

Budget Committee Meeting
APPROVED Minutes
December 6, 2017 @ 6:30 PM
Alton Town Hall
1 Monument Square, Alton, NH 03809

1. Call to order

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

Roger Nelson, Chairman
Greg Fuller, Member
David Hershey, Member
Andrew Levasseur, Member
Peter Leavitt, School Board Representative

Others: Liz Dione, Town Administrator

Absent: Terrence O'Rourke
John Markland, Board of Selectmen Representative

4. Approval of Agenda

MOTION by David Hershey to approve the Agenda as presented. Second by Andrew Levasseur. No discussion. Motion passes with all in favor.

5. Approval of Minutes

November 29, 2017

MOTION by David Hershey to approve the minutes of November 29, 2017 as presented. Second by Greg Fuller. No discussion. Motion passes with all in favor.

November 30, 2017 No quorum of members present at the November 30, 2017 meeting to approve the minutes. Minutes to be presented for approval on December 7, 2017 meeting.

Statement of intent by Roger Nelson

To the public present for this meeting, during Public Input session any public statements or input is to be directed to what is represented on the Agenda for this meeting only.

6. Old Business

7. New Business

Review of Town Department Budgets to include:

a. Solid Waste Department (4324)

Present: Scott Simons

Roger Nelson line 202 5yr avg is \$3100 but of \$4000 budgeted. Realistically only one year high in 2013 at \$7300.

Scott Simons stated so far spent \$5877 for this year. Parts are getting expensive.

Greg Fuller asked how old is loader?

Scott Simons 6 Years.

David Hershey asked if combining line 005 and 011 combining for this year?

Scott Simons answered yes. Plus 4% merit and cola increase.

Roger Nelson noted some numbers will probably change next year with addition of the scale?

Scott Simons answered yes. Some will be coming out of the revolving account.

Roger Nelson said don't see the revenue on the budget sheet that offsets the numbers.

David Hershey procedure to suggest

Greg Fuller stated that the more things coming out of the budget that are invisible, doesn't feel this is good reporting.

David Hershey asked where the income shows up.

Liz Dione stated they are on the revenue sheets.

Roger Nelson stated it is listed every month. The only thing you don't see is the revenue off-setting the bottom line.

David Hershey would like to see for next year a line item on the reports showing the revenue for each department.

Roger Nelson, line 171. Salaries. Spent \$9300. Feels serious problem for Warrant Article for the same thing. Either get rid of the Warrant Article or get rid of the line item.

Scott Simons a yearly testing in his budget for testing by DES and for unforeseen things. That's how it was set up

Roger Nelson said this is the same thing, double dipping.

David Hershey said he doesn't think it's the same thing.

Scott Simons it has happened in the past to have to put test wells in, unexpectedly. Where will be the money for that?

Liz Dione stated money goes into a capital reserve fund. There are different issues that come up during the year that are unknown with unknown fund required.

David Hershey asked if there will be a Warrant Article for this year?'

Liz Dione stated that is 2016 the Warrant Article was for \$30,000, 2017 for \$35,000, 2018 \$3,000. Capital Reserve fund is used every year.

David Hershey stated if you know you are going to be spending each year, for example \$25,000 out of that, then the \$25,000 should go into the operating budget.

Liz Dione stated they don't know that. It changes every year. It could be -0- or \$30,000.

Roger Nelson glad to see the number reduced for this year.

b. Library (4550)

Present: Annette Slipp, Betty Jane Meulenbroek, Holly Brown

Roger Nelson line 110 - meetings and conferences. Why the high jump in numbers?

Holly Brown asked a few years ago for trustees to give them the opportunity to NHTA conference, spring and fall NHLA conferences. Only one went this year. Spent \$427 with balance of \$388. A few other meetings as well. Trustees are strictly volunteer. Felt it appropriate for library to pay for this and mileage as well for all the work they do.

David Hershey suggest to talk with Paulette Wentworth to see if there is Worker's Compensation or Auto Liability exposure.

Liz Dione stated it would be Stacy Bailey that they should contact.

