

BUDGET COMMITTEE

Minutes of December 14, 2004

Meeting was held in the Community Room, Hollis Town Hall and was called to order by Chairman, Mike Harris at 7:35 PM.

Members present: Mike Harris, Chairman; Melinda Willis, Vice Chairman; Vahrij Manoukian, Selectmen's Representative; Anita Moynihan, School Board Representative (arrived late); Jim Belanger, Scott Bartis, Chris Hyde; Deborah Adams, Secretary

Also present: Mark Johnson, Chairman Selectmen; Peter Band, Ray Lindsay, Richard Walker, Selectmen; Paul Calabria, Finance Administrator; Cath Hallsworth, Administrative Assistant; Richard Darling, Police Chief; Michael Pischetola, Communications Director; Arthur LeBlanc, Public Works Director; Rick Towne, Fire Chief; Howard Bigelow, Chairman Library Trustees; Jim Cram, Heritage Commission member; Gerry Gartner, Chairman Land Protection Study Committee

Presentation of Town Budget – Paul Calabria

Paul mentions that the budget he is about to present is under the BudCom proposed guidelines. Vahrij adds that the Selectmen have been working on this budget since September. They attempted to maintain the current tax rate while also providing essential services to the town. He points out that the Department Heads are present at the meeting to offer comments and explanations of their budgets. He suggests limiting their comments to 5 minutes each, in order to control the length of the meeting. All BudCom members agree.

Executive – This is up \$28,000 or 9%. \$20,000 has been added to this account for stormwater related costs to meet EPA regulations. \$8,400 has been added for increased hours for townhall personnel to help meet Town demands.

Town Clerk – This is up \$11,000. \$19,000 has been added for changes in salary due to changes at the State level, however this is really just a pass through. \$7,431 has been decreased from this budget due to a decrease in the number of elections for this year.

Finance – This is up \$28,000. \$22,000 of this is for a partial re-assessment of properties. ¼ of the town will be re-assessed each year with adjustments to the entire town being made in the fifth year. This is a State mandate to control the assessment ratio. Melinda asks if this will eliminate the need for a full revaluation in the future. Cath indicates that it will. The Town already has a database of all properties. This is to update the information and make changes.

Legal Expenses – No Change.

Employee Benefits – This is up \$266,210. \$73,000 to cover benefits for new employees approved in 2004. \$13,000 is mandatory retirement increases. \$57,000 is for increases to health insurance. Paul explains that the town is currently in the final stages of changing over to a self-funded health insurance plan. He will know by the next meeting what the final numbers for this will be. He anticipates the \$57,000 decreasing to \$40,000. Mike asks if the Town will be insured for catastrophic losses. Paul indicates that this will be covered. This account is also up \$84,000 for Collective Bargaining Agreement increases.

Planning & Zoning – This is up \$6,227. \$5,700 for the regional planner's salary, which is a mandated figure. An additional \$1,100 has been requested by the Heritage Commission.

Buildings & Grounds – This is down \$28,557. \$27,500 has been reduced for major building maintenance. This amount has been encumbered from 2004 to cover the cost of roofing a portion of the fire station. Other major maintenance items are included in the safety building warrant article.

Cemetery – This is up \$5,799. \$5,000 has been added to rebuild the wall around the Church Cemetery.

Insurance – This is up \$6,457. Workers Compensation has increased the premiums \$6,401.

Municipal Dues – No Change.

Information Systems – This has reduced slightly.

Police – This is up \$68,074. \$44,000 of this covers union salaries and 1 new employee that was hired during the past year.

Fire – This is up \$37,002. \$30,000 covers salaries for new employees hired during the year.

Communications – This is up \$15,282. \$9,000 for union salaries and \$3,600 for equipment maintenance contract for console.

Building & Septic – This is down slightly.

Emergency Management – This is up \$5,000. The Town is mandated to write a new disaster plan, which is mandated by both State and Federal.

Highway Administration – This is up \$30,591. Most of this is for salaries.

Road Rebuilding – This is down \$20,000.

Street Lighting – No Change.

Dumps – This is down \$1,000

Solid Waste Disposal – This is up \$29,955. This is a mandated item. The regional fees have increased.

Health – No Change.

Animal Control – This is up slightly due to an increase in requested services.

Health Agencies – This is down slightly.

Welfare – This is up \$10,000. This is due to increased utilization of welfare services.

Parks & Playgrounds – No Change.

Recreation – This is up \$8,290. Some additional costs for the new recreation fields.

