

BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

Selectmen Present: David Petry, Peter Band, Frank Cadwell, Vahrij Manoukian (arrived 7:08 pm)
Selectmen Absent: Mark LeDoux
Staff Present: Kimberly Galipeau, Interim Town Administrator; Deb Padykula, Finance Officer; Paul Armstrong, Camera Operator

COMMUNITY ROOM

Vice Chairman David Petry convened the November 2, 2015 Selectmen's meeting at 6:30 pm in the Town Hall Community Room.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by Hollis Police Chief James Sartell.

AGENDA REVIEW

Interim Town Administrator Kimberly Galipeau reviewed the Selectmen's Agenda.

BUDGET WORKSHOP**1.) Emergency Management; Donald McCoy, Director**

D. McCoy stated that the Emergency Operation Plans for the Town have been completed, and the State has reimbursed the Town fully for the costs associated with the plan. For 2016, the budget request is essentially the same as for 2015. P. Band asked there were any other items that the Selectmen should be aware of. D. McCoy replied that a plan should be created in order to utilize the Lawrence Barn as a "warming station" in the event of weather or other emergencies. At the present, the portable generator to be put in the Lawrence Barn will only provide power for the furnace and a few lights. In the past, portable temporary generators have been brought to the site for additional use, but a permanent solution should be sought.

2.) Information Technology; Dawn Desaulniers, Director

In 2015, the Community Room camera system and microphone upgrades were completed. During the installation of the upgrades, it was found that animals have destroyed the existing microphone wiring in the ceiling area, and the hanging microphones are no longer functional. Due to this, the audience cannot be heard by the listening audience or staff writing minutes. To address this issue, D. Desaulniers proposed the purchase of two wireless microphones which can be placed on posts on either side of the audience. There are remaining funds to cover this installation in the 2015 budget, which will cost approximately \$1500 for equipment and installation. D. Petry asked about the quote provided; D. Desaulniers stated that she had researched equipment costs, and those are roughly the same no matter the vendor; the installation quote was provided by the company who installed the new camera/microphone system. D. Petry suggested encumbering funds if not able to install by the end of the year. D. Petry asked if an exterminator service was used for Town Hall; K. Galipeau answered yes, but animal control not a covered service. Contract covers typical insect or mice infestations, neither of which is believed to have caused the wiring problems.

For 2016, a Fire Department server upgrade to allow more users is planned, along with Microsoft Office upgrades as needed in different Town Departments. The planned Assessing software upgrade was delayed by the software company, and is not anticipated until 2017, but more information should be available by the end of 2016. No other major increases are anticipated for 2016. D. Petry asked if any grant funding was available to offset any costs; not at this time.

3.) Department of Public Works, Tom Bayrd, Director

Building & Grounds Maintenance Accounts. The majority of increases were to the Fuel Oil and Wood Pellets for Town Hall, overall the budget request for these accounts decreased by 5% for 2016.

Department of Public Works Salaries. Most significant change is to Non-Union Salaries and Union Salaries, as a Union Employee was promoted to Foreman in 2015; this is reflected in the line item. The Equipment Operator position vacated by the promotion will remain unfilled at this time. DPW staff consists of a Full-time Director, 2 Full-time Foremen, 5 Equipment Operators, 1 Part-Time Operator, and the Full-time DPW Secretary; this does not include Waste & Recycling Employees. Both salary line items include annual step raises/longevity increases. Overtime is based on past use; T. Bayrd noted that the past 2 winters were more difficult than average. Overall, the budget request for these accounts increased by 5% for 2016.

Road Rebuilding Accounts. Several roads were resurfaced in 2015. Louise Drive was not able to be finished due to a culvert replacement; this is anticipated to be completed in 2016. The paved section of Nartoff Road and Arbor Lane resurfacing is also slated for next year. P. Band asked if asphalt costs have decreased due to the decrease in oil prices; T. Bayrd replied yes, but still fluctuates. The DPW was able to save approximately \$30,000 this year due to this decrease, and those funds were used to resurface Apple Lane and Rocky Pond Road, which were originally scheduled for 2016. Rebate funds for the road resurfacing are still anticipated, which will lead to additional savings. P. Band asked if salt and sand costs remain the same; T. Bayrd stated that they have been reasonably stable over the past several years, but Town costs have increased due to weather conditions and additional snow removal.

