

MINUTES

Sanbornton Budget Committee

Meeting Date and Time: Monday, December 18, 2017 at 7:00 PM

Meeting Place: Town Offices, 573 Sanborn Road, Sanbornton, N.H.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ralph Rathjen at 7:00 PM.

Present: Chair Ralph Rathjen, Justin Barriault, Craig Davis, John Vorel, Selectman Karen Ober

Approval of draft BC minutes from 12/4 – Chair Ralph Rathjen made a motion to approve the draft minutes of 12/4. Justin Barriault seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Review of FY19 Department Budgets

Fire Department – Fire Chief Paul Dexter explained that he is requesting new software for the Fire Department which will be more efficient and user-friendly. The current Firehouse software is antiquated and Fire Incident Reporting will be able to be used remotely and is easier. He stated that Gilford has moved to the product and is very happy with it. He is also requesting a new photocopier for \$6,800 as the current one has broken repeatedly and is a hand-me-down from other town departments.

Chief Dexter stated that the requested increase for Overtime from \$12,000 to \$15,000 is because payroll will increase January 1st based on 6-month reviews of the two full-time firefighters, and he also noted that multiple calls are increasing. Justin Barriault asked how multiple calls were handled before the full-time firefighters were hired. Chief Dexter responded that mutual aid and part-time staff were relied on.

The Chief is proposing an increase for the overnight stipend to entice employees to sign up for night shifts, an increase from one times their hourly wage to twice their hourly wage. He said that he has asked employees about this and some said that it would entice them to sign up if the stipend was increased. The department is under budget on this now because of the overnight shift vacancies.

Justin Barriault stated that he understands the requests but that the total budget increase of \$30,000 for one year is big and he would like see it cut by \$10,000. He suggested cutting the software and overtime increase and keeping the photocopier and incentive requests. Chief Dexter stated that he has heard from boards that they want data from the Fire Department and the software will be an easier way to capture this. He stated that he would rather get new software than a photocopier. John Vorel stated that since the software will be used for completing inspections the fees may need to increase for LP gas installs, copies of reports, etc. Chief Dexter responded that the fees just started in January but this can be looked at in the future. He also noted that the new Zoning Administrator just started and that they will both be looking at the fee structures for permits.

Chair Ralph Rathjen made a motion to reduce the BOS recommended budget of \$15,000 for Overtime to the prior year's budget of \$12,000, and to reduce the BOS recommended budget of \$7,800 for Office Equipment (new photocopier) to the prior year's budget of \$1,000, for a total Fire Department budget of \$473,022. Justin Barriault seconded the motion and the motion passed, with John Vorel and Selectman Ober voting No and Justin Barriault, Craig Davis and Ralph Rathjen voting Yes. The motion passed. Chair Rathjen noted that this motion will be revisited at the next meeting when all Budget Committee members are present.

Forest Fire – Chair Rathjen made a motion to accept the BOS recommended budget of \$2,023 for Forest Fire. Justin Barriault seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Highway Department – Craig Davis noted that there has been a lot of salt put on the roads. Highway Department Director Johnny Van Tassel stated that he is training staff to reduce salt use on Sanbornton roads and only using if necessary. Craig Davis also noted that he wants salt and sand separated on the Highway Department budget, and also asked if the salt and sand line could be cut by \$10,000. HD Director Van Tassel stated that he would be comfortable with that reduction and that moving forward he will try to find ways to cut the budget more each year. Justin Barriault asked if the 5 days for crack sealing that was recommended last year was useful. Director Van Tassel responded that it was useful but it can only go so far. He also noted that there have been discussions about the Highway Department doing crack sealing rather than subbing it out. Justin Barriault stated that this will probably be more expensive once training and equipment costs are factored in and suggested letting a crack sealing company handle this work. Craig Davis asked if the \$20,000 for tree removal is adequate and Director Van Tassel responded that he thinks it is and he would like to work on coordinating tree work with future road projects.

Craig Davis noted that there is a \$6,000 increase for temporary labor. Director Van Tassel that part of this is for snow shoveling which is delegated to an employee by the Transfer Station Manager, but he would also like the worker trained on flagging, chainsaw work, trash clean-up, etc. Director Van Tassel noted that he is reviewing applications for a 5th Highway Department employee because there is an opening due to Rick Razinha becoming the Transfer Station Manager. He is also requesting an additional 6th employee at \$32,156 in the Highway budget and stated that a core group of six workers is needed for year-round projects, and stated that snow plowing is only part of their job. Selectman Ober stated that the Highway Director has been asked to do more long-range planning and clerical work, so the Highway Department will really only have 5 employees, as 75% of the Director's time will be spent in the office. Justin Barriault stated that the Director is not overseeing the Transfer Station any longer so this will free up some time. He also suggested hiring a part-time secretary to do the admin work being requested of the Highway Director rather than hiring a full-time laborer. Selectman Ober stated that this has been proposed in the past but that residents didn't want money going towards an admin position at the Highway Department.

Craig Davis stated that the Budget Committee may want to see if there is room in the Highway budget to purchase comfortable chairs for plow drivers to rest between shifts. Director Van Tassel stated that some drivers can go home but others live as far away as Campton so they rest in their vehicles rather than driving home and coming back. Craig Davis has asked some of the Highway employees if they would take advantage of an area to rest at the Highway garage and they said that they would. Selectman Ober said that this has been discussed before but that there may be labor laws that require employees to be paid if they are being required to stay on site and rest between shifts. Justin Barriault said that this should not be an issue if workers are given an option to stay rather than making it a requirement.

Chair Ralph Rathjen made a motion the replace the BOS recommended budget of \$32,156 for a Truck Driver to \$0. Craig seconded the motion. Justin Barriault stated that he would rather there be \$1 in this line in case the position is needed later on. Chair Ralph Rathjen stated that he would

like to see the Highway Department try to work with 5 positions this year and then see if it's needed later. He withdrew his motion. Craig Davis made a motion to replace the BOS recommended budget of \$32,156 for a Truck Driver to \$1, and to reduce the BOS recommended budget of \$150,000 for Sand & Salt to \$140,000 for a total Highway Department budget of \$909,870. Justin Barriault seconded the motion and the motion passed, with Selectman Ober voting No.

Transfer Station - Chair Rathjen stated that there is a revenue gap of \$50,000 for the Transfer Station and has suggested increasing bag tag prices from \$1.25 to \$2.00. HD Director Van Tassel stated that increased disposal costs for residents can lead to more trash on roads which ends up being more expensive to clean up in the long run. Rick Razinha asked about the process for increasing tag costs. Chair Rathjen stated that he has brought this up to the Selectmen and nothing has been discussed on their end. Selectman Ober stated that the Department Head would need to present this to the BOS, not the Budget Committee, and that a public hearing would need to be held.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 8th at 7:00 to be held at the Town Offices.

Respectfully submitted,

Audry Barriault, Budget Committee Secretary