



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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DRAFT
Budget Committee Meeting
Meeting Minutes
February 19, 2014

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: John Wilson, Ben Cushing, Doug Homan, Joe Cardillo, Pat Blanchard, Bill Green, Rob Prohl, Phyllis Piotrow, Larry Dufault, Janet Kidder (Board of Selectmen's Representative)

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

OTHERS PRESENT:

Sean Carroll, *The Intertown Record*

Ed Andersen, Acting Police Chief

Donna Larrow, Police Department Administrative Assistant

Heather Wood, Communications Administrator

Russ Lamson, Part-time Police Officer

Jack Sheehan, New London Resident

Richard Lee, Public Works Director

Jim Wheeler, New London Resident

Sandra Licks, Library Director

Bruce Hudson, New London Resident

Jason Lyon, Fire Chief

Peter Bianchi, Selectman

Chair Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:02pm. He thought it inappropriate to review the minutes at the meeting since they had just received them. They will be reviewed at the next Budget Meeting on February 26th.

Selectmen's Report

Selectman Kidder said that she and her colleagues have recently discussed possible warrant articles but have not voted on any yet. They have planned to review the report on dispatch, which was prepared by Heath Wood, Acting Chief Andersen and Chief Lyon on March 3rd. She noted that the Selectmen have no updates to report on the 1941 Building or the lease.

There was a question as to whether the Budget Committee will meet on March 5th, the date reserved to discuss the 1941 Building. It was thought that they would keep the date available in the event there are things to discuss. Ms. Piotrow thought they should advertise the topic of discussion for the meeting on the 5th to encourage public input. She wondered if the Budget Committee or Select Board could pay to advertise this meeting. Mr. Homan said the 1941 group was under no obligation to provide information to the Budget Committee or to pay for advertising for a meeting. The information the Budget Committee uses to make their decisions comes from public officials, not volunteer boards. He said the Budget Committee needed some direction from the Selectmen on this issue; he thought the Selectmen should make a decision.

Mr. Cardillo asked if April 8th was the last date warrant articles could come in. Ms. Hallquist agreed that it is. The Selectmen can put anything on the warrant as late as the day they post it, however if they intend to include an article that requests an appropriation, it must be submitted in time to be considered at the Budget Committee's public hearing. When the budget is posted, each article containing an appropriation will have a notation of either "recommended" or "not recommended" by the Budget Committee and Board of Selectmen.

Highway Department Budget – Richard Lee, Public Works Director

Mr. Lee began his presentation by noting that currently he has \$1,800 left in the sand account and \$1,500 in salt account, noting that he believes he will have just enough to get through the winter. They are on-par with the average snow fall from the last four years. 1,220 gallons of fuel was burned last week in equipment. The overtime budget is getting close but he thought it would be OK. Mr. Lee said most of his workers worked 60 hour weeks last week due to the snowfall. If there were more winters like this, he may be asking for that extra employee back. There haven't been complaints, but it is something that would help with the work load.

Mr. Lee referred to the memo he sent to the Selectmen in December 2013 that explained his budget details.

- The cost for uniform cleaning has gone down due to some competitive bidding between two companies.
- Highways and Streets have had \$6,000 added to cover the increase in paving.
- \$5,000 less has been put into equipment and repairs.
- General Supplies went down \$2,900 because they don't need to purchase trash cans at the beaches next year.
- Tires went down \$2,000 because they are using this year's money for grader tires.
- Calcium was up \$1,800. The use of this to harden the roads saves wear and tear on their machines.
- Paint up \$1,600 so they can paint center lines in the roads.
- The Transfer Station increased \$16,000 for grinding brush due to the Ash Borer Beetle. They cannot move brush out of the county. The company he would like to use will come in for \$4,000 per day, grind it, and take the chips away. He anticipated grinding two days in the spring and three days in the fall.
- General Supplies for the Transfer Station is down by \$500. The Transfer Station is up \$15,500.
- Sewer Lab fees are up \$200
- Sewer Equipment Maintenance is up by \$5,000 to clean and maintain the generator at the Main Plant. They will have to rent a generator while this one is being repaired.
- Sewer is up by \$5,200.
- Cemeteries Equipment is down by \$6,300 because they purchased the mowers last year.
- Hazardous Waste Day – Mr. Lee said they have signed a contract with the Upper Valley for \$3,000 to have a collection in New London in August as well as to partner with four other towns to allow New London residents to bring hazardous waste to their respective collection days.
- Emergency Management – The Town's generators need repairs. \$8,700 was put into the Emergency Management Line for this by the Selectmen. One of the generators is finicky and sensors go off frequently. The machines run ½ hour every week and are all diesel. All of them have a weep in the radiator and sensors go off when the level of coolant gets too low. The fuel tanks are 100 gallons each except for the one at the Police Department, which he believed was 130 gallons.