Street Lighting. P. Band stated that he thought that the new electric provider contract costs included street lighting; D. Padykula replied yes, but kWh cost has gone up slightly. She felt that if the Town had remained with Eversource as the electricity provider, the increase in costs would be substantially more.

Waste & Recycling. F. Cadwell asked if the fee increase for the Souhegan Regional Landfill was included in the budget; D. Padykula replied yes, as an estimate. The District meeting is to be held on November 5, 2015, and the final number should be known soon after that meeting. Last year the increase was 2%, and a placeholder for a similar increase was added. D. Petry asked if the increase was anticipated to be the same this year. T. Bayrd stated that staff is concerned it may be more, but there may be other reductions that would offset the increase. Both he and D. Padykula will have better information at the next Budget Workshop meeting.

D. Petry felt that an overall 4 to 6 percent increase in the DPW specific budget will be questioned by the Budget Committee, but when all DPW budgets are considered, the overall increase is not significant.

4.) Fire Department, Fire Chief Richard Towne

Fire Salaries. D. Petry noted that the first two items that caught his attention were the Part-time Emergency Response and the Overtime line items. Chief Towne explained that in 2012, approximately \$30,000 had been expended via the Overtime line item, and in order to offset these costs, funds had been transferred from the Ambulance Fund. Since then, 24-hour shifts have lead to increased overtime. Labor Laws allow for an employee to work a maximum of 212 hours in a 28 day cycle; if additional hours are worked, overtime must be paid. The requested increase covers an additional 641 hours worked by full-time employees. Employees can elect to earn

compensatory time instead of overtime payments, but this adds to additional staff shortages. Chief Towne utilizes part-time Fire and Paramedic personnel to help reduce overtime hours whenever possible, but the pool of available qualified personnel has decreased over the past year. The part-time employees also fill in on shifts when coverage is low. This further results in the need for an increase to that line item, which is being requested to cover 528 hours a year. Funds previously transferred from the Ambulance Fund must be repaid as well. Overall, the Fire Department provides exceptional service for considerably smaller budget than similar Towns.

F. Cadwell asked for a breakdown of Fire Dept. employees; Chief Towne responded that there are 7 full-time Union Employees, 3 full-time Non Union Supervisory Employees, and the full-time Fire Dept. Secretary. 1 Full Time position has not been filled for the past several years, and the Deputy Fire Chief has taken over those duties. There are also volunteer firefighters/first responders who are not paid for their services to the town.

Financed Equipment. P. Band noted that there is a decrease for this line item. Chief Towne affirmed, stating that the Forest Truck, Engine and Tanker have been paid off in 2015. He is not expecting any major equipment replacement costs over the next five years.

Health Budget. No major expenses over 2015. Spraying was not felt necessary this year. No increases requested. D. Petry asked if Health Agencies & Hospital donations recommendations had been submitted; Chief Towne stated that he was not aware of request. D. Petry asked him to review these items for the Selectmen to ensure that the donations made to these charities were appropriate and warranted.

5.) Police Department, Chief James Sartell

Police Salaries. Chief Sartell noted that the increase in the Administration Salaries line had been offset by savings in other salary line items; the staffing of a Lieutenant position led to the increase. F. Cadwell asked if the vacant Sergeant position is funded in the proposed budget; Chief Sartell stated no. A handout was provided by Chief Sartell, listing Union employees consisting of 2 full-time Sergeants, 8 full-time Patrol Officers, 1 part-time Patrol Officer, 2 full-time Detectives, 1 part-time Prosecution/Records Clerk, and 1 full-time School Resource Officer. Non-Union employees consist of the Chief, 2 full-time Lieutenants, 1 full-time Police Secretary, 1 part-time Maintenance Technician, and 1 per diem Kennel Maintenance Staff. He is requesting that the Part-time Salary line item remain as previously budgeted; Patrol Officer Dan Bliss has recently submitted his resignation, as he is/has obtained full-time employment in the private sector. Chief Sartell would like to retain him as a Part-time Officer to cover any staff shortages. Officer Bliss is fully trained and has proven to be a valuable member of the Police Dept. Leaving the Part-time Salary position would provide funding for the position. V. Manoukian asked if a replacement had been found for Ken Beers' position after his resignation this year; yes.