Library – This is up \$26,814. Operational costs have increased.

Patriotic – This is up \$4,000. The Old Home Days Committee has requested an increase in order to pay the town employees that work during this time.

Conservation Commission – No Change.

Debt Service – This is up \$407,655. This is due to the 1st year costs of bonds for Dunklee Pond, Hall, Parker Pond, Honi Glover, Haight/Wright, Walker, Hall and Weston properties that have recently been purchased. There was a small savings on bond issuance costs.

Capital Reserves – These are explained with the Warrant Articles.

Mike questions how all of this relates to the guidelines. Melinda compares the proposed budget against the guidelines. The presented figures are \$581,000 under the guidelines.

Department Head Presentations

Howard Bigelow – Library Trustees

They are proposing a budget increase of 14%. The major increase is for \$9,500 to have permanent shelving installed. He comments that since the library opened in 1993, there have been no renovations made to the building. They had a library consultant review the existing conditions. One suggestion for improvement was the installation of the shelving. Heating costs are also increasing. Additional funding is needed for programs to help pay for speakers and mileage. There are 13 computers in the library. They have been replacing 2 computers each year, which allows for a 6 year cycle for each computer. This has proven to be too long. They would like to increase this to 3 computers each year to allow for a 4 year cycle. They need to add more materials to the library, such as books, dvd's and audio books. They have purposely kept this low for a number of years to accommodate increased salaries and hours. They are now falling behind in this area and would like to catch up.

Mike congratulates Howard on the recent recognition given to the library. He asks if they will be needing any additional staff or increasing the hours of operation. Howard indicates that they will not. Jim questions if they have any projections for future expansion. Howard explains that at this time they do not have any good projections. Mike comments that he would like to see statistics on the utilization of the library over the last several years. This will give them an idea of when expansion may be needed. Howard points out that this location doesn't offer much room for expansion. Paul points out that the full time equivalent for employees per number of residents is the 2nd lowest in the State. Howard explains that this is due to the staffing model being used and the number of volunteers. This is why the library was recently ranked so high. Mike comments that he would love to see this done in the schools as well.

Dick Darling – Police Department

He would like to increase the hours of their "gopher". This person was hired last July on a temporary basis and they are now making this position permanent. The hours will increase to 5 hours per day, 4 days per week. This is a retired Pepperell police officer who assists the department by taking vehicles to the shop, delivering evidence or reports to the County Attorney's office. This frees up other officers to handle police duties. Dick mentions that the amount for vehicle fuel is a guessing game. Although a consistent amount of fuel will be used, the dollar amount for this is unknown. Training is up to accommodate mandates for the officers to maintain their certification. Most of this training is done on overtime.

Jim questions what the town would do without a police department. Dick comments that the town would be in deep doo-doo. He is not sure who would cover the town. He points out that Greenville recently abolished their police department. There is 1 part time sheriff attempting to cover the town. There is not enough State Police to assist. Mike questions if there is a State requirement for a municipality to provide a police department. Dick states that there is no requirement for this.

Scott comments that each year it appears that the overtime budget is overspent, yet this line item has not been increased. Dick states that he is being optimistic. New staff was added back in July to help cover an employee that was out on medical leave. That employee is now back to work. The department is currently at full staff. Mike mentions that last year they thought that hiring this new position would help with the overtime. Paul explains that in the last year the department has had 4 officers out on family leave for maternity. This coming year they should be fully staffed and barring any unforeseen medical, there should not be a need for excessive overtime. Vahrij comments that Hollis is the #1 town in the State due to a great police department. People feel safe in Hollis.

Mike Pichetola - Communications

The budget is up \$15,282. \$9,683 of this is for salaries, which is a contractual item that he has no control over. \$3,600 is for a new equipment maintenance contract for the console. Mike questions the status with Brookline regarding the agreement for communications services. Mike P. states that they still have 1 more year of the contract with Brookline. This year Brookline's portion increased 3%, which is based on the call load. He explains that currently Brookline accounts for approximately 40% of the total calls. The new software program that has been implemented will help to better track all calls. He explains that the Communication Center receives calls from E911 through the State, as well as the old emergency numbers 465-2211 and 465-2223. They also have a B911 system in place should the E911 system go down. He stresses that they have many disaster contingencies. The current system is adequate to service all of Hollis' needs and could also service additional towns if necessary; possibly Mason. Paul adds that next year Brookline will be paying for 27% of the budget with no claim to any of the equipment.

