



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

375 MAIN STREET • NEW LONDON, NH 03257 • WWW.NL-NH.COM

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Wednesday, January 9, 2019 7:00 PM

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Rob Prohl (Chair), Joe Cardillo (Vice Chair), Phyllis Piotrow, Lauren Snow Chadwick, Jerry Coogan, Chris Lorio, Lyndsay Lund, Suzanne Jesseman Bill Helm (Selectmen's Rep).

STAFF PRESENT: Kimberly Hallquist, Town Administrator; Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

OTHERS PRESENT: Sandra Licks, Bob Harrington

Chair Prohl called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Phyllis Piotrow) AND SECONDED (Jerry Coogan) to accept the minutes from the January 2, 2019 meeting THE MOTION WAS APPROVED.

Selectman's Report

Selectman Helm stated the Board of Selectmen accepted all three differences between the Budget Committee budget and the Selectmen's budget. This included adding in \$500 to the Trustees of the Trust Funds, adding \$2,000 to the Health Officer and reducing the Selectmen's budget by \$5,000 for the Planning and Zoning engineering.

The Selectmen then approved the \$8,000 increase for the grinding at the stump dump. This line item increased from \$6,000 to \$14,000. Selectmen Helm asked that the Budget Committee take action on this item.

IT WAS MOVED (Jerry Coogan) AND SECONDED (Suzanne Jesseman) to increase the budget to \$14,000. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED.

With regards to the Health Officer, the Selectmen voted to increase the per site inspection fee for septic systems from \$20 to \$100 effective immediately. This will offset the additional stipend expense with revenue. Chair Prohl asked if there were any candidates to fill the Health Officer position given the resignation of Deb Langner. Kim Hallquist noted they will contact Colby-Sawyer College to determine if anyone in the environmental program that may want to take on the position. In the short term, the Board of Selectmen will handle the duties.

Budget Review

Capital Reserve Accounts and Capital Outlays

For Capital Reserve the Selectmen voted for the following:

- Added \$10,000 to Conservation Capital Reserve fund

Phyllis Piotrow stated that she is not satisfied with only contributing \$10,000 to the Conservation Land fund. She doesn't think it represents the level of importance that purchasing land for conservation has. She would like to raise the figure to \$25,000. This would be comparable to the average of what has been put in this fund for the past 16 years since some years it was higher and

there have been no contributions for the past 9 years. She would like to set a baseline standard of a \$25,000 contribution moving forward.

Selectman Helm stated that contributing \$10,000 was a compromise for the Selectmen as they would have preferred to make no contribution. His personal opinion would be to set a target fund balance and set a number of years to get to the target. The Selectmen did hear the arguments from the Conservation Commission and understand their concerns. Joe Cardillo stated the reality is that these funds are not necessarily to buy the land, but to put a down payment on the land. It is a nice gesture and in light of other financial responsibilities, he thinks \$10,000 is more than appropriate for this particular year and is thus not in favor of increasing the amount. Jerry Coogan stated that land conservation is important and adds value to the town but agrees that due to other financial responsibilities this year should keep it at \$10,000. Ms. Piotrow stated it will be harder and harder in future years to put money in. It's easier to maintain a level contribution. Selectman Helm thanked Ms. Piotrow for her perspective but doesn't feel they should increase it this year.

- \$30,000 was put into the new Energy Capital Reserve fund
- Gravel roads Capital Reserve fund was left at \$50,000

Bob Harrington has agreed they can pave an additional road in 2020 which will be Pine Hill. The Selectmen propose the transfer of \$673,510 to capital reserves and added \$20,000 for sewer department for a total of \$693,510. The \$20,000 sewer amount has already been voted on.

IT WAS MOVED (Jerry Coogan) AND SECONDED (Suzanne Jesseman) to accept the amount of \$673,510. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Selectmen also agreed to propose two long term bonds. One to fund the Buker Building repairs and the other to fund Pingree Road, Goosehole Bridge and Brookside Culvert projects. Selectman Helm proposed \$500,000 for Buker repairs and \$750,000 for the bridge repair projects. Selectman Helm noted even if the town bond a certain amount, the total won't be spent if these numbers are too high. Lyndsay Lund stated she doesn't want to spend more money to improve a building that is inefficient in the first place. Selectman Helm stated there are still people that don't accept the decision to build a new police station. Some still want to spend as much money as required to make the current situation work.

The Selectmen agreed to use \$22,500 from the transportation improvement fund for the Bunker road guardrails. The Selectmen voted to take \$200,000 from the sewer enterprise fund. This is \$115,000 for a backup sewer pump and \$85,000 to do much needed electrical and connection work at the main pump station. There is currently \$800,000 in the sewer enterprise fund.

