



BUDGET COMMITTEE
Town of Hollis
Seven Monument Square
Hollis, New Hampshire 03049
Tel. 465-2209 FAX 465-3701

Minutes of December 7, 2015

Meeting was held in the Community Room, Hollis Town Hall. The Budget Committee was called to order by Tom Gehan at 7:03 PM.

Members present: Susan Benz, Frank Cadwell - Selectman, Tom Gehan, Mike Harris, Chris Hyde, Tom Jambard, David Sacks – School Board Rep, Frank Whittemore

Others present: Peter Band – Selectman, Tom Bayrd - DPW Director, Dawn Desaulniers – IT Director, Mark LeDoux (via phone) - Selectman, Vahrij Manoukian – Selectman, Kim Galipeau – Interim Town Administrator, Deb Padykula – Finance Officer, David Petry – Selectman, Jay Sartell – Police Chief

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Selectman Petry called the selectmen's meeting to order at 7:05.

Approval of minutes:

Mike H. moved to accept the minutes of 11/10/15. Chris H. seconded. Frank W. abstained. Vote was 7-0-1. Minutes were accepted.

1st Review of FY16 Budget

Deb P. reviewed the proposed Operating Budget of \$9,755,348, which is up \$270K from 2015. She stated that the proposed budget is \$192K over guidance. She pointed out the significant areas of variation, both up and down.

Tom G. clarified that part of the salary increase is due to employees moving to the next step on the pay scale.

Chris H. asked what the price of gas is less state tax. Deb P. estimated \$2/gallon. Mark L. suggested budgeting gas at \$2/gallon and diesel at \$2.50/gallon.

Chris H. asked for a detailed explanation of the salary increase.

Deb P. replied that the \$35K increase in overtime for the fire department is due to on-call staffing shortages and a state law mandating any hours worked in excess of 212 hours in a 28 day period be paid as overtime. She also said that currently fire employees are taking comp time in lieu of overtime but in 2016 the overtime will be paid out.

Frank C. stated that the \$22K increase in the DPW line was due to staffing changes.

Chris H. asked why the town clerk salary increased \$10K. Frank C. replied that the salary is based on fees collected and would be offset by revenue.

Tom G. stated that the increase in the Checklist Supervisor salaries is due to the 2016 elections.

Tom G. asked Deb P. and the selectman if they would classify any items in the budget as discretionary.

Frank C. referenced the charitable donations line item. It was agreed that this would remain in the budget.

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Warrant Articles

Deb P. reviewed the list of proposed warrant articles.

In response to Article 2 for the land acquisition, Tom G. stated that the conservation commission did not yet have any numbers and requested that Peter Baker present information and financials on the desired property at the BudCom second review of the budget on January 11, 2016.

In response to Article 3 for the new athletic field, Tom G. asked how building a new field on Depot Rd. would impact parking during Old Home Days. David P. replied that providing shuttles from the school parking lots was being considered.

In response to Article 4 for the new dump truck, Mike H. asked about the lease terms. Deb P. replied 5 years at 2.8%. Chris H. asked how many similar vehicles are owned by the town. Tom B. replied that there are 6 active trucks and this older truck is now a backup truck making the total 7. Tom B. stated that repairs to the truck have totaled ~\$23K and that repairs are still needed to ensure it can be used this winter.

In response to Article 5 for the new track loader, Tom J. asked if the loader would be used for plowing and if it came equipped with a plow. Tom B. replied yes.

In response to Article 6 for the police officer safety cameras, Mike H. asked if the selectmen have a policy in place regarding police body camera video.

Mark L. said that Chief Sartell should request a best practices policy from the state attorney general that the selectmen would review prior to adoption.

Chief Sartell stated that the department has a policy in place that it received from the International Association of the Chiefs of Police. Chief Sartell discussed the benefits of the program.

Mike H. asked what happens after 5 years have transpired. Chief Sartell replied that equipment would need to be replaced and he anticipated the cost would be less.

Chris H. asked if the cameras would be mandatory. Chief Sartell replied yes.

Mike H. asked how the data was stored in the cloud. Chief Sartell replied that the camera was docked at the station and data was uploaded.

Chris H. asked about projected cost increases for uploads and storage. Dawn D. replied that testing would be done to determine upload speeds.

Mike H. asked for the number of cameras. Chief Sartell replied 14. Frank C. asked if there were also 14 tasers. Chief Sartell replied yes.

Tom G. asked for clarification regarding the requested \$30K for the first year. Chief Sartell replied that it is similar to a lease program in that Taser supplies all the equipment in the first year and the town makes annual payments of \$18.1K beginning in the second year.

Chris H. asked if there would be an increase in requests for video under the Freedom of Information Act. Chief Sartell replied that providing video evidence was more efficient.

Tom G. asked if given the recurring nature of the costs in this warrant article it should be moved to the operating budget, even though it would increase the budget further above guidance. David P. stated that a disclaimer could be put on the article so that it would only require voter approval one time.

There was a discussion about the benefits of taser and video technology in terms of reduced risks of fatalities and protection from litigation.

In response to Article 8 regarding a request to raise \$40K for unused earned time Mike H. asked how much was used in 2015. Deb P. replied ~\$20K due to 3 employees leaving.

Regarding Article 9 for the reevaluation capital reserve fund, Chris H. asked if this would be a statistical update or a reassessment of every property. David P. replied that it was a statistical update.

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In response to Article 10 for the municipal buildings and facilities maintenance expendable trust fund Chris H. asked about the metal roof for the fire department. David P. replied that there are areas which don't get sun that are problematic.

Chris H. asked about the reasoning for installing a generator at the Lawrence Barn. David P. replied that it was determined that the barn would be the best place for shelter or water in large emergency situations.

Deb P. reviewed the potential \$.09 increase the proposed budget would have on the 2016 town tax rate.

Mike H. clarified that it did not consider the cost of the proposed land acquisition or new collective bargaining agreement.

Tom G. asked what the unassigned fund balance would be at the end of 2015. Deb P. replied ~\$3.0M.

Mark L. stated the target amount was \$2.5M.

There was a discussion about pending litigation regarding the taxation of Eversource utility poles and rights of way.

Chris H. asked for a report detailing the building permits and new construction for 2015.

Other Business:

Venu Rao, chairman of the energy commission, made a presentation regarding the implementation of efficient heating and solar energy at the Hollis school district buildings.

Peter B. moved to adjourn the selectmen's meeting. David P. seconded. Selectmen's meeting was adjourned at 8:44 PM.

School Business:

David S. asked where the additional revenue from the increased rent from Lund Lane should be held. Tom G. replied the Lund Lane building maintenance trust fund. Presenting the rent increase as a warrant article was discussed.

Motion to adjourn was made by Mike H. Susan B. seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 8:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Winsor, Tax Collector