Jim questions the cost to out-source the communications needs of the town. Mike P. states that Mac-Base would charge approximately \$150,000 per year. They currently expend \$298,000 with \$81,000 in revenue coming in from Brookline, while still retaining in-town service. He stresses that by having this in town they can also offer other services to residents, such as, issuing burn permits. Paul mentions that they are looking into a potential revenue sharing source with alarm monitoring programs. Currently alarm companies collect for these services. Jim states that the purpose for his question is not to say that Hollis does not need these services, but to show that residents are getting a good service for their money.

Mike states that Brookline's portion should be related to the # of calls. Mike P. feels that Brookline's portion should be related to population. Population creates the need for services from the Communication's Center. When the population increases, the demand for services also increases. He feels that this would be fair. Jim comments that if Brookline were using 41% of the calls, they should not be obligated to pay for 41% of the budget if they do not have a share of the equipment ownership. He thinks the current arrangement is fair. Chris states that this is then a wasted asset that Hollis will have to replace. Jim states that the equipment would still need replacing with or without Brookline. Chris argues that additional manpower is required to service Brookline. Mike P. states that during the night shift .5 of a person is needed for Brookline. The activity in Hollis requires more than 1 person, yet not enough for 2. He anticipates that eventually, in the near future, there will be enough activity for 2 persons.

Rick Towne – Fire Department

It is a very good thing that Hollis is a great community, as the Fire Department receives many contributions that help to keep the budget low. Without these generous contributions, the budget would be \$55,000 higher. The ambulance fund is working very well. This has become totally self-funding, excluding salaries. This also includes ambulance replacements. Mike questions where the department stands regarding new positions. He understood that they would be converting to more of a full time department with less volunteers. Rick explains that he is working hard to continue with a mixed group of full time and on-call volunteers. The proposed sleeping quarters are needed for part time employees to help cover some of the shifts. He is not looking for an entirely full time department. Paul states that there will be a warrant article for 1 new position to start next Fall. Rick states that currently there are 6 full time employees, with the warrant article there will be 7.

Arthur LeBlanc – Department of Public Works

Building Renovations – In 2006 the roof/dome of the library will have to be addressed. They have waited several years. The dome is

copper and you can see daylight through part of it. They are not currently getting any leaks, yet sometimes leaks occur during certain wind conditions. They will be hiring an architect to review the conditions. There may be some kind of epoxy that will help to seal the dome. At this time they are not budgeting for any inspections or estimates, yet based on previous expenses this may be \$10,000. Mike suggests adding this expense to the 2005 budget. Jim questions what would happen if this were not repaired at this time. Would there be any structural damage? Arthur states that at the least there would be stains appearing on the ceiling. Worse case would be structural damage. Mike states that if they anticipate this repair being in the 2006 budget, it would be appropriate to budget the engineering costs in 2005.

Highway Administration – Salaries are up due to 1 new employee. The time is divided between town buildings and grounds and helping to cover the transfer station and stump dump during vacations or sick time, as well as plowing during the winter. He mentions that the total number of employees is actually down from 15 years ago. He points out that fuel oil is up. This expense is hard to predict.

Road Rebuilding – There is a drop on annual road rebuilding. There are no large projects scheduled for this next year. He will continue with routine paving to help reduce this. In 2006 the culvert on South Merrimack Road will need to be replaced. The last time this was done was 20 years ago. This area used to flood. Additional culvert pipes were added, which has helped. A petitioned warrant article has been submitted for paving of Wood Lane. Wood Lane does have some drainage problem that will have to be addressed this year. The drainage portion of this would be \$25,000, yet to also pave would be \$70,000. This has not been included in the budget. Mike asks if the \$25,000 to correct the drainage has been put in the budget. Arthur indicates that it has not. Jim comments that the warrant could be changed from the floor to cover only drainage issues and not include the paving.

Jim comments that the portion of gravel Rocky Pond Road bordering Brookline has been an issue in the past. Arthur states that he expected to receive a petitioned warrant article to pave this last year, yet it never came through. He explains that they cleaned up the sides of the road and did not experience the same mud problems this last Spring as was an issue the year prior. He mentions that he has also anticipated a petitioned warrant article for Mill Road, yet this did not come in either. Rick Towne explains that Rocky Pond Road was so muddy in the Spring of 2003, that emergency vehicles could not get through. Neither Hollis or Brookline crews could get to a property for an emergency. Eventually they were able to get a 4x4 vehicle in, yet there was much time delay. He stresses that in a case like this, when discussing the necessity of paving or repairing a road, there are other issues to consider besides the money. He mentions that just the other day an accident occurred on Rocky Pond Road due to slippery road conditions. This occurred before DPW had applied any sand or salt to the roads. He stresses that DPW does a good job and they do all they can, yet issues do come up.

