

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING**

Selectmen present: David Petry, Vice Chairman; Vahrij Manoukian; Peter Band; and Frank Cadwell.  
Selectmen absent: Mark Le Doux.  
Staff present: Kimberly Galipeau, Interim Town Administrator; Deb Padykula, Finance Officer; and Paul Armstrong, Camera Operator

**COMMUNITY ROOM**

Vice Chairman David Petry convened the public meeting at 7:15 pm in the Town Hall Community Room.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by William Moseley.

V. Manoukian asked those present to remain standing, as he requested a moment of silence to remember the victims of the recent terrorist attack in Paris on November 13, 2015.

**AGENDA REVIEW**

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

**BUDGET WORKSHOP****1.) 2015 Budget Guidance**

D. Padykula informed the Board that the Budget Committee had established the final guidance number for the 2016 Proposed Operating Budget for the Town at 2%, or a \$162,938 increase over the 2015 Operating Budget. At this time, the proposed 2016 budget is 26% over the final guidance number. Both D. Padykula and the Board of Selectmen had requested a 3% increase in guidance at the Budget Committee meeting, due to the large increase in health insurance; the Budget Committee allowed 2%. The Department Heads were informed and asked to review their budgets for possible reductions.

Along with setting the guidance number, the Budget Committee made the following suggestions:

- a.) Assessing Contracted Services. As past practice was to ask for funding for the cyclical Assessing update via a Warrant Article, they recommended that the increase in the contracted amount for the multi-year contract also be brought forward as a Warrant Article.
- b.) The proposed Police Safety Equipment, to include body cameras, etc., be returned to a Warrant Article and not included in the Police Operating Budget.

P. Band noted that, if the Board chose to follow the suggestions made by the Budget Committee, the decrease in the proposed operating budget would be \$37,000. He asked if the majority of the proposed budget increase was due to changes in health insurance; yes. D. Padykula stated that she had received all open enrolment forms from eligible employees; the final health insurance cost is estimated at \$215,000, which has been revised from the original estimate of \$241,000. This has been updated in the budget proposal presented to the Board today. P. Band asked if it would be worth communicating with the health insurance provider for any additional consideration; D. Padykula thought not. P. Band asked if the employees portion of the premium could be renegotiated; no, as payments are established via the two bargaining agreements in place. V. Manoukian noted that at the amount given in the updated proposed budget, the total health insurance cost for 56 full time employees is \$1,058,000, or \$19,000 per employee. He suggested having employees purchase own insurance with a stipend from the Town in lieu of providing insurance; this would have to be negotiated via the bargaining agreement process. D. Petry also noted that these calculations do not include other costs, such as deductions, etc. There are contract caps in the bargaining agreements,

which limit the amount the Town must contribute to health insurance premiums, barring any future changes to Federal Law.

Further research will need to be done for 2017; P. Band asked what the Budget Committee's perspective was, while they raised the final guidance number to 2%, 75% of the Town budget is salaries and benefits. The health insurance premium increase was partly due to a significant increase in claims in 2015, and partly due to changes in the Federal Affordable Care Act. Savings seen by the Town in 2014, due to a decrease in health insurance premiums, were used by the Town to offset other budget items. D. Petry stated that the Board was faced with looking at staff levels and equipment. Can staff be reduced without impacting the Town's needs? Is the Town infrastructure adequately up to date and could remain at the current level without impacting public safety?

D. Petry asked Department Heads to suggest possible budget decreases.

## 2.) Budget Review

### a.) Dept. of Public Works; Tom Bayrd, Director

No major items that can be decreased. Lawn maintenance includes 4 lawn treatments a year for Town Hall, the Town Common, the Farley Building, and the Little Nichols Ball Field. R. Towne asked why individual departments cannot maintain their own yards/lawns. T. Bayrd replied that it's more than just mowing lawns, other landscaping/yard items are also addressed. The Board asked T. Bayrd to investigate the cost of lawn maintenance for any savings in that item.

F. Cadwell questioned the salary line, if one full-time operator position was unfilled due to a promotion, why is the salary reduction so low? T. Bayrd responded that step and longevity increases were included; the overall savings due to the personnel change was a decrease of \$23,000. F. Cadwell also questioned if we had really had two bad winters in a row; could the overtime line be decreased to \$50,000, or is \$55,000 appropriate. He noted that the contingency line item is rarely used; could it be used for overtime overages if the overtime line was decreased? Employees will be paid regardless of what line is used. D. Padykula will check the historical use on both items.

