

Approved

SANBORNTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MINUTES

October 19, 2019

Town Offices

The Board of Selectmen convened in joint session with the Budget Committee on Saturday, October 19, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. at the Town Offices. In attendance were Selectman Tom Salatiello, Selectman Jim Dick and Selectman John Olmstead. Budget Committee members present were Craig Weisman, Ralph Rathjen, Ray Masse and Bob Lambert. Town Administrator, Trisha Stafford was also present.

1.0 Review of the 2021 Proposed Budget - Selectman Dick pointed out to the Budget Committee members that the Board asked the Department Heads to submit their budgets with "flat" payroll – no Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) or merit increases – until the Board and Budget Committee had a chance to discuss the approach to those items for the FY21 budget. So the budgets being presented are not truly the Department Head recommendations, because they would have step increases that they want to present. Those will be incorporated in the final budget recommendation that goes to the Budget Committee.

Highway Department - 4312 - Director Van Tassel stated he has budgeted for a 53 week year, so the payroll figures have been changes accordingly. Director Van Tassel referred to the department's narrative sheets and explained anything with a "NC" next to it means no change. Director Van Tassel stated line item .357 has been increased for two radios to be replaced at a time. Director Van Tassel reported that no bids were received for hired equipment/trucking (.380) and the Town hired Nate Douglass as the Transfer Station Manager, the plow route was his but he (Van Tassel) may take over the Knox Mountain Road route and divvy out the snow plowing for the Town Complex/Town Office area. Director Van Tassel noted that this is not the best situation but he would make it work. Director Van Tassel moved onto (.398) hired snow removal and stated the level of service has bigger expectations than ten years ago because people expect to be able to travel while it is snowing out, whether it be residents or outside travelers. Ray Masse added that we now live in a world of immediate gratification/notification. Selectman Salatiello stated if there are problems then complaints should be brought to the BOS because we can't expect to meet everyone's expectations. Director Van Tassel explained that repairs & maintenance has been increased by \$1K but those funds were moved from vehicle repairs (.660). Director Van Tassel stated the gasoline line has been decreased to \$500 dollars because they have only spent \$200 dollars to date but diesel was over expended last year. Chair Olmstead noted it is hard to predict the number of storms for the Highway or the number of calls for the Fire Department. Director Van Tassel reported that the tires line (.661) has been increased by \$3K because he is replacing his stock. Director Van Tassel stated the uniforms (.685) line has been increased by \$1K and he may be sending out an RFP or rethinking how to purchase them because it is expensive. Director Van Tassel stated he reduced crack sealing line (.685) by \$4K last year and moved the funds to the

dust control line to help save the “fines” on the dirt roads, they are treated twice a year with calcium chloride. Director Van Tassel explained that crack sealing is good to a point but it can be overdone, every crack doesn’t need to be filled. Craig Weisman replied he walks the roads and some of the sealing material is not in the cracks and feels there should be more oversight when the work is scheduled. Ralph Rathjen stated he feels every crack should be sealed because if not, then water is being let into the road. Chair Olmstead stated the Town looked at purchasing its own crack sealing equipment but it was too expensive. Director Van Tassel explained that the road will get to a point where it will need a shim and overlay. There was a brief discussion of the “Y” project and the road’s current condition. Selectman Salatiello stated he feels the road work should be looked at seriously because of past issues and he doesn’t mean to be critical but the road conditions should be reevaluated. Director Van Tassel explained the funds should be in the gravel road line, so he can evaluate each one every year. Selectman Dick replied he understands but then the plan losses visibility and Director Van Tassel replied sort of, but this leaves room for him to do the work he needs to do. Director Van Tassel stated the sand (.691) and salt (.693) lines have been split but are level funded and the meals line has been increased by \$400 dollars. Director Van Tassel stated they have used \$18K in funds this year for tree removal (.841) with a total budget of \$20K. Ralph Rathjen stated the tree removal funds in the past has been used as a short fall for other things, so he would like to see all of it spent. Director Van Tassel said he has a plan to spend all of that line on tree work, and there is more work than we can afford. Ray Masse stated implicit transfers noted in the board’s meeting minutes are all over the place and it is hard to wrap your head around for the proposed budget. Selectman Saltiello stated he feels that \$20K is too much money and it should be looked at. Ralph Rathjen suggested getting quotes for all of the trees that need removal for specificity. Director Van Tassel replied if he did, the quotes would exceed that figure and then he would have no more variability. Selectman Salatiello noted the Tree Warden should be consulted when removing trees from a scenic road. Director Van Tassel replied yes, there is usually a hearing as well.

Library -4550 - Chair Olmstead thanked Director Haigh for providing the line item breakdown of the Library’s budget and noted the Board can approve their budget but they can spend those funds anyway they would like to per the state statutes. Director Haigh explained that the proposed budget was developed by the Library Trustees and was treated like the other departments with payroll budgeted for 53 weeks. Director Haigh reported that the telephone line (.341) was increased by \$30 dollars, the security system has been increased due to the new fire & burglar systems, line .690 building supplies was increased by \$100 dollars because they have been going over, bookkeeping & accounting has been decreased because they have moved to bi-weekly pay and the elevator line has been decreased to \$300 because it is an off contract year and the figure will go back up next year. Director Haigh stated advertising & marketing (.335), computer software (.565) and office supplies have all decreased because they have to digital. Selectman Dick stated he appreciates the cooperation of the Library for budget transparency and the services they provide are amazing.