Selectmen Helm continued by noting that the Selectmen passed on four items for the upcoming town meeting:

- They will not try to solve the problem of the recreation office and will not ask for additional funds.
- They will not ask for any money for a future piece of land for the Police Department
- They will not ask for money to buy the land adjoining Whipple Hall (McEnrue property)
- They don't have enough information at this point to ask the town for additional funds for Transfer Station improvements. Anything done in the short term can be done using existing funds.

Preparation of a storm water asset management plan will be funded through a \$30,000 loan forgiveness program. There will be a warrant article asking for permission to undertake this asset management plan at no cost to the town.

The Selectmen discussed the town solar array on the buildings on Pleasant Street and agreed to do a warrant article. This would give the town permission to do this at no cost as there will be a developer that will raise the funds and then we would use the Capital Reserve fund to buy the project several years later. Joe Cardillo suggested having town counsel review the agreement before the Selectmen enter into it, if it is approved by voters.

Other warrant articles will include:

Accepting the Elkins bandstand property.

Renewing the Elkins Post Office lease for 5 years.

Approve the continuation of the non-lapsing account for Archives.

Selectman Helm also announced that he will not be seeking re-election as a Selectman.

The Budget Committee discussed the Capital Outlays.

\$104,800 for one-ton Dump truck, \$13,550 for repairs to the Fire Station, \$10,000 for Whipple Hall, \$50,000 for upgrades to the library stack room, \$47,000 for town building painting and repairs and \$110,375 for gravel roads/paving for a total of \$335,725

It was moved (Jerry Coogan) and seconded (Chris Lorio) to accept the amount of \$335,725. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The amount for Bonded Debt Principal is \$334,540.

It was moved (Phyllis Piotrow) and seconded (Suzanne Jesseman) to accept the bonded debt principal amount of \$334,540. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The amount for bonded debt interest is \$74,941.

It was moved (Joe Cardillo) and seconded (Phyllis Piotrow) to accept the bonded debt interest amount of \$74,941. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Tax Anticipated Note Interest amount is \$1.00.

It was moved (Lyndsay Lund) and seconded (Chris Lorio) to accept the TANS amount of \$1.00. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Revenue amount is \$3,134,400

Selectman Helm asked about building permit fees given the upcoming senior living project. Kim Hallquist stated we can assume there will be additional money due to the fees because of the size of that project. It was decided to add \$10,000.

Phyllis Piotrow asked if there would be a building inspector for this project and would like to know if this is being considered. Selectman Helm stated the Planning Board has required inspections to be made on a regular basis as part of their approval. This will be paid and then reimbursed by the builder.

The new total is \$3,144,400.

It was moved (Chris Lorio) and seconded (Suzanne Jesseman) to accept the revenue amount of \$3,144,400.

All were in favor with the exception of Bill Helm who abstained as the Selectmen haven't addressed the increased amount yet.

The budget increase over the 2019 budget is currently 2.8%.

Selectman Helm noted that in 2019 there will be a total reassessment of the town.

Chris Lorio asked if it was the philosophy of the Selectmen to keep the bonded debt the same every year. Selectman Helm stated yes, as long as there are projects to be done. The big projects right now are the Police Station, Recreation and the Transfer Station, adding that it would be approximately \$6 million for a new Transfer Station.

Lyndsay Lund stated allocating this amount for waste management is asinine if the same amount or more is not invested for the Police Department, safety, cultural or recreational needs for the adults and children in our town. She is not against making improvements to the Transfer Station but wants to make sure our priorities are in order for other things that benefit the community. Phyllis Piotrow stated she disagreed and pointed out that the Transfer Station is widely used by families in New London and also for political campaign purposes. Joe Cardillo noted that a study is being done on the Transfer Station but there needs to be a reorganization of traffic flow there.

The Public Budget Hearing is Wednesday, February 6 and the last day for petitioned articles is Tuesday February 5, 2019. The public hearing will be held at Whipple Hall. Town Meeting elections will be held on Tuesday, March 12th and Town Meeting to consider the other warrant articles, including the budget, will be held on Wednesday March 13th at the elementary school gym (Outing Club Gym).

Other Business

Joe Cardillo thanked Selectman Helm for all the work he has done as a Selectman for the town. It was noted that the timeline for people to sign up to run is January 23rd until February 1st. There are also three seats open on the Budget Committee.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held on Monday, January 28, 2019 and will be a joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen.

It was moved (Lyndsay Lund) and seconded (Suzanne Jesseman) to adjourn the meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson, Recording Secretary
Town of New London