Without wages and benefits included, Mr. Lee saw a \$15,500 increase, which was a 1.2% increase overall.

Capital Outlay

Mr. Lee said they had planned to replace one of the older trash trailers three years out. He wanted to move that replacement to this coming year because the one trailer they have has been patched already and has some serious rust issues. It could be taken out of service if this is identified by a state trooper on the highway. They can fit 18-20 tons into the current trailer, but the new aluminum trailer can take 25 tons at a time, which will save on trucking fees to Meredith. Mr. Lee said he had discussed with the Selectmen that since he did not replace the fifth full-time position, they didn't need to replace the fifth truck that person would have been using and they would just keep the old vehicle instead. The body of that truck, which is a combination sander/dump truck, needs to be replaced. The truck portion is still good so this is a work-around so they didn't have to replace the entire vehicle. They can't keep up with a storm with three trucks; if one truck breaks down they need to have this spare to keep working until they can repair the one that is broken.

Mr. Homan wondered if they could put a plow and a wing on that vehicle. Mr. Lee said it would be about \$60,000 to do this when considering all the hydraulics and installation. Instead of \$170,000 for a new truck, \$31,000 to put on a new body with a sander would be a cheaper solution. It was noted that \$25,000 was added to the Gravel Roads Paving line item because of the new truck they decided not to purchase.

In all, Mr. Lee would like to spend \$298,000. He currently has \$235,000 but would like to take \$63,000 out of the Gravel Road Capital Reserve as well. Mr. Lee noted that the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) gravel roads schedule (table 12) shows a balance of \$663,000 in 2037, which is incorrect. He wasn't sure how this was overlooked by himself and the Budget Committee for so many years. By 2022 (not 2037) they should be able to have every road paved on their prioritized list of roads to pave. He has looked the numbers over several times and this was the case. In 2023 the only roads that would not be paved are: Whitney Brook Road, 40 Acres Road, Morgan Hill, Old Main Street, Columbus Avenue, and Camp Sunapee Road, as those people have asked that those roads NOT be paved.

Chair Wilson wondered if the \$25,000 reduction in contribution each year plus the \$31,000 being spent next year would negatively affect the Highway Equipment CIP program. Mr. Lee thought it would even out. Mr. Lee said he would like to spend \$25,000 to put a shed on top of the High Pine Pump Station where the controls are currently underground. Moisture ruins the controls and they have to be replaced frequently. It is considered a confined space which requires two people to go in there to check the readings. Additionally, they are planning to use \$85,000 in FY2015 to remodel the old highway shed. The old shed will have the formaldehyde insulation removed (which was outlawed six months after it was put in), new insulation put in, and the windows replaced.

Police Department Budget – Ed Andersen, Acting Police Chief

Chief Andersen highlighted some items in his budget:

- There is a \$150 increase in the Police Department accreditation expense for software maintenance.
- Uniform cleaning is up \$250 to enable the department to get their spring and winter coats dry cleaned. They also use this fund to have the pillows and blankets from the cells cleaned after they are used. The winter coats cost \$350 each and they'd like to keep them clean and fresh as long as possible.

- Vehicle maintenance – Chief Andersen would like to combine all these vehicle repair line items into just one, and then decrease the entire amount by \$500.