Other Police Budget Items. Chief Sartell stated that while there is a change to the Heating Fuel budget for the Police Station, the overall cost remains the same. This is the first year for the pellet wood furnace, he felt it best to keep the line item the same, but the costs are split between propane and wood pellets. He hopes that the pellet furnace will prove economical over the next year, and he will be able to reduce the line item accordingly. The Vehicle Fuel line item has been reduced \$8000 for 2016; existing police vehicles are more fuel efficient in addition to lower gasoline costs. P. Band asked about decrease in the Police Cruiser line item; Chief Sartell explained that the lease payments were thought to be higher than actual and the line item has been adjusted accordingly. It is expected that the lease payments will remain at \$45,000 over the next two years.

6.) Communications Department, Chief James Sartell

Communications Salaries. Chief Sartell noted some staffing changes have been made over the past year. An increase to the Part-Time Salary line item has been requested to help with coverage to avoid overtime expenditures. Chief Sartell explained that in 2015, 4 different employees had been placed on long term medical leave for part of the year. To assist in controlling overtime expenditures, several changes were implemented: 1.) Shifts changed from 2 days on, 2 days off from 5 days on, 2 days off. 2.) Part-time personnel were utilized to work maximum hours allowed. While the part-time personnel were unable to be utilized for all eligible hours, most worked between 16 - 28 hours per week. 3.) Increasing eligible hours for part-time employees from 24 to 28 hours per week. D. Petry stated that the Town currently has a tentative agreement in place with the Local #3657 Bargaining Unit, and that budget increases that might be attributable to the approval of the agreement have not been accounted for in the proposed budgets. Chief Sartell concurred, but felt Salary and Overtime line items will also have increases. D. Petry wanted to make sure that the public was aware that these costs were not shown in the proposed budget as they have to be approved at Town Meeting.

Other Communication Budget Items. Other line items have revised, such as equipment lines are now merged into one line item. Other items have been added, such as Preventative Maintenance inspections are now to be performed twice annually; Radio Replacement Schedules have been implemented to replace one radio per year. D. Petry asked if the antenna replacement project has been completed; Chief Sartell stated yes.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN**1.) Present Obligations**

The Fire Dept. Forestry Truck, Engine, and Tank Truck all have been paid off during 2015. The DPW Dump Truck leased in 2012 has 1.5 years remaining on lease, and the 4 DPW vehicles leased in 2014 will have the final lease payments in 2018. The Police Cruiser leased in 2015 will have the final lease payment in 2017. The 2003 Open Space Bond and the 2004 Open Space/Cemetery Land Bond will both be paid by the year 2020.

2.) Future Capital Improvements

For 2016, funding for the following items has been requested:

a.) Emergency Management Sign/Message Board.

After discussions with Emergency Mgmt. Director Donald McCoy; Chief Sartell informed the Board that it was felt that the sign/message board was no longer necessary at this time.

b.) Fire Truck Computers.

Chief Towne stated the computer installation was necessary for Public Safety. Emergency Responders would have information in real time available in the vehicle, rather than calling Communications, carrying large notebooks around, or in "a person's head". Information would be in the database, and surrounding Town's data may be linked together. As Hollis provides mutual aid to surrounding communities, the computers will provide emergency personnel access to vital information much quicker than presently available. 8 units are being requested; cost includes units and software per D. Desaulniers. D. Petry asked if put out to bid already; Chief Towne replied yes, and stated that 3 bids have been received. This item was previously thought to be requested for the 2015 budget, but additional research was required, and this delayed the request to 2016.