T. Bayrd stated that sand and gravel cost was a little lower than estimated in 2015, and he has approximately \$20,000 remaining in the line that he had not expected to spend. He could order and stockpile for use in 2016, this would reduce the line by that amount. D. Petry stated if this was approved, a contract would need to be in place by the end of the year. R. Towne noted that in the past when this was done, it was difficult to get the funds back the following year when needed, and this should be considered. F. Cadwell asked if any remaining funds in the salt line item; no, this has been completely expended. T. Bayrd stated that all other lines close to budgeted through today.

After review of the remaining DPW budget items, all lines shown to be close to budgeted amounts.

### b.) Liability Insurance.

V. Manoukian questioned why the premiums had not been adjusted. K. Galipeau explained that she and D. Padykula had a conference call with the Insurance Company, who stated that the reason for the increase was because the value of the Town buildings and equipment had risen to over \$1,000,000; they were in the process of sending the calculations on how the value had been derived. D. Petry thought that the Town should obtain additional quotes from other vendors if the Town was not contractually obliged to remain with the current provider. V. Manoukian still

questioned the CC camera installation being taken into account; R. Towne mentioned that the State of NH Labor Board had recently inspected all Town facilities, and any safety deficits were corrected as part of that inspection; these inspections should have resulted in a decrease to the premium. D. Petry asked K. Galipeau and D. Padykula to communicate with the vendor on these items; he felt when these items were considered, it should result in a lower premium.

c.) Town Hall.

D. Petry asked about the \$4200 expenditure for the proposed building permit software; this has not been approved yet and isn't shown in the 2016 proposed budget. D. Desaulniers, IT Director, explained that funding for this purchase was to come out of the 2015 budget funds remaining. D. Petry thought that this could be listed as a 2016 Warrant Article; felt that the cost was not sufficient to ask for a Warrant Article. D. Desaulniers felt that the 2016 software maintenance costs and the proposed large format copier/printer purchase could be combined into a Warrant Article; combined cost for both would be about \$8000 (Difficult to hear due to side conversation.) if the Board would support the software purchase in 2015.

d.) Police Department, Chief Jay Sartell

Chief Sartell proposed two changes:

- 1.) Delay filling the open Full Time Officer position until the start of the 2016 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter; this would allow a savings in \$14,100 from the salary line, and savings to Town NH Retirement and Benefits budgets, resulting in a net savings of \$20,400.
- 2.) That the Police Safety Equipment proposal for the body cameras, etc., be returned to a Warrant Article.

With these two changes, the overall increase to the Police Department budget was \$5600 for 2016. This represents a 6% decrease in spending with the exception of salaries. There are not any other places that could be cut without impacting public safety or the proper operation of the department. F. Cadwell asked if the salary increase is due to contractual obligations under the bargaining agreement; yes. (Microphone was accidentally covered during this part of the conversation and difficult to hear.) F. Cadwell asked if the diesel fuel line was correctly calculated; Chief Sartell stated that this line has been recalculated to account for the decrease in fuel costs.

e.) Communications, Chief Jay Sartell & Chief Rick Towne

Most of overall department increase due to salaries. The \$1500 increase to replace the radio equipment could be reduced or stricken; however, as some of these radios are 25+ years old, they need to be replaced. The overall budget increase of \$6200 is not significant. Some funds are received from Brookline and Mason, and are used to offset costs, approximately \$140,000. D. Petry asked if the annual amount received is based on use or flat fee; Chief Sartell stated flat, but felt the amount was fair to all 3 communities. Hollis staffing would need to be at the present level regardless of mutual aid provided to those communities.

D. Petry asked the Department Heads to review their budgets again to see if any other items could be decreased voluntarily. If no other cuts can be made, the Board does not have many options, but they could make the difficult decision to arbitrarily decrease budgets, which they do not want to do, or they could go above the Budget Commission guidance and request an increase at Town Meeting. The Selectmen would prefer to have the Department Heads determine any further budget decreases as they know what their departments best. D. Petry is concerned that further decreases to equipment may not serve the public good. Should the Board be looking at other item than expendables? P. Band felt that overages outside of the Selectmen's ability to control, such as health insurance and contracted salary increases, should not be made part of the guidance formula. D. Padykula stated that this was

not discussed by the Budget Committee. F. Cadwell felt that these amounts are not subtracted from the guidance amount, as the Budget Committee expects the Board to take this into consideration during contract negotiations. He felt that the Board has done a good job in negotiations, but these items should be reviewed in the future.