Liz Dione if there was an accident during one of these trip that occurred they would not be covered.

David Hershey concern for a third party suit against the town.

Roger Nelson asked about other revenue for the library

Holly Brown there is a trust fund account, Money Market Account.

Roger Nelson asked specific or general to use

Holly Brown used for anything. Used to date \$1500 to augment computer expense line, and library building \$5529 from Money Market account line.

Roger Nelson asked any more endowments or trust funds?

Holly Brown stated the only other funds received is from fines and donations or book sales, and copier charges.

Roger Nelson asked if the trust fund of \$18,000 is their only other monies?

Holly Brown said yes. Nancy Jordon memorial fund for approx. \$1000. Use only interest to purchase books. \$1156.

Roger Brown stated there was a rumor that there was approx. \$350,000 in other funds. Is that true? Holly Brown there are stocks, make out specifically made out to the library not the town. The amount of \$18,000 is the interest from these stocks. Stocks and bonds value stocks as of 10/10/2017 \$465,124, \$488,414 ending market value. Restricted to use interest only. Interest not restricted. Also have a small library building fund when fundraising was done for the addition. Has \$348. Spent \$840 of this money this year. \$18,000 augments the line items.

Greg Fuller asked is this should be net budgeting not gross budgeting?

Liz Dione stated any questions should be answered by trustees. Library is not directed by the Selectmen.

Greg Fuller Shows \$1 for computer expenses. I know you used the library money but should be shown total spent and total coming in.

Holly Brown stated they have their own IT person, nothing goes through Josh.

Liz Dione - this is like the water department, they are their own entity. If they used Josh they would be charged. Using their own IT person is their discussion.

David Hershey asked who is cheaper Joshua or who they higher.

Liz Dione any of those decisions is up to the trustees

Roger Nelson \$488,000 in stocks and bonds can only use the interest of this balance.

David Hershey suggested get a copy of the documents showing guidelines of stocks and bonds.

Roger Nelson seriously identify use of that money.

Greg Fuller would like an answer question for gross budget and net budget. Law says gross budget not net.

c. Fire Department (4220)

Present: Chief Ryan Ridley

Ryan Ridley gave a presentation. When started this year part of budget looking where spent money this year, went way over on vehicle maintenance and slated to do more next year. Increase of chief salary. 10-12 years ago made chief position 20 hours. Deputy Chief worked 20 hours. When he took over changed to 32 hours. Restricted to work due to his own specific restrictions. Proposal need to go back to full time position, for the safety of the fire fighters and community. Deputy average 16 hours per week. Would like to increase Deputy hours. Have done a fair amount of inspections. Some for new buildings that are needed for fire department to inspect as well as building inspector. Staffing is currently as issue. Essentially if two or three people left they would be in trouble staffing. That has happened. Month of October there were 26 open shifts, most were filled. November repeating again. For example, also this Friday no one on call. No one available. Took wages out of ambulance budget and put them into the fire department budget when went from Alton volunteer ambulance service and question on whether wages should be taken out of the ambulance revenue account. Replacing an ambulance looking 4-5 years down the road, it would deplete this account. So, he made the decision to take the wages from ambulance and put it in fire department. This brings the total down considerably to just shy of \$80,00 this year. That fund should be solvent as long as revenue stays the same. Expenses on repairs were in the \$14,000 range. Ambulance accident going down for repair. Add funding into training. Working on getting 24-hour coverage. Night coverage with high stipend. Certain nights there are 2 members in East Alton. Fire calls. End of the year 900 range for calls. Understand that funds are limited and working in the best interest of those they respond to.

David Hershey asked new ambulance every 5 years? Life of ambulance is 10 years?

Ryan Ridley Yes, they need to get on track with this.

David Hershey buying a new ambulance every 5 years till we get caught up?

Ryan Ridley proposed buying one this year.

David Hershey asked of the approx. cost for an ambulance?

Ryan Ridley approx. \$193,000, Our radios are more than 10 years old. With radios and small amount of equipment he would probably see \$215,000. Durable medical gets transferred from each vehicle.

David Hershey moved funds from ambulance to fire and it was questionable?