Town Dumps – This budget is down slightly. The Selectmen enacted a measurement method to assess dumping fees at the stump dump. This has proven successful. Jim asks if there are any problems with the Souhegan Landfill and if they will be requiring clear bags for disposal. Arthur states that Hollis does much recycling, which helps to reduce the landfill costs. They are trying to avoid a bag and tag program. Currently there is no program to assess fees per bag. They have a compactor for mixed paper. Plastic is sorted from co-mingles. He found a new program that is experimenting with plastics. Currently they are only taking material from commercial sites, yet he is hoping to get Hollis involved with this. Scott comments that it is impressive what is being done at the transfer station. He recalls that last year a comment was made that people did not want to pay the increased fees for demolition at the stump dump and were sneaking this material into the transfer station. Arthur believes that they have gotten past this problem. He has not noticed this recurring. Paul mentions that the dump fees are currently \$13,000 above last year, without figures for December. Arthur mentions that they will also need to include money in the 2006 budget to repair the retaining walls at the transfer station. Using current concrete and labor costs he anticipates this to be \$80,000. This figure may increase with inflation. The transfer station is under mandates from the Department of Labor to have running water for eye stations. In the past there was a problem with the water for the eye stations freezing in the winter. They have now constructed a shelter with heat for the attendants, therefore the water will not be freezing anymore. Jim questions the line item for rent. Cath explains that this was a line item used in the past when the town leased this property. The town now owns this parcel.

Proposed Warrant Articles

1. Safety Building Project – Cath present pictorals of the proposed projects; fire department, police department and public works. Rick explains that for the fire station they are proposing an extension to the existing building. The ell is to be gutted and renovated. Drains will be incorporated to handle all wastewater. The sleeping quarters will be created, as well as renovations for office space. The existing bay area already has grates for drainage, with the flow leading to a failed septic. All stormwater/EPA issues will be treated and addressed with this plan. Chris asks if there will be ongoing maintenance for the drainage system. Arthur explains that this is not a complicated system. The water treatment will be handled over the ground before reaching wetlands. Any residue will be pumped periodically.

Cath explains the proposed changes to the police department. New offices for the chief, secretary and lieutenant will be created upstairs, which is currently unfinished space. The sally port will be expanded to accommodate more vehicles. It is currently very short and narrow. The addition will accommodate 4 bays. The septic system will be replaced and the parking lot extended. The existing floor drains will be addressed to comply with stormwater mandates. All wastewater will be treated. Paul adds that the booking room is currently inadequate and dangerous. This will be corrected. Jim asks if changes will be made to the air handling

system. Arthur states that the entire system is messed up. They plan to renovate the entire system. Jim asks about the need for an elevator. Cath states that they will be installing an elevator. The building already has the elevator shaft.

Cath explains the proposed changes to the department of public works. The left side of the site plan presented is existing property. They are in the process of negotiating for the purchase of some land to the north and east. Some changes to the proposed plans are necessary to accommodate the seller's concerns regarding drainage and the detention basin. A new salt shed will be constructed on this new land. All drainage must be treated and kept on sight. Mike questions if there will be any monitoring wells installed. Arthur states that they are not proposing this. They will have rain gages. Weekly inspections of the site will be made and after a significant rainfall. Jim asks if there will be any changes made to the kennel. Arthur indicates that no changes will be made to the structure. The only changes will be to handle drainage from this area.

Paul states that they are proposing \$3,100,000 for all facilities. This is based on estimates given by architect David Udelsman. There will be a design build bid. Whoever bids must bid on the design and building as one package. Arthur explains that the police and fire departments will be handled by one contractor, while the public works site can be handled by the town.

2. Land Protection Study Committee – Gerry Gartner

He does not currently have a figure for next year. He would like to wait until after the Special Town Meeting to get a sense of the voters. He feels that they will again need money for land purchases next year. He stresses that this is a 2-part process; voting on the bond amount, then approval of specific parcels to purchase. He feels that the citizens of Hollis deserve the right to decide how to invest their money. He stresses that they will need a meaningful bond amount in 2005 so the town will have the ability to acquire major parcels that may become available during the year. He understands that the town needs to address infrastructure needs this year, however taking a year off from funding land purchases will be disastrous. The town could potentially miss an important acquisition, where quick response is necessary. Prices of land will escalate. Interest rates will rise. Delaying acquisition by 1 year will only save 1/20th investment in the first year and move it to the last. The Land Protection Study Committee would most likely disband, as they would have nothing to do.

