

MINUTES

Sanbornton Budget Committee

Meeting Date and Time: Monday, December 17th, 2019 at 7:00 PM

Meeting Place: Sanbornton Town Offices, Sanbornton, N.H.

Present: Selectman Jim Dick (remote), Kate Osgood, Chair Craig Weisman, Bob Presby, Ralph Rathjen, Ray Masse, Bob Lambert

Ralph Rathjen made a motion to allow Selectman Jim Dick to participate remotely via phone, as he is out of state. Chair Craig Weisman seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously with votes as follows – Rathjen/Yes, Weisman/Yes, Presby/Yes, Osgood/Yes, Masse/Yes, Lambert/Yes, Dick/Yes. Roll call votes are required for all motions if one or more members is participating remotely.

Minutes: Ray Masse made a motion to approve the draft minutes of 12/16 with corrections. Ralph Rathjen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously with votes as follows – Rathjen/Yes, Weisman/Yes, Presby/Yes, Osgood/Yes, Masse/Yes, Dick/Yes, Lambert/Yes.

Old Business

a. Recreation – Chair Weisman stated that he has received information regarding the 15% increase for the Camp Director position discussed last night; Recreation Director Amanda Pelissier explained via email that this was due to an increase from Grade 9 Step 7 to Grade 9 Step 10 during the pay week of October 12, 2019. Former Recreation Director Julie Lonergan stated that this was to make the pay for the position more competitive with other towns. Julie also noted that there is about \$7,000 from yard sales in a trust and is earmarked for a new recreation building, and about \$1,500 in a trust from a donation that is to be used for a playground.

New Business

a. Elections - Julie explained that she has adjusted this budget since the BC looked at it last night. She changed the Seasonal Election worker lines from 900 to 300; the Elections budget approved by the BOS on 11/20 was \$10,324 but Julie has adjusted to \$10,138. This will need to be re-voted by the BOS and Selectman Dick will talk to the BOS about this on Wednesday.

b. Town Clerk/Tax Collector – Selectman Dick stated that he talked to NHMA regarding a question brought up last about pay for elected officials versus employees. He was told that elected officials will get the salary voted on at Town Meeting, while the BOS can set the pay based on qualifications for regular, non-elected employees. Selectman Dick noted that elected officials are not on the pay scale as regular employees are, and Chair Weisman stated that this may be true but elected officials have traditionally received COLA increases. Chair Weisman asked if a brand new person with no qualifications could replace an elected official who has worked for the Town for many years and receive the same pay, and Selectman Dick responded Yes, but noted that the new person would have the same amount of responsibility as the official they are replacing.

Julie explained that she has broken out line .610 for General Supplies, and plans to use this money in the lines for Printing and Postage. She has contracted with a company that does the stuffing and mailing of tax bills for \$.68 each which she feels is a good value, as just postage would be \$.50 per. She explained that line .390 for Professional Services is for providing vital records like birth certificates and marriage licenses, but the Town does generate revenue from this. Julie stated that there has been an increase in requests for vital records and that is why she is budgeting at \$5,600, same as last year. The line for Personnel will be overspent this year because of the interim help needed when the previous TC/TC and Deputy TC/TC left at the same time. Ray Masse asked why the budget for Software has been up and down, and Julie responded that there was one year that the previous software and new software, Avitar, was billed in the same year, and sometimes it is billed at different times during the budget year. Ray noted that the TC/TC budget has increased about 20% in the last two years but the department was also underspent for several years.

c. Highway Dept - Chair Weisman stated that parts of this budget are hard to predict and often dependent on weather, and noted that the salt/sand line was overspent last year but the snow removal budget was underspent. He explained that Highway Dept Director Johnny Van Tassel has decreased the snow removal budget line by \$10,000 for FY21. Ray noted that Johnny has explained hired snow removal was being used because too many

plowing hours for Highway Dept employees was unsafe. He also noticed that the line for Tires is increasing by \$3,000 and the narrative says that tires are stocked, and Chair Weisman said he will ask Johnny about this.

Ray noted that the Construction Material line was budgeted for \$70,000 last year and was overspent by \$20,000, but is being budgeted at \$70,000 again. Ralph stated that the Catch Basin Cleaning budget has increased to \$3,500 from \$3,000 but has been less in past years and wonders if certain cleaning isn't happening. Selectman Dick explained that Johnny had said the dust control done by the Highway Dept, budgeted at \$12,000 in FY21 but only \$500 in FY20, also helps preserve the road and hold road material together.

Ray stated that \$466,000 of the \$600,000 road budget (not in the operation budget) was spent in FY19 but this could be because of the timing of invoices being paid. Ralph explained that Center Harbor had a road study similar to the one that Sanbornton just had done, but they had several public hearings to educate taxpayers. Chair Weisman suggested a meeting between Johnny, the road study engineering firm and CIP to discuss. Ray stated that the line for Culvert Pipe is budgeted at \$5,000 but FY19 actual spend was \$744 and current YTD is only \$417.

Chair Weisman noted that the line for Salt/Sand has been broken out into two separate lines and needs to be reflected on the spreadsheet, with Salt in .693 and Sand in .691.

d. General budget discussion - Selectman Dick stated that he would like to work on the budget earlier next year to allow for more conversation between the departments, BOS and BC. He stated that both boards should be able to see the prior FY actuals just a couple months after the end of the fiscal year on June 30. Selectman Dick also stated that the BOS tries to maintain 10% cushion in the unassigned fund balance but is at about 12.7% right now; he will be recommending that the LSB improvements (showers and water filtration) come from the fund balance rather than starting a new CRF since the money is already there. Kate asked if warrant articles will be provided ahead of time versus at the same night of the BC public hearing like last FY; Selectman Dick responded that the BOS is tracking these and they will include change in CIP member terms, fixing the solar energy abatement process, LSB renovation using current unassigned fund balance, and floodplain ordinance amendment.

Ralph asked if the current spreadsheet provided by Ray can be used to see how much of the average budget overage per year is attributed to salaries, Ray said he can do this. Chair Weisman asked for a presentation to the BC about the insurance study, and Ray said he is prepared to do this in January.

The meeting schedule for the Budget Committee is as follows:

Monday, January 6th
Monday, January 27th
Monday, February 3rd (tentative, if needed)
Tuesday, February 4th – Public Hearing
Tuesday, February 11th – Public Hearing snow date

Kate Osgood made a motion to adjourn at 9:10pm. Chair Weisman seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously with votes as follows – Rathjen/Yes, Weisman/Yes, Presby/Yes, Osgood/Yes, Masse/Yes, Dick/Yes, Lambert/Yes.

Respectfully Submitted,
Audry Barriault