Mr. Homan noted there were currently five vehicles being used by the Police Department. He understood that the third cruiser would be traded in when they purchased the new one. Chief Andersen said they run into many issues with the cruisers breaking down or being out of commission for one reason or another. The Sheriff's report shows the New London Police Department runs themselves thin on vehicles and an extra car would be useful. As of last Friday, three of their vehicles were down. One is in the body shop, one blew a manifold gasket, and a brake caliper broke on another car. They were stuck running their spare car. This is not an anomaly. They often have to put two officers in one cruiser due to people going to court and needing the use of a cruiser. Sometimes there are up to five officers going to Newport per day. Chief Andersen said there would be no increase in insurance by keeping the fifth car in the fleet. Ms. Johnson confirmed this and said a \$1,200 cruiser wouldn't add anything to the Town's premium.

Mr. Homan asked if the Board of Selectmen gave him permission to keep the fifth vehicle. Chief Andersen said they did not. He held onto the car but could get rid of it at any time. Mr. Homan thought this should have been discussed with the Selectmen sooner than later. Maintaining an older vehicle is expensive. Chief Andersen felt the benefits of keeping the fifth vehicle would outweigh the costs. The vehicle can be used to go to Concord or Newport and not for patrolling, which offers a lot of abuse to a vehicle.

Mr. Green asked how many officers were on duty during the daytime on a typical shift. Chief Andersen said there were two officers and one detective on duty during the day. Mr. Green didn't understand why they needed this extra vehicle. Chief Andersen said the Detective's vehicle is not used for patrol and the SUV is used in winter months and special circumstances and is not used as a main patrol vehicle. It is more expensive to run and maintain and will not be up for replacement for several years to come. He thought it would be silly to get rid of the fifth vehicle as it offered such great benefits to the department. Mr. Homan didn't think they should keep the vehicle; it had 130,000 miles on it and was at risk for breaking down.

Chair Wilson asked how long he expected to keep the car. Chief Andersen said he'd like to keep it one year and keep a rotation of the older cars for one extra year. They would get the same value when it sells a year later as they would if they sold it this year. Mr. Homan thought they had gotten by with four vehicles until this time. Chief Andersen noted that he takes the SUV or a car home each day. Mr. Homan wondered why not cycle out the van and SUV and get four of the new cruisers, which are AWD? Chief Andersen said the van is full of detectives' equipment that won't fit in the cruiser. It is also used for surveillance. It serves a totally different purpose than the cruisers.

Chief Andersen said he has decreased the Vehicle Maintenance fund by \$500 and asked if they could try this arrangement of keeping the oldest cruiser for another year. If it doesn't work out, they won't ask to continue. Chair Wilson thought it would be helpful if the Select Board had some indication of whether they are for or against this idea. He realized it wasn't affecting the budget, however, but hoped this wouldn't be part of an effort to increase the number of vehicles in the fleet slowly over time.

Chief Andersen said for Firearms and Repair he asked for \$8,869. Due to the high trade-in value of the pistols they currently use, it will only cost \$1,700 to replace the holsters and clip pouch. If they keep their current firearms, with the sites and springs that are going, it would be about \$3,300 to repair them. Officer Lamson, an Armorer for the State Police, came to explain why New London should service out their 12-year old firearms.

Mr. Lamson said he has been an armorer for over 17 years. The Trinitron sites on the Sigs they use in New London are failing. Trinitron sites glow in a low-light condition and have a 7-10 year shelf life. Many sites are going down and cost about \$125 to purchase new sites; installation is even more. The Police Department doesn't have the proper equipment to do the installation and they would have to hire someone to do it. Mr. Lamson said the State Police rotates their pistols every five years and their pistols are not used any more than New London's. They rotate their pistols for different reasons but mostly for maintenance reasons. Service pistols are important as the officers rely on them for personal and public safety. The springs in the pistols need to be replaced every 2-3 years whether showing fatigue or not and is considered regular maintenance. Mr. Lamson said the two highest liabilities in law enforcement are motor vehicles and firearms and he thought New London's firearms should be replaced. Generally, 5-10 years is normal for rotation. Chief Andersen said their vendor, Interstate Arms, would charge \$635 each for a new Sig .45 caliber. It is necessary to change the side holster and clip pouch when changing the type of firearm. Overall, it would be \$11,300 to change over to new Sigs. To get the Glock Gen III pistols, with holsters and magazine pouches, is \$8,868. This does not count the trade-in for their Sigs. Interstate Arms is willing to make an even trade the new Glocks for New London's pistols. Holsters and magazine pouches will still need to be purchased, however. Mr. Lamson said the Sigs are popular in the civilian marketplace which is why they hold such a good value.

