

**Budget Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
September 16, 2021 @ 6:00 PM  
Hiedke Room  
1 Monument Square  
Alton, NH 03809**

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1. Call to Order: 1812
2. Roll Call: R Parker, D Hershey, P Obrien, J Bemis, L Laplante, B Mitchell (absent: School board representative)
3. Approval of Agenda: RP moves to accept the agenda, 2<sup>nd</sup> by DH, all were in favor.
4. Old Business: DH reviewed the purpose of the committee, further discussion was had on reviewing individual lines vs the bottom line. It was ultimately agreed to continue to review each line just realizing that its truly a bottom line budget.

Review current Year Budget  
2022 Budget Goals

- DH suggest dept heads present 3 budgets: as requested, a 5% reduction, and a 10% reduction, identifying what those reductions in services would be. DH emphasizes this isn't a blanket cut, just an exercise to better understand what services would be lost. Much discussion. DH affirms he is not calling for a cut, just to see what items would be reduced by the dept head if a reduction had to be made. JB mentioned maybe we suggest up to a 5% increase, a 0 increase, and 5% reduction. DH mentioned how there was no reduction in staff or services through covid, and that should be considered. LL advocated there was still business and need for services.
- DH motion for the pol fire Dpw: request of these dept to identify goods/secs that would represent % and 10 10% of their proposed budget. There was no second.
- JB: moves to have department heads present their budgets as prepared, with 0% increase over 2021, and a 5% reduction from 2021. 2nd BM, Discussion: for clarity, requesting this of all departments? Pol fire, pw solid waste, lib, PnR, BM withdrew 2nd. Too much discussion and changes. motion failed
- Much discussion on wether or not the timing is too late for this, how we decide which departments to make the request through etc.
- DH moves to provide 2 alternative for consideration the one as presented, and the other for identification that would represent 5% of the budget that would before the 6 larger departments pol fire pol PnR SW lib, motion fails.
- BM, select board just got budget books, have not started meeting with dept heads. Still waiting on insurance and benefits.
- No action on the instructions topic.

Recording of meeting minutes:

- JB suggesting Otter, which recognizes voices and identifies people in meetings. Spoke with josh Monaco, who advised he was already looking into this. \$240 annually, talk that his is a no brainer, there would be a excersize to get the program to recognize voices. Stores 800 voices, \$240 per user per year.

- Pobrien moves to allow josh Monaco to expend up to \$300 to implement a VR software. 2nd BM all in favor.
- LL questions how this software will recognize public and if its legal to record public without them knowing. It was noted meetings are subject to audio and video recording regardless, questioned were raised if it needs to be posted that audio and video recording is taking place.

5. New Business:

- Joint Budget Committee Representatives RP: JMA BC need to add 3 reps to that committee: PO & DH provides background JB, LL, RP appointed to the committee. Alton is scheduled to chair the committee this year.

6. Approval of Minutes:

- DH moves to approve meeting minutes of August 26, 2021, 2nd BM, all in favor.

7. Public Input:

- Ken Roberts - advised he was former road agent, and questioned the validity of the BC directly req dept heads to provide information. KR also mentioned that requesting cuts: consider the cuts that the TA and SB have already made before it reached our board. Referenced 200k that was reduced in the budget last year, which was just deferred, and is anticipated to come back. Ref COLA and how selectmen removed it, this year it is 6.1% and employees only receive up to a 3.5% increase. Referenced dept heads generally only promote increases to maintain the same level of service. Provided the examples of the fuel increase, and how that will impact the budgets alone. Suggested that increase in general supplies are going to be a significant impact on budgets.

8. Other business (if necessary): There was no other business.

9. Adjournment: PO moves to adjourn 2nd DH all in favor.