Fire Department - 4220/4290/4291/4292 - **Budget 4220** - Chief Dexter stated he has added an administrative assistant line (.116) to his budget (\$15,860 total), which is one of his on-call EMT’s that was coming in on Mondays to help with payroll as a pilot program

but the position has moved to 2-days a week with some other data entry responsibilities. Chief Dexter explained that the funds were coming from the existing budget funds of line .195 but he wanted to create its own line for a 3-day schedule because it has streamlined the process and been of value to the department, so he has decreased the on-call & per diem line by \$6K to help cover funding the pilot with a total payroll increase of approximately \$6K. Chief Dexter noted full-time is under budget due to a vacancy but per diem is over due to that. Ray Masse asked why the night shift stipend has doubled (.115). Chief Dexter replied that line covers the 7 p.m. to 5 a.m. shift which went from a one-hour to two-hour stipend that's why it has doubled, as an incentive for coverage and it has worked out very well. Chief Dexter stated 2-4 people respond depending on qualifications. Selectman Dick asked if \$32K was aggressive enough for the on-call & per diem callback and Chief Dexter replied this is the first year, so he tried not to lower the line too much because of payroll. Craig Weisman stated the department has seen a \$150K increase from 2017 to 2021, as a business owner a new employee is a big expense and so the question has to be asked, is it absolutely necessary because from a budget standpoint there is hesitation. Chief Dexter stated there have been a lot of permits and building, some things fell through the cracks because there is not enough of his time and payroll is due on Mondays so he cannot be absent. He also has additional responsibilities under his emergency management hat that are not getting his attention because of routine admin. Ralph Rathjen stated two full-time firefighters were hired and they should've been able to pick up some of the slack. Chief Dexter replied the full-time firefighters are not expected to do administrative work. Ralph Rathjen noted it is the same argument that was made for the secretary at the Highway Department and he doesn't disagree but the decision should be left up to the voters. Chief Dexter explained that dispatch (.332) has been increased to \$35K which is the worst case scenario because the final figures will not be received until December. Chief Dexter reported that physicals (.350) have been decreased by \$1K and telephone (.341) has been increased by \$700 dollars. Selectman Dick noted that BoS is currently reviewing phone/internet to make a reduction across the board. Chief Dexter reported that software purchase/contract, general supplies and office equipment have all been increased by \$500 dollars or less. Chief Dexter noted the computer line (.622) is to purchase a new computer annually. Selectman Dick replied a new computer every year is excessive and the line should be looked at because it adds up over time – and the replacement interval is not consistent across Departments. Chief Dexter stated the 2001 Engine is at Chapel Station and he is rethinking its replacement but will be asking the CIPC to replace Engine #3 instead due to recent repairs (.660). Ralph Rathjen requested a list of the department's training hours and Chief Dexter replied he would produce one.

Police Department - 4210 - Chief Hankard explained that he also budgeted for 53 weeks for payroll without any increases which are needed, so the total increase is approximately \$6K. Chief Hankard stated he has discussed hiring another part-time officer and would like for them to be certified because training is expensive. Chief Hankard explained that the only other change is that \$6K was moved out of permanent part-time (.115) to overtime (.140) to provide 24-hour coverage because State Police is unable to but this is not a permanent solution, it is just filling the gap. There was a brief discussion regarding allowing an incentive for those that decide not to take the Health Insurance. Chief Hankard also presented a quote from Ossipee Mountain Electronics for the upfitting of the new police SUV and tear down of the old cruiser. Chair Olmstead made a **motion** to

accept the quote from Ossipee Mountain Electronics for the upfitting of the new hybrid SUV and the downfitting of the old cruiser, in the amount of \$9,670.05 dollars with the funds to be reimbursed from the 2019 special warrant article and the police special detail fund. Selectman Dick **seconded** the motion and the **motion passed unanimously**.

Budget Recommendation for COLA, Wage/Grade Increases, Discussion of Town Building Renovations - Selectman Dick stated that he believes the Board and Budget Committee should have some basis for recommending COLA increases, tied to an official index. He noted that social security is proposing a 1.6% increase this year. Selectman Dick suggested that if COLA or merit increases are given then the Board should review the pay matrix every few years. TA Stafford stated the Town needs a wage classification schedule. Craig Weisman asked if the BoS approve the proposed increases by department heads and Chair Olmstead replied yes. Craig Weisman replied good then there is checks & balances. Selectmen Dick agreed to provide the Board and Budget Committee with some index options to consider that could be agreed upon as the annual basis for a COLA. Ray Masse noted that the 4.5% increase proposed by the HISC has not been decided on yet. Once the Board has voted on the HISC recommendations, and the two groups agree on an index basis for a COLA, then the Department Heads will be directed to adjust their payroll, including any step increases they want to propose. On the topic of Town building renovation, Ralph Rathjen added that the \$5 million dollars proposed for the Town Buildings to be renovated was hard to swallow but there was support for some of the work. Selectman Dick noted that the Town Building Construction Committee will be looking at space needs and working with the architectural firm which may take a year. Craig Weisman stated he would support funding through the CIP, \$300K over five years. Ralph Rathjen agreed and stated it would be nice to have some money in hand instead financing the entire project. Selectman Dick stated the Town needs to move forward with the most cost efficient/cost effective way possible. Chief Dexter noted he would be proposing \$175K to install showers at the life safety building which will not be money wasted, they will just be getting the showers early. The Budget Committee and BoS agreed to come up with a recommendation in two weeks.

2.0 ADJOURNMENT – Selectman Dick made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 1:30 p.m. Craig Weisman **seconded** the motion and the **motion passed unanimously**.

3.0 NEXT MEETING(S) – The Selectmen will hold their regularly scheduled meeting on **Wednesday, October 23, 2019 @ 5:00 p.m.** at the Sanbornton Town Office.

Respectfully submitted,
April Rollins, Administrative Specialist

Selectmen's Clerk _____
Approved 10/23/19