c.) *Officer Safety/Cameras.*

Chief Sartell stated that Selectmen Chair Mark Le Doux tasked him with researching cost and companies providing equipment. Chief Sartell stated that at first, he was dismissive of the necessity of providing body cameras to officers; New Hampshire has a very low crime rate. After reviewing, he felt that it was a good opportunity to address the need for increased officer safety mechanisms. As part of his research, Chief Sartell found that approximately 95% of Police Depts. nationwide now utilize cameras as part of their risk management programs. The Hollis Police Dept. recently asked residents to respond to a survey, and their survey findings show that the public supports the use of body cameras. While researching replacement Taser weapons, Chief Sartell found that Taser International (Taser Intl.) has become involved with body cameras and the supporting software, and conducts an Officer Safety Program. The platform provided by Taser Intl. supports the body cameras with the ability to upgrade to both body and cruiser cameras in the future, and can provide both weapons and cameras to the Town. As the existing weapons are nearing their expiration, Chief Sartell was able to explore an option with Taser Intl. to provide replacement weapons and body cameras with an initial outlay of \$25,000; annual costs after initial outlay should be about \$10,000. This will provide officers with the most up-to-date equipment and ensure that any replacements are provided when needed. D. Petry asked what equipment would be provided by Taser Intl., and should this request be included in the Police Dept's regular operating budget rather than as a Warrant Article? Chief Sartell stated that all equipment would be provided. Additionally, Taser Intl. will also store electronic data; one of many benefits of this is that evidence can be shared with Defense attorneys via a link provided by Taser Intl. to the video. This will save staff hours and materials utilized in replicating data in those cases. The Police Dept would determine the data storage size needed, and with this system, no additional infrastructure is required. P. Band felt that Town would be supportive of proposal. F. Cadwell felt should be placed in Police Budget; D. Petry agreed.

d.) *Athletic Fields - Depot Road*

F. Cadwell explained that the Recreation Commission is requesting funding for an additional full size recreational field to accommodate Town needs, and would like to place this field on the southern part of the Hardy Field on Depot Road across from the Nichols Field Recreation Area. A quote of \$125,000 has been received to construct the field, which includes fill and irrigation. F. Cadwell noted that this has been an 8-year process to find a suitable location for the new field. V. Manoukian asked how the cost calculations were arrived at; he could not justify spending \$125,000 for a new field on land the Town already owns. F. Cadwell replied that the irrigation costs are approximately \$25,000, and the fill costs are approximately \$50,000. While the area in question has been previously cleared, the area will need to be widened and properly constructed in order to be considered a playing field. Over the past few years, an increasing need for soccer, lacrosse and field hockey fields has been noted, and is becoming vital to meet the needs of the community. D. Petry noted that the area is now being used as parking for events at Nichols Field and overflow parking for Old Home Days. This must be addressed as part of the new field construction, and needs to be part of the plan for the new field. The Board hopes that the Recreation Commission will present this plan to them shortly.

e.) *Communication Microwave Link.*

Chief Towne explained that the microwave antenna at the Fire Station is no longer operational, and needs to be replaced. Estimated cost to replace is \$25,000, but investigation on the failure is still ongoing. The link has been experiencing issues for over a year, and the manufacturer is now out of business, so replacement parts are difficult to obtain or are after-market parts. Beltronics has been working with the Town on the matter, but has not been able to determine cause of failure. Chiefs Towne and Sartell asked if any member of the public with experience

would like to assist in trouble-shooting the matter, to please contact the Fire or Police Dept. with their contact information.

f.) New Leases.

The DPW is requesting an International 7400 Dump Truck and a Volvo L-70 Loader to replace antiquated vehicles. F. Cadwell thought that only loader was being sought for 2016; T. Bayrd said that the DPW was on a 2-year replacement program; once the antiquated vehicles have been replaced, the life span is approximately 14-15 years, due to rust and obsolete computer wiring. Discussion in regards to replacements, vehicle and equipment life spans, models, and pricing occurred.

3.) Municipal Buildings and Facilities Expendable Trust Fund

D. Padykula reviewed the projects slated for 2016.

a.) Fire Station roof, estimated at \$60,000. D. Petry asked the life expectancy on the roof; Chief Towne stated unknown at this time. Previous replacements have been asphalt shingle, new roof will be metal. There have been issues with the roof in the past, especially on the northern side. Chief Towne will confer with the manufacturer and return to the Board with an answer on the expected life time.

b.) Police Dept. Alarm Panel, estimated at \$6500.

c.) Communications Console with new workstations, estimated at \$53,000.

d.) Town Hall Window Trim, and Library trim, estimated at \$20,000 combined.

e.) Lawrence Barn, trim. As this was just submitted to the Finance Office, estimated cost is unknown.

