale. There was discussion on baling paper. The Board was okay with the budget that was presented.

Fire Department: Fire Chief Cartier explained the attached historical expenditures report and the 2009 proposed budget explanatory data. He noted in 2007 the association donated \$7,000 worth of gear to the department. Fire Chief Cartier stated there is an increase in the truck and building fuel lines. There was some discussion on the water supply. Fire Chief Cartier noted he would like to have the pond behind the fire station cleaned up, because it's a critical pond. It covers the fire station, school, and Town Offices. He stated he had spoke with Ron Severino and he estimated \$10,000 to dredge out the pond. Fire Chief Cartier stated he would try to get a Moose Grant for that project. Selectman Giffen mentioned this might be a conservation project for the conservation fund. Selectman Giffen stated if they present it to the Conservation Commission, they might open to it. There was some discussion about the 11-month intern grant. There was some discussion about the under ground storage tank. The cost to replace the tank will be \$4,000 to \$5,000. Selectman Giffen suggested getting an extension and putting it in as a warrant article. Fire Chief Cartier stated he filed for an extension. The Board was okay with the budget presented. **Ambulance:** Fire Chief Cartier suggested going with a one-year extension on the contract. It will give them time to see what's in the best interest of the Town. There was some discussion on ambulance service.

Forestry: The Budget remained the same and the Board was in favor as presented.

Police Department: Chief McGillen noted the special detail wages is not a wash item. There was some discussion about installing computers in the cruisers. Chief McGillen thought it would cost about \$10,000 to hook them up. Selectman Lazott suggested putting it in as a warrant article. There was an increase of \$4,000 to \$5,000 in the computer expenses line. Selectman Giffen went over a list of questions the Budget Committee had for Chief McGillen. There was some discussion on the cruisers and tires. After some discussion it was decided to increase the tire line by \$500. Chief McGillen mentioned the officers need new vests, which are approximately \$700 each. He thought he could apply for a grant for 50% reimbursement. Chief McGillen stated he would like to hire 2 part time officers in 2009 and they will need to have a psychological test, which will be an expense. **Animal Control:** Chief McGillen stated the cost of the rabies shot would go up from \$150 to \$300. He factored in a \$.50 wage increase for Animal Control Officer Rodier. There was some discussion about the Animal Control van. The Board was okay with the budget that was presented.

Emergency Management: Same as last year. The Board was in favor of the budget.

Trustees of the Trust Funds: The Board was in favor of the new budget line.

Treasurer: The Board approved the budget as presented.

Exit 3 – Property Marketing Services: It was the consensus of the Board to increase the line item from \$500 to \$1,000.

Legal Expenses: After some discussion it was the consensus of the Board to leave this line item at \$24,000.

Insurance: It was the consensus of the Board to table this until they get numbers from Primex.

Street Lighting: Chairman Kelley explained he would like to have some of the street lights shut off in Town, since it's costly to keep them on. He noted it will cost a total of \$11,000 to turn off all of the street lights. Selectman Giffen suggested that Chairman Kelley come up with a recommendation and bring it back to the Board. Selectman Robie stated he will help Chairman Kelley with this.

Summer Recreation/ Ski Program/ Moore Park: The Board reviewed the note in regards to the fact that former Selectman Brennan was contacted on the Summer Recreation Program and was awaiting a response from him. Selectman Giffen felt they should not wait to hear from former Selectman Brennan because it may take too long. Selectman Giffen noted in the past it was agreed the Board wanted to have a summer recreation program, but did not want to fund it. The Board unanimously agreed to zero out all lines and not fund the Summer Recreation Program. The Board approved the budgeted combined amount of \$9,740 for Moore Park and the Pond Park as presented by Selectman Robie.

Property Appraisal: Selectman Giffen noted this has nothing to do with the revalue; it has to do with the pick ups. It was the consensus of the Board to level fund this line.

Town Building Expenses: There was some discussion about the increase on the grounds keeping and building maintenance line. Chairman Kelley the carpeting cleaning line should to stay at \$1,000.00, because there are still some carpets that need to be cleaned. There was discussion about ivy growing on the old library building. Selectman Lazott noted that the ivy will rot the building and should be removed. There was some discussion about heating the building. Selectman Giffen mentioned the building should be used for civic uses (i.e. American Legion, Jessie Remington), so it will some how benefit the Town. He questioned why we would use it for a Town Government function (Town Clerk and Tax Collector offices) when it's a bad use of money. Selectman Robie disagreed and thought they should put the building to good use and move the Town Clerk and Tax Collector offices to the building. The Board was okay with the budgeted that was presented.

Town Officer's Expenses: Chairman Kelley stated they did the same as other departments for wages which was 4%. Chairman Kelley also noted they increased the auditing services line. Finance Director St. Pierre stated there was a considerable increase in the auditing services. She stated they were caught off guard this year with new auditing standards. There was some discussion on staff wages. Selectman Giffen noted that the Town should match the IRS mileage rate. They increased the mileage line from \$100 to \$300.

Other Business:

Plodzik and Sanderson engagement letter: Selectman Giffen motioned that the Board authorize Chairman Kelley to sign the engagement letter for auditing services for Plodzik and Sanderson to perform the audit at the sum of \$17,000. Seconded by Selectman Robie. Motion carried. All were in favor.

Selectman Giffen motioned to adjourn at 2:35 p.m. Seconded by Chairman Kelley. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Andria Hansen, Recording Secretary