Gerry stresses that they have done a great job over the last few years. They have been receiving majority votes when specific parcels come before the town for vote. After the Special Town Meeting the committee will discuss what amount they feel is appropriate to propose for next year. This figure should be available at the next BudCom meeting. Mike urges moderation to allow for this other large bond that the town will be facing. Gerry comments that there are several large parcels that they have not yet discussed with the owners. These people could potentially face life altering situations that could change their mind about selling the property. The committee needs to have some means in order to enter into negotiations with these owners. Mike again urges moderation for the upcoming year.

Mike presents a tax impact sheet for land purchases and town facilities. He points out that the tax impact for this is not small. Gerry argues that at the same time house assessments are increasing. He states that it is impossible to predict the full impact. Protecting the land is also not having an impact to the schools. He points out that the highest impact is at the front end, which decreases toward the end of the bond. He agrees to take the BudCom's advice back to the committee. He mentions that right now they are proposing to spend 80% of the approved amount, while in previous years they did not spend this much.

3. New Employee for Department of Public Works – This new employee will split their time between DPW, the transfer station and building/grounds.
4. Loader for Department of Public Works – This loader will be fully funded from Capital Reserves. The cost is not as much as anticipated.
5. New Employee for Fire Department – This position will not be filled until November 2005.
6. New Employee for Police Department – This position was created last year to assist the police department with errands. Currently this is considered a temporary part-time position. This will now be going to a permanent position.
7. Lawrence Barn – Jim Cram

Last year the Heritage Commission requested \$50,000 to repair the old beams. At that time they stated they would be returning to request \$200,000 for the reconstruction of the barn. The plan was to have 1/3 of the barn heated and the remaining 2/3 un-heated. Kitchen facilities have been donated. Since last year many others have come forward with donations. The Commission has revised their thinking and are now looking at having 100% of the facility heated to accommodate the increased interest in usage. The total cost for the town for the project will be \$270,000. This year they are asking the town for \$200,000. Another \$293,079 will still have to be raised from donations. Of this, they have already raised \$128,000, so only \$164,000 is needed. He points out that the town is getting \$2.00 value for every \$1.00 spent from taxes. There are many community organizations, town boards/committees working on this project. The facility will be used by many groups.

Mike questions the annual maintenance costs, such as heating, cleaning, etc. Jim C. is not sure. He points out that this building will

be replacing a building that already has some minimal heating costs. The existing building will be gutted and moved. It will then be used merely for the storage of recreational equipment. Mike states that the heating costs alone will be substantially increased. Scott asks who would maintain this building. Jim C. indicates that the town building and grounds employees would handle the maintenance. Chris asks if money has been budgeted to move the existing structure. Jim C. explains that \$15,000 has been incorporated to move this down to the Orchard Drive end of the fields.

Mike comments that he is not sure about the potential liabilities that would be incurred by the use of the building. Scott questions who would schedule the use of the building. Jim C. assumes this would be handled by town hall staff. Cath indicates this is the first she has heard of this. Debbie comments that this would be adding more work to an already overburdened staff. Jim questions the additional electrical costs, heating and janitorial expenses. Vahrij stresses that there are other priorities that the town must think about at this time. Mike asks if the Selectmen support this expense. Vahrij indicates that they have not taken a position on this yet. Cath states that she understood that the Selectmen supported having this as a regular warrant article, not as a petitioned warrant article.

Mike comments that this seems to be a bigger project than anticipated. He would like to understand the entire picture before the BudCom will take a position. He thinks they are only seeing the tip of an iceberg. Jim C. agrees that they need to see some operating costs for the building. He points out that there are many bells and whistles that could possibly be reduced to help lower the amount they need to raise from donations. Mike agrees, yet stresses that the BudCom needs more details. There is a 2nd review of the budget on January 20, 2005. He would like to discuss this more at that time. The BudCom needs more information on maintenance and other associated costs.