F. Cadwell asked what the Fund balance is; D. Padykula stated \$30,000 remaining. D. Petry asked if all 2015 projects were complete; D. Padykula responded that the Town is still waiting for the final invoice for the split rail fence, and the final payment is yet to be made for the Pellet Wood Furnaces at Town Hall and the Police Department, pending final inspections. The Library Parking lot project was rescheduled to 2016. D. Padykula anticipates the same funding to be requested for 2016 as for 2015, in the amount of \$150,000.

F. Cadwell asked if Budget Committee Guidance page was omitted from Budget Proposals. D. Padykula explained that the Budget Committee has not given their final determination, due to Health Insurance Rates increase. The Budget Committee is meeting on November 10th, and final guidance should be set at that meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

D. Petry apologized for not allowing Public Comment at the beginning of the meeting, and invited comments from members of the audience.

Maryanne Shanley, Town Resident, enquired where the Town wants to go in regards to dissolving the Hollis-Brookline Coop District. She felt that the investigation was ineffectual, and that both communities were not in favor of dissolution. Both the Middle School and High School are working well now. State RSA requirements may cause unnecessary rifts and other issues between communities. D. Petry expressed his frustration that the School District and the State cannot provide financial figures to aid in the process. Mrs. Shanley stated that the numbers do not exist. D. Padykula agreed, stating that there are no rules or case law regarding the matter, the Towns must negotiate, and the State reviews the dissolution agreements. The Committee was to present its findings to the Board in December, but that presentation has been pushed off due to lack of information available. Any further discussion on the matter should take place after this presentation.

Paul Happy, Town Resident, had the following questions/comments:

- 1.) Recreation Field - has four children that participate in sports utilizing existing recreational fields, had not noticed over crowding
- 2.) Administrative costs (couldn't hear question). D. Petry responded that departments should include a summary of employee count for each line item for transparency, so that public is aware of what is included in each item.
- 3.) Asked next step in budget process. D. Petry stated that next Budget Meeting will include preliminary reviews of budgets submitted, but not heard tonight. The full schedule of meetings is available at the Town website at http://hollisnh.org/announce/townmeeting/town_meeting.htm
(Staff Note: Due to microphone issues, entire conversation could not be heard clearly. Minutes may not reflect full discussion. CC)

NEW BUSINESS

1.) **Recommittal of Property Taxes.**

D. Padykula explained that this should have been finalized when Barbara Kowalski, former Tax Collector, resigned last year, and when the present Tax Collector, Christina Winsor, took her place. The recommittal assigns any outstanding tax debts to the new collector, and is being done to ensure proper record-keeping.

MOVED by Peter Band seconded by Frank Cadwell that the Selectmen approve the Recommittal of Property Taxes. Voting in favor of the motion were Petry, Cadwell, Band and Manoukian. No one was opposed. The motion PASSED 4-0-0.

2.) **2015 Second Half Property Tax Warrant.**

Christina Winsor, Tax Collector, has submitted the Property Tax Warrant for the 2nd half of 2015 for approval, in the amount of \$13,744,964.54 to be collected through property taxation. The 2015 Tax Rate was set by the State at \$23.02 per \$1000 of assessed value, which is a decrease of \$0.11 from the 2014 Tax Rate of \$23.13.

MOVED by Vahrij Manoukian seconded by Peter Band that the Selectmen approve the Property Tax Warrant for the 2015 Second Half, in the amount of \$13,744,964.54. Voting in favor of the motion were Petry, Cadwell, Band and Manoukian. No one was opposed. The motion PASSED 4-0-0.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Vahrij Manoukian seconded by Peter Band to adjourn. Voting in favor of the motion were Petry, Manoukian, Band and Cadwell, no one was opposed. Motion passed 4-0-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie Cain
Staff