The Board felt that Capital Improvements may need to be reviewed, but these items are not included in the guidance calculation. If an equipment purchase is put off, that would result in one less payment attributable to the appropriate Department budget. D. Petry asked Department Heads to consider purchases, but if necessary equipment purchases are being delayed or not considered, the Board needs to know. Chief Towne stated that the Budget Committee needs to be aware that all departments have cut to the bone over the past 3+ years due to the flagging economy. The Budget Committee should realize and know that increases are necessary because of these previous cuts, and the delay in replacing equipment or not filling positions is beginning to affect all departments at all levels. Any additional decreases could have a negative impact on public safety or services. D. Petry reminded the audience that the Town has had no new positions created and several positions in all departments have gone unfilled to reduce expenditures over the past 3+ years. K. Galipeau reminded the Board that the November 30<sup>th</sup> meeting will be the last Selectmen's meeting before the 1<sup>st</sup> joint Selectmen-Budget Committee meeting to review the 2016 Budget.

Both Chief Towne and Chief Sartell informed the Board that the microwave link, as discussed at the November 2, 2015 meeting, is impacting communications and must be replaced at the earliest opportunity. Chief Sartell stated that pages have been transmitted from the link, but are not always received in the field. This could become problematic if the link fails completely. Requests to Bid have gone out to vendors, and two bids have been received, with a third expected within the next few days. The two bids received are within \$500 of each other; Chief Sartell would like to move forward with one of these vendors. He explained that the hardware failed, not the software, and the microwave link is the best method of communicating with officers in the field until broadband communication is made available in the area. Once broadband is available, the new link will be able to be integrated into that system and continue to be used. P. Band asked if any demonstrative warranty is available to ensure that the link will work correctly; Chief Sartell stated that the manufacturer's and system mechanical warranties will be in place, and an updated maintenance plan will be implemented by both Departments. P. Band asked if final testing will be performed prior to the final payment; yes. Discussion of the equipment, installation process, and vendors continued. D. Petry asked both Chiefs to return to meet with the BOS once the third bid has been received to discuss the final recommendation prior to moving forward.

## NEW BUSINESS

### 1.) Town Hall Holiday Schedule

K. Galipeau provided the following schedule to the Board:

Thursday, November 26, 2015 - Town Hall closed for Thanksgiving Holiday;

Friday, November 27, 2015 - Town Hall closed for Thanksgiving Holiday;

Tuesday, December 22, 2015 - Town Hall will close at noon for the Annual Staff Holiday Party;

Friday, December 25, 2015 - Town Hall closed for Christmas;

Friday, January 1, 2016 - Town Hall closed for New Years Day.

### 2.) Weekly Meetings & Announcements

V. Manoukian read the meeting schedule for the week of Monday, November 16 through Sunday, November 22, 2015.

**3.) Senator Kelly Ayotte Hours**

V. Manoukian announced that a representative from Senator Kelly Ayotte's office will be available at Town Hall on Monday, November 30, 2015, from noon to 1:00 pm to speak with Hollis residents.

**4.) Approval Public Minutes, November 2, 2015**

*MOVED by David Petry seconded by Vahrij Manoukian that the Selectmen approve the public minutes of Monday, November 2, 2015, as submitted. Voting in favor of the motion were Petry, Manoukian, Band, and Cadwell. No one was opposed. The motion PASSED 4-0-0.*

**NON-PUBLIC SESSION**

*MOVED by Vahrij Manoukian seconded by Frank Cadwell that the Selectmen enter NON-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3-II (d), land acquisition. Voting in favor of the motion were Petry, Manoukian, Band and Cadwell. No one was opposed. Motion PASSED 4-0-0.*

The Board entered non-public session at 8:38 pm.

**CONCLUSION OF NON-PUBLIC SESSION**

*MOVED by Frank Cadwell seconded by Peter Band that the Selectmen come out of NON-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3-II (d), land acquisition. Voting in favor of the motion were Petry, Manoukian, Band and Cadwell. No one was opposed. Motion PASSED 4-0-0.*

*MOVED by Frank Cadwell seconded by Peter Band that the Selectmen seal the minutes of the NON-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3-II (d), land acquisition. Voting in favor of the motion were Petry, Manoukian, Band and Cadwell. No one was opposed. Motion PASSED 4-0-0.*

The Board came out of non-public session and entered public session at 9:40 pm.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

The Board adjourned the meeting at 9:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Connie Cain  
Staff