

Budget Committee
January 27, 2020
Meeting Minutes

Present:

Chair Joe Caristi, Vice Chair Dave Carr, Tom Kaempfer, Walter Waring, Charles Therriault, Janet Cavanagh (late), and Select Board Representative Les Dion

Others Present:

Mark Bucklin, Highway Superintendent; Nik Coates, Town Administrator; Bob Blanchette, Finance/Human Resources Director

Call to Order:

Mr. Caristi called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Review and Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve January 13, 2020 minutes by Mr. Therriault, seconded by Mr. Kaempfer. Motion passed 6-0-0.

Correspondence:

None

Old Business:

4711/4712 Principal L/T Debt & Interest & 4194-410 GGB Electricity

Mr. Coates informed the committee that these budgets are on the agenda for the February 4th Budget Committee meeting in order to have more information available for the committee. Mr. Caristi and the committee agreed it would be best to discuss lines 4711/4712 and 4194-410 at the February 4th meeting.

New Business:

4311 – Highway

Mr. Bucklin stated there were increases in salt, cell phones, and solid waste. He thinks an extra 50 tons of salt should be ordered to salt areas sufficiently and have extra on hand when needed for emergencies. New cell phones were bought last year along with a tablet. The Department is also looking in the future to add scales to weigh loads brought in by contractors. The sidewalks line was also increased to do sidewalk maintenance this year on Beach Street. Bathroom and breakroom updates were moved to the Warrant along with the salt and sand shed construction project. Mr. Therriault motioned to amend line 810 from \$18,000 down to \$1,000. Motion to move bottom line of 4311 in the amount of \$542,866 by Mr. Therriault, seconded by Ms. Dion. Motion passed 6-0-0. Ms. Cavanagh was not present at the meeting at time of motion.

4312 – Highway Projects

Mr. Bucklin stated that the Chip Seal line included the Castle Lane cul de sac and Camelot Acres that needed work. He discussed the Hall Road Project to grind, regravels, and repave that road for maintenance upkeep. The Town is looking at grant funds from the Economic Development Administration since it is the same area as the proposed sewer extension project. He is also requesting funds to complete the Millstream Bike Trail as well as some drainage work in the parking lot. Motion to move bottom line of 4312 in the amount of \$413,263 by Mr. Kaempfer, seconded by Ms. Dion. Motion passed 5-0-2.

4319 – Streets/Bridges

Mr. Bucklin stated the budget is flat and is for maintaining streetlights, bridges, and fixing guardrails. Motion to approve bottom line of 4319 in the amount of \$30,500 by Mr. Therriault, seconded by Mr. Kaempfer. Motion passed 6-0-1.

4324 – Solid Waste

According to Mr. Bucklin, Bristol has made an arrangement with the Town of Ashland to drop off cardboard from Bristol to be recycled. This helps Bristol to reduce the cost of disposing cardboard by keeping it out of the waste stream. Glass is now \$30 a ton to dump and process through New London. Tire disposal costs have increased due to the use of a new storage container which allow the department to keep them organized rather the mess they used to create. The Hauling Services line has decreased because of a contract with a new contractor. Mr. Caristi stated the proposed Solid Waste budget is decreased by 7% from last year. Motion to move bottom line of 4323 in the amount of \$346,762 by Mr. Therriault, seconded by Mr. Waring. Motion passed 5-0-1. Ms. Dion was not present at time of vote.

Warrant Article Preliminary Review:

Mr. Coates and Mr. Bucklin discussed the message signboard for \$16,000 to purchase a trailer mounted variable message sign board. \$8,000 is to come from a grant; paying half of the cost for the board. This will help to alert those going through town about weather and emergency events, road closings, NH Marathon weekend, Old Home Day Parade, or any other Town events.

Mr. Bucklin also discussed two Highway Department articles, one for \$130,000 to construct a salt and sand shed and the other for \$45,200 to renovate the bathrooms and second floor facilities at the Highway Department building.

Chief LaRoche presented the Fire Department's articles in the draft Warrant. One article is for \$15,000 to cover the first year's payment on two (2) Cardiac Monitor/Defibrillators. The current ones owned by the Fire Department are discontinued by the manufacturer. The total cost is \$60,000 broken up into four yearly payments of \$15,000 and 0% down.

Chief LaRoche also discussed the article for \$100,000 for architecture and related studies for a future public safety building to house the Police and Fire Departments into one building. Chief McIntire of the Bristol Police Department and Chief LaRoche have visited other town public safety buildings including

New Hampton and Farmington. Farmington was able to recommend the architectural company that built their public safety building and has drawn up a proposal for the two departments.

Mr. Coates then discussed the other sections of the Warrant. The Solar Tax Credit article discusses provisions of RSA 72:61-64; proposing a tax credit on solar improvements for homeowners. The Town does not currently have a methodology for assessing solar arrays and this warrant article was recommended by the Assessor as a way forward.

Discussion followed on the two solar warrant articles. The first article asks the Town to approve the Power Purchase Agreement with BP Bristol, LLC for a 25-year span for all electricity generated at the solar powered generation facility. It also asks to appropriate \$14,000 for the first year's purchase of electricity, coming from the sewer usage fees and not from taxation. This is contingent on the next article for the Town to vote on leasing a portion of the property of 180 Ayers Island Road for the construction, operation, and maintenance of a solar powered electric generation facility.

The Contingency Fund article is to establish a contingency fund for unanticipated expenses that may arise during the year 2020. This is a warrant article that DRA requires towns to do every year.

The Police Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund warrant article asks for \$44,000 to be added to the Police Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund with \$10,000 of coming from the Police Revolving Fund. The use of the funds from the Revolving Fund helps to bring costs for replacement police vehicles down by using non-taxpayer dollars. A new police cruiser costs approximately \$50,000, there is \$6,000 in the Capital Reserve Fund right now.

Mr. Coates discussed the warrant article requesting \$128,500 for the purchase and installation of an elevator, emergency backup generator, and office furniture for the Town Office Building. The cost would be offset by a grant, if received, of \$70,675. The Americans with Disabilities Act says that equal access needs to be provided for both floors, which is the reasoning for the elevator. The purpose of the backup generator is to provide power in the case of power outages and emergencies and for the backbone fiber network. The purpose of the furniture request is to replace furniture that is falling apart and add furniture where there is some needed.

Mr. Coates discussed the Expendable Trust Fund article for the purpose to support Town-sponsored events. Examples of these events are Old Home Day, Fireworks, and other such events. \$5,000 is to be raised and added into the fund from unreserved fund balance to help get it started.

Mr. Blanchette and Mr. Coates discussed the Capital Reserve Funds articles, asking the Town to raise and appropriate \$240,000 into five existing Capital Reserve Funds. The Fire Department's Reserve is for the Fire Engine and Highway's Reserve for equipment needed. These funds are used for large ticket items that are planned for in the CIP. For the Accrued Wages fund, Mr. Blanchette stated that Town policy states that 60% of liabilities should be planned for.

Member Comments:

Mr. Waring expressed his concern with the new Public Safety Building concept, that are members of his neighborhood and his community whom are frustrated with the town spending, and he would like to see some debt come off the books before the town starts any major projects. Janet Cavanagh and David Carr agreed with the sentiments

Select Board Comments:

None.

Staff Comments:

None.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn meeting at 8:00pm by Ms. Cavanagh, seconded by Mr. Kaempfer. Motion passed 7-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shannon Wharton