8. Basketball Courts – This is for new basketball courts at the newly created recreation fields on Depot Road. Melinda questions if this was something that was removed from the previous warrant article. Cath explains that the approved warrant article did not cover the entire project due to delays and increased construction costs. The basketball courts is not a change in the scope of the project, but merely the result of costs overruns. The base for tennis and basketball courts has already been constructed. This warrant article will cover the costs to complete the project; asphalt, chain link fencing, etc. Mike questions why the cost overruns. Arthur explains that they only had \$250,000 to work with and the town could not get anybody willing to bid on a project that should have cost \$450,000. There just wasn't enough money. Hollis Construction graciously did much of the work.
9. Sidewalk around "The Block" – Arthur explains that repairs were performed to the sidewalk in front of the library and church this past year. The portion of the sidewalk around the Block is also in bad shape. Like would like to continue with these repairs before the situation gets any worse and becomes a liability.
10. Heavy Duty Pick-up Truck for DPW – This is a replacement for the truck being used by the foreman.
11. Fire Department Capital Reserve
12. DPW Capital Reserve
13. Uncompensated Absences – This is an auditor's mandate to fund the earned time liability. The town has been doing this for several years.
14. Wood Lane Petition – Mike asks if the Selectmen support this. Dick states that they have not voted on this yet.

Jim asks if they will be a warrant article for an increase to the veteran's exemption. Paul explains that the BudCom supported increasing this last year, which was approved at town meeting, therefore the Selectmen are not planning to offer another increase this year. They do plan to increase this again next year.

Special Town Meeting

Mike suggests to Gerry that the tax impact sheet be presented to voters at the meeting. He feels they need to see the full impact. He would like to have the BudCom present after the Land Protection Study Committee gives their presentation. Gerry mentions that there will be 2 separate articles. They will discuss the 1st warrant article, then vote. Discuss the 2nd warrant article then vote again. He suggests having the BudCom present before each item is specifically discussed. Mike states that usually the BudCom presents financial data before the vote. Jim comments that the BudCom normally presents after the warrant article presentation, before opening up to the floor for comment. Gerry states that it would not be appropriate to discuss the merits of either purchase before the Land Protection Study Committee has a chance to make their specific presentation.

Scott questions the length of the bond. He feels there may be some merit to some resident's concerns, therefore they may want to pass the payment on to future residents. Mike does not have a problem with the 15 year bond. He feels it is better to get it over with. Paul explains that for every year beyond 15 years, this adds \$100,000 worth of interest each year. Right now the interest rates are at an all time low, therefore they will not get many bids for longer term bonds.

Mike asks if the BudCom should take a position. Jim states that they already took a position at the March town meeting. Scott agrees. Mike asks if the BudCom should take a position on the specific purchases or merely present information on the financials. He feels they should take a position on

the individual warrant articles. Vahrij points out that there was not unanimous vote by the Selectmen. The vote was 4-1 on Woodmont and 3-2 on Siergiewicz.

Melinda asks for more information on the Siergiewicz property. Gerry explains that this parcel is not accessible by road at this time. It is surrounded by other properties, although it is accessible to the public, since the town does own abutting land. This can be used for hiking. He stresses that although this parcel was not in danger of possible development, it will provide an extension of the greenway. This land connects to the Gardner property, which the town purchased the development right to. Debbie points out that the Gardner property cannot be used by the town. One of the conditions of that purchase was that there would be no public access, therefore people cannot hike on this land gaining access to the Siergiewicz land. Chris asks if this land could be developed if someone else were to purchase the parcel. Jim and Debbie both indicate that it could not be developed. Gerry states that it could with easements. Debbie explains that the ordinance does not allow roads to be constructed on easements. Gerry mentions that there is also an abandoned road that could be used. Jim states that this is not a road, as it was totally abandoned.

Melinda moves to support the purchase of the Siergiewicz property. Seconded by Scott. In Favor – Scott Opposed – Mike, Melinda, Chris, Vahrij, Jim

Chris moves to support the purchase of the Woodmont property. Seconded by Melinda. In Favor – Mike, Melinda, Scott, Chris, Vahrij Opposed – Jim

Tax Rate Impact

Cath points out that last year the BudCom stayed until midnight discussing a \$.12 increase to the tax rate. This year the Selectmen are proposing a \$.96 increase. \$.40 of this is for debt service as the result of recent land purchase bonds. Mike asks if these figures are assuming any change in revenue. Paul explains that he was being very conservative.

Jim moves to adjourn. Seconded by Vahrij. Motion unanimously approved.

Next Meeting will be held January 11, 2005 at 7:30 PM in the Town Hall Community Room for the second review of the School Budget

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Adams, Secretary