



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

**Minutes of December 8, 2014**

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: Tom Gehan, Susan Benz, Chris Hyde, Frank Whittemore, Mike Harris (arrived at 7:47), Tom Jambard, Frank Cadwell

Others present: David Petry – Selectman, Peter Band – Selectman, Vahrij Manoukian – Selectman, Deb Padykula – Finance Officer, Troy Brown – Town Administrator, Jay Sartell – Police Chief, Dawn Desaulniers – IT Director

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Selectman business was conducted. Please refer to the Selectmen minutes for further details.

Approval of minutes:

Susan B. moved to accept the minutes of 10/14/14. Tom J. seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Vote was 6-0-0. Minutes were accepted.

1<sup>st</sup> review of FY15 budget

Deb P. reviewed the proposed Operating Budget of \$9,508,961, which is up \$315K from 2014. She pointed out the significant areas of variation, both up and down.

Tom G. clarified that the road resurfacing increase was included in the committee's budget guidance and that the increase in capital leases for DPW and accounting software represented a full year of activity whereas in FY14 it was only for 6 months.

David P. stated that most of the salary increase stems from the transition to a full time Communications specialist, which allows greater scheduling flexibility.

Tom J. asked about the grounds maintenance increase. David P. stated this is the second year without the Nichols Trust to help offset costs.

Chris H. asked from which line item FY14 pipeline legal costs are funded. Deb P. replied that they are currently funded using the contingency line item.

Chris H. asked about legal fees for personnel exceeding budget the past 2 years and if the proposed FY15 budget was high enough. David P. replied that additional personnel issues are not anticipated.

There was discussion of the reduction in health care costs and the change in the funding for Health Savings Accounts to be a matching benefit instead of being fully funded by the town.

Chris H. asked what estimated price for gas was used. Deb P. replied \$3.50 for gas and \$4.00 for diesel.

Chris H. asked Chief Sartell to review the accreditation process and costs. Chief Sartell replied that costs may be less than initially anticipated and that it was still very early in the process.

Tom G. asked about the increase in the selectman stipend. Peter B. replied that the stipend had not been adjusted in 25 years and the new amount reflects a 1% annual increase, or \$3K, since that time.

Tom G. asked if the notes reflected changes with the bond refinance. Deb P. stated that they do not as the refinance is not final.

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Tom J. asked about the increase in maintenance costs for police vehicles. Chief Sartell replied that past budgets were too conservative and unanticipated events such as accidents exceeded available funds. Chris H. asked about new police cruisers. Chief Sartell replied that they are replacing 4 cruisers through the current lease program.

### Warrant Articles

Deb P. reviewed the list of proposed warrant articles.

In response to Article 3 for the Gas Pipeline, Peter B. stated that the Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company had sent a letter stating that the pipeline route had been moved further west and would no longer impact Hollis. Regarding Article 5, Tom G. asked what the expendable fund for compensated absences had been in past years. Deb P. replied \$30K.

Regarding Article 7 for building repairs, Troy B. clarified that the proposed new town hall camera system was not a security system but rather for the modernization and upgrade to the community room's video recording equipment. Chris H. asked if Charter Communications would subsidize some of this cost. Troy B. replied that the contract negotiations were almost complete. Troy B. also stated that issues with the generator at the police station were discovered during the Thanksgiving power outage and it would most likely need to be replaced.

Tom J. asked if the Lawrence Barn rental revenue offset the maintenance costs. Deb P. replied that YTD 2014 \$11K has been collected. Tom G. asked how the resolution of the playground drainage issue would be funded. Troy B. replied that it would be from the expendable trust and that it would be a complicated process requiring an engineering plan to redirect the water.

Deb P. discussed the final slide, which showed an estimated 0% effect of the total proposed articles on the tax rate. Chris H. asked about the town valuation. Deb P. replied that it was up 1% for 2014.

Tom G. explained that increases were due to road resurfacing and allowances for NH Retirement.

Tom J. raised concerns with the Selectmen's compensation increase. Mike H. suggested putting it on a warrant article instead of including it in the operating budget. David P. said he would present this suggestion at the next Selectmen's meeting.

Tom G. asked Chief Sartell why the new vehicle leases were part of the operating budget and not a separate warrant article. Chris H. and Tom J. stated that replacing police cruisers was ongoing and not generally funded via warrant articles.

Troy B. stated that union negotiations were going well and anticipated that a signed agreement would be completed prior to the February 3<sup>rd</sup> state deadline for collective bargaining agreements.

Motion to request the collective bargaining agreement by January 27, 2015 was made by Chris H. Mike H. seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Vote was 7-0-0.

Motion to adjourn was made by Mike H. Susan B. seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 8:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Winsor, Tax Collector