



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

Minutes of April 9, 2013

Meeting was held in the Community Room, Hollis Town Hall. The Budget Committee was called to order by Tom Gehan at 7:02 PM.

Members present: Tom Gehan, Susan Benz, Peter Band, Tom Jambard, Frank Whittemore

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Election of Officers:

Susan B. moved that Tom Gehan should remain Chairman of the BudCom. Frank W. seconded. Tom G. stated that he would be happy to serve again. All agreed that he had done an admirable job over the past year. Motion passed unanimously. One vote was cast by Tom J. – Secretary.

Tom J. moved that Susan Benz should remain Vice Chairman of the BudCom. Peter B. seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Frank W. moved that Tom Jambard should remain Secretary of the BudCom. Susan B. seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of minutes:

Peter B. moved to accept the minutes of 2/5/13 as amended by Tom G. Tom J. seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Minutes were accepted as amended.

Public Input:

No members of the public were present.

Review of Previous Year's Budget Cycle:

Tom G. mentioned timeliness of inputs and volume of data provided to the public as being two areas to consider. Susan B. suggested that due to the relative inexperience of the new School Board, the BudCom should keep an eye on deadlines with them. It was mentioned that Skip Snyder is the new School Board liaison to the BudCom.

Tom G. suggested that the scheduling of meetings needs to be considered, with the goal of having the School Board meetings occur **prior** to the BudCom meetings each month. This was particularly a problem during the budget season this past year. The other item that should be brought up earlier in the process is if the School Board intends to deviate from stated policy on class size. This could help to prevent last-minute angst and misunderstanding.

Frank W. thought that possibly too much information is provided to the public unnecessarily. Tom J. agreed, saying he thought there could be a briefer overview at public meetings, but have the backup available if necessary to answer questions.

Budget Committee Minutes April 9, 2013

Susan B. thought that the paving project for the Lawrence Barn parking lot was mishandled. Plenty of time was allowed up front to have all the data in hand and come up with a compromise. Yet at Town Meeting no decision could be reached due to lack of data.

Peter B. stated that his big issue with the process is the timeliness of the data and information.

Tom G. agreed with the timeliness issue, a good example being the Town Hall renovation project.

Tom G. suggested allowing exceptions from guidance for one-time items or for other things that are truly non-discretionary, such as NH Retirement or health insurance costs. The budgets will not be able to continue to absorb these increasing costs, so it may become necessary to exclude them from budget guidance in the future.

Tom J. asked how, if the budgets are so tight every year, the town and schools continue to have budget surpluses at the end of the year. Susan B. stated that the Finance Officer, Deb Padykula, should be able to provide more detail on where specifically the savings are coming from. She suggested reviewing budgeted vs actual for the year. Tom G. said he would request an itemization of the unexpended funds.

Tom J. suggested that the joint budget meeting with the selectmen needs to be better attended by the selectmen. He also asked about switching the regular meeting date, but Tom G. said that he had spoken to various members and the 2nd Tuesday works best for the majority. Possibly during the height of budget season, it may be necessary to add or switch meeting dates in order to get information in a timely fashion.

Tom G. mentioned that there are two proposed new committees which may need representation from the BudCom, a facilities committee and a personnel policies committee.

Tom J. asked whether there was a way to get ideas on how the budget process works in other towns.

Susan B. mentioned that LGC has a training session that a few BudCom members attended two years ago. It was very helpful as much for the networking opportunity as anything else. Tom G. said he would look at the LGC website to see what training was coming up.

Town Update:

Peter B. stated that the town is negotiating with the Town of Mason for dispatch services. This could add about \$35K of revenue to the budget. He also mentioned that RFPs have gone out for work on the Town Hall exterior. A public hearing will be scheduled once the bids have been reviewed.

Due to staffing shortages in the PD, the chief has been investigating the use of qualified, part-time officers to fill gaps in coverage. Peter B. also discussed a couple of anticipated expenditures from the Facilities Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund. Tom J. asked what the status was on the communications radio project. Peter B. stated that it is essentially complete, with the height of the Pine Hill tower the only remaining issue.

Tom G. asked about the Farley Building project. Peter B. stated that the roof has been made watertight. They are currently working on the louvered ventilation system for the windows.

Motion to adjourn was made by Susan B. Tom J. seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Kowalski, Tax Collector