

Budget Committee  
June 24, 2019  
Meeting Minutes

**Present:**

Joe Caristi, Walter Waring, Janet Cavanagh, Joseph Dillier, Thomas Kaempfer, and David Carr.

**Absent:**

**Others Present:** Town Administrator, Nik Coates

**Call to Order:**

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

**New Business:**

**Tour of town hall**

The meeting began with a tour of the department center in the town hall building.

Nik talked about the foot traffic and the busy influxes of the year. For instance, at this point in time there is an increase in beach passes. Nik states that the primary revenue streams through the town clerk. Nik said that one of the challenges in the present space that are looking to be rectified in the new building is private space. In the current space there is nowhere for people to come in and hold a private conversation. Currently everything is cramped, there are thin walls, and no designated areas for such processes. The second attribute of the new space, said Nik, is the double entrance which he said would improve the efficiency of foot traffic. Nik said since he has been in his position his focus has been directed towards more customer service and technology. He extended office hours and make an effort to get people help faster with their applications. The effort towards more privacy in the new building also is to increase the quality in customer service. In terms of technology Nik said that the introduction of credit card transactions was a big step. This allows people to use credit cards for water and sewer transactions, paid in real time. Within the office Nik talked about the updating of software and licenses. Joe Caristi asked if there was anything to be expected in the upcoming budget in terms of projects. Nik said that a lot of those projects are happening now, referring back to the technology updates. He said the website is now up and running which is a big improvement and only has a few bugs to be fixed. In the future the website can provide a platform for residents to make online permit submissions. Once received municipal departments would be able to streamline communications to process these applications. Nik went on to say that the town logo is something that can be seriously considered. It needs to be legitimized. Further in the tour they looked at some of the structural compromises that have taken place in the current town hall. Nik said the big issue has been the filing system which has created large structural impairments even after being moved to a space that was assumed to be more suitable in handling the weight. Because of these needed repairs the Police Department, whom would be taking over residence, is now considering what would be more sensical: to invest in repairing the building or to build new.

**Review of Budget**

The budget Committee proceeded to quickly go over the budget outline and identify and discuss some of the changes and projections. There is now a new health insurance plan. There has been a switch from Harvard Pilgrim to Blue Cross. Town employees are now contributing 12% up from 10%. A wellness program has been implemented. There is currently a blood pressure screening. This is an effort to be proactive on health for employees which can potentially reduce costs of health insurance long run. Some changes in the executive budget includes supply upgrades. The boards are going paperless and will be

given laptops. This will allow more condensing and gathering of information that will be on hand for board members at meetings. In consideration of the new town hall Joe Caristi requested an estimate of operations costs for the new facility. There will be an increase due to the addition of a new building instead of the one splitting the police department from the town hall itself. There will be separate maintenance, signage, security, and utilities. Nik Coates responded that there will be difficulty in getting an accurate cost. There are many new variables. He explained that the previous owner did not forward any billing information. There is also a new upgraded heating system. It's going to take the first year to really gather what it costs day to day but he would still compile an estimate. They then looked at long term debt obligations. The town hall would be an addition and many are remaining for some time but the library and Fire Department Engine replacement would be closing within the next couple years. Nik discussed some of the expenses for the (EDC), Economic Development Committee. He updated the board on Bill Dowey's progress meeting with Dean Kamen. Much of the expenses are going towards meetings, memberships, and networks to scout potential businesses that are interested in Bristol.

**Interviews:**

The Budget Committee interviewed three candidates for the open position on the board. Closing the interviews the board held a discussion and voted to appoint Charlie Therriault.

**Correspondence:**

There was no correspondence.

**Old Business:**

There was no old business.

**Member Comments:**

There were no member comments.

**Select Board Comments:**

There were no select board comments.

**Staff Comments:**

There were no staff comments.

**Adjournment:**

Mr. Caristi motioned to adjourn at 8:30 PM, seconded by Thomas Kaempfer, the motion passed with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Brett Parenteau