



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BUDGET COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING MEETING MINUTES Wednesday, February 5, 2020 7:00 PM

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Robert Prohl, (Chair) Joe Cardillo (Vice Chair), Suzanne Jesseman, Lauren Snow Chadwick, Jerry Coogan, Chris Lorio, John Raby, Michael Williams, John Cannon (Selectmen's Representative)

ABSENT: Mark Christensen

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Sandra Licks, Scott Blewitt, Fire Chief Jay Lyon, Police Chief Ed Andersen, Selectman Janet Kidder, Board of Selectman chair Nancy Rollins, Nancy Mahar, Public Works Director, Bob Harrington, Donna Larrow, Phyllis Piotrow

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

1. Welcome

Chair Prohl welcomed everyone to the Budget Committee Public Hearing.

2. Approve Budget Committee Minutes of January 15, 2020

IT WAS MOVED (Joe Cardillo) AND SECONDED (Michael Williams) to approve the minutes from the January 15, 2020 meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED.

3. Open Public Budget Hearing

a) Overview by Town Administrator

Kim Hallquist thanked the Board of Selectmen, Budget Committee and the Department heads for all the work done on the FY 2021 budget preparation. Everyone got their budgets in on time and the process was well organized.

This year the Selectmen's budget and the Budget Committee's budget presented at town meeting will be the same. Yesterday was the last day for the submission of petition warrant articles and there were no petition warrant articles that have appropriations. The general operating portion of the budget is up 5.1% and includes all town departments. The overall budget increase which includes transfers to Capital Reserves is 3.9%. If all the assumptions we now have regarding this budget comes to fruition, the town tax rate will go from \$4.13 to \$4.32. This is approximately a 4.5% increase.

Some highlights of this budget include:

- Funding for an additional full-time firefighter to fill the Fire Prevention and Training officer position. This position was established in 1999.
- Funding for a Public Works part time facilities position to go to full time.
- Addition of a second full-time employee in the Sewer department.

- Funding for a part time person in the Finance Office to serve as a back-up to that position.

b) Discuss Individual Warrant Articles

- **\$250,000 Bond sprinkler for Tracy Library**
- **\$260,000 6-wheel dump truck**
- **\$40,000 Tracy Library – 3 kitchenettes and 5 bathroom renovations**
- **\$16,000 diesel fuel pump at Public Works**
- **\$25,000 mobile radios for Fire Department**
- **\$135,000 will be taken from the Municipal Transportation fund for paving of gravel roads.**
- **\$55,000 Command SUV at Fire Department**
- **50% proceeds from timber harvest to Conservation fund, max \$5,000**
- **\$45,000 roller to compact roads**
- **\$7,000 State of NH DOT for Park and Ride expansion**
- **Transfers to Capital Reserve Funds**
- **Sewer Fund**

The Selectmen have included funds for a 1.5% cost of living increase (COLA) for all town employees and will continue on the step program. Employees that receive an acceptable performance evaluation will receive a step increase of 2.5% on their anniversary date.

The maximum increase for Health Insurance for town employees will be .9%. The final number will be available in the coming months.

Phyllis Piotrow commented that she has always believed that more money should be put in Capital Reserve funds and after reviewing this budget, it appears that in order to reduce the tax rate, less money is being put in reserve funds. She finds this short sighted and is opposed to this.

Ms. Piotrow would also like to know what the town is doing with respect to energy conservation. Kim Hallquist reported that Jamie Hess and the Energy Committee continue to review the lighting in various buildings and last year a capital reserve Energy Fund was created to begin to save. This year the Budget Committee and Selectmen agreed to put another \$30,000 in there to bring it up to \$60,000. The solar project at the Public Works garage and the sewer department pump station has begun. The Energy Committee has been active and aggressive in trying to come up with new ways to introduce energy efficiencies.

IT WAS MOVED (Joe Cardillo) AND SECONDED (Suzanne Jesseman) to approve the total budget amount of \$9,481,412. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

IT WAS MOVED (Michael Williams) AND SECONDED (Chris Lorio) to approve the revenue amount of \$3,778,610. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. Other Business

Chair Prohl discussed SB667. If this bill were to pass, it would allow local towns to increase the contribution to the Municipal Transportation Fund from \$5 to \$10. This was vetoed last year by the Governor but is being brought back this session. Chair Prohl would like the Budget Committee and the Board of Selectmen to write a letter in support of passing this bill.

IT WAS MOVED (John Raby) AND SECONDED (Michael Williams) to write a letter on behalf of the Budget Committee in support of SB667. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Joe Cardillo noted that Suzanne Jesseman's term is up and thanked her for her many years of serving on the Budget Committee.

5. Motion to Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:34PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson,

Recording Secretary
Town of New London