Ryan Ridley stated he presented to the Board of Selectmen in the spring about the ambulance revenue account. If we continue to take wages out of ambulance acct, as wages go up and cost of vehicles go up the ambulance reimbursement rates will not increase well. Expendable supplies going up. Ending the year with less than \$300 in both budgets.

Roger Nelson his biggest concern is \$854,000 vs last year \$487,000. 78% of that is salaries.

Ryan Ridley researched what they are paying fire chief. Has worked more than 32 each week. If he works more than 32 hour the state takes away his retirement. Not a small community. Typical summer night they are out most of the night. Discussion of ambulance calls. Training a fire fighter is 240 hours. 2 nights a week class is 800 per person. Example of July 4th coverage.

David Hershey from his perspective 018. specific and dedicated carve out - just wages?

Ryan Ridley gets muddled when ambulance and fire going out to the same call. Some of the salary lines do not make sense. Always 2 on duty.

David Hershey pull wages out of ambulance account for increasing need of dedicating money for the capital equipment was important. He would be interested in seeing projection of those numbers over a period of time.

Ryan Ridley ex \$400,000 in revenue account, take \$168,000 out yearly, replaced an ambulance, and was purchased out of fire equipment monies, and probably should not have, but they were in a bind.

David Hershey suggest goal to buy back ambulance fees based upon what is needed for the capital purchase and the wages, overhead, etc. divide cost per call and get a target approach.

Ryan Ridley what is being billed right now is not on the low end. Ambulance service has been a self-funded entity. Ambulance replaced last year was less money than the ambulance purchased in 04 or 05.

David Hershey asked for the plan for the future to make the ambulance department self-sustaining including wages?

Ryan Ridley, it will be now with the exception of the wages. Training, expendable supplies, hospitals used to replace supplies, so need to order \$1500 monthly.

David Hershey would the goal be to make the ambulance department self-sustaining, all inclusive?

Ryan Ridley Is willing to look at it but not it can be accomplished without raising the rates.

Peter Leavitt but will the insurance companies pay for this.

Ryan Ridley Medicare says you can bill \$492 for a call. Actual bill is \$1892. Gross and net are two completely different things.

David Hershey

Roger Nelson concern is 8 percent increase. 4 percent of the 8 percent increase is Fire Department. Don't know how a voter can vote for this. Something has to move to accommodate the need.

Ryan Ridley desperate need of updated equipment. Working on purchasing a little bit each year.

Have not purchased hose since he has been on the department. Training. Refresher training, paramedic training, deputy at hours 10 hours a week. Audit process for the national registry

A lot that was not being done and now a lot more being done. Reporting to national registries,

Roger Nelson concern tax increase- doesn't know how the average person can afford a tax increase.

d. Ambulance (9000)

Present: Ryan Ridley

Essentially presented through the Fire Department review.

e. General Government (4130)

Present: Liz Dione

Roger Nelson 110 meetings and conference. 5-year average \$788. Requesting \$2200. Line 133 postage - 11 percent increase

Liz Dione - used for weekly AP bills, payroll, stage increases and sometimes the amount of checks increase. Went up \$500.

Roger Nelson line 161. Average \$16,000 now at \$18,075

Liz Dione contractual increase.

David Hershey when was the last time it was bid out.

Liz Dione stay with the current vendor every couple of years.

David Hershey suggest getting new bids.

Roger Nelson line 899.

Liz Dione fully used this year. Justification sheet 20,000 to be put toward a watershed plan. Level funded. Will be a warrant article. All will be spent on this line. Used for unanticipated expenses.

f. Audio Visual Meeting Equipment (4199)

g. Legal (4153) reviewed at meeting of 11/30/2017

h. Patriotic (4583) reviewed at meeting of 11/30/2017

8. Public Input None.

9. Other Business. January 10 public hearing. January 11 snow date. December 7 finalize budget as a workshop - No public input.

10. Adjourn at 8:03.

MOTION by David Hershey to adjourn. Second by Greg Fuller. Motion passes with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Schaeffner, Recording Secretary