Mr. Green wondered about refurbishing the current pistols. Mr. Lamson said why not opt to get brand new pistols for such a small amount instead of paying even more to refurbish their old ones?

Ms. Hallquist said budget requirements state that they must gross appropriate the cost for the new guns and the trade-in value will show on the revenue side.

Chief Andersen explained some additional budget items:

- Conference and Training has increased by \$3,000. This would include improvements to the shooting range and adding another range day for qualification. They have three brand new officers that will need more training and classes. Chief Andersen said the range is in tough shape and they would like some work to be done to it. They would like to have poles set in with removable target holders so the public can't use the range as easily. They are trying to keep the public out of the area.

Chair Wilson asked if other departments were allowed to come to the range in New London. Chief Andersen said if other towns ask to use the range to qualify someone, they allow it. Chair Wilson asked if the other agencies should be asked to help pay for these upgrades. Chief Andersen said in the past the other towns have willingly helped make repairs if asked. The range is very close to the Town's glass collection area and the public takes numerous bottles to the range, shoots at them, and it makes a big mess. They have put fences up and signage to dissuade the public from going there.

Mr. Lamson noted practicing at the range is important because shooting is a perishable skill. He is a firearms instructor for New London and other surrounding towns. It is important that the people are comfortable and confident with their firearms.

- The Police Department's number one issue is the copy machine. The repairman has been in the office three times since February 1st to replace parts. It is 12 years old and has made just under 500,000 copies. They average about 140 copies per day. Chief Andersen said it would cost more to lease than to purchase a new copier. Ms. Larrow said Northern Business Machines has provided a quote. She noted there was no town-wide lease program. To lease for 36 months it

would be \$190/month for a total of \$6,840, in addition to a buyout of 20% of the sum of the payments (\$8,208). If they purchase a copier it would be \$6,150.

Mr. Cardillo thought all the Towns' machines should be under one lease agreement because it would save money. Ms. Larrow said they pay a little over \$1,000 on maintenance per year, which includes toner. She noted that the copier also serves as their network printer.

- Chief Andersen said the electronics system they would like funding for, is for the door locks and key pads. These were installed when the Police Department was moved there in 2001. It has had no maintenance since then. The back-up batteries are dysfunctional, and the door strikes have turned on and stayed on in the past resulting them in heating to over 300 degrees. In one instance, they had to be cut out of the wall to prevent a fire from starting. The security system is proprietary of the Hearst Company. The closest company that can repair the system is from Rutland, VT and they charge \$500 just to come to the site. Chief Andersen had a representative come to the station to see if they could identify what needed to be done with the strikes. It was found that the strikes in the doors were 6 volt but were on a 12 volt system. They suggested changing out all 24 strikes.

Chief Andersen said the key pads are weathered and those using them cannot see the numbers to enter their codes easily. To repair the whole system completely was \$33,000. He knocked it down to \$14,486, which was the minimum that he felt should be addressed: door strikes, back-up batteries, and key pad replacement.

Chief Andersen said he called Tasco Security to see if they'd be able to service them and they said to re-do the system would be about \$70,000. They informed the Chief that New London Police Department had a top notch security system that, with proper maintenance, will outlast the building.

- New Employee Expense: Chief Andersen said they cannot outfit a new officer for \$3,000. It costs closer to \$5,000 when considering they will need special fit bullet-proof vests, coats, pants, etc.

Mr. Prohl noticed that the fuel line probably wouldn't reach the maximum this year. He wondered if they budget for less next year. Chief Andersen said they never know what the cost of fuel will be.

Mr. Cardillo said their departments are pretty close to their budgets. The wage area for the bigger departments, whether at full capacity or not, even with the increases in health insurance or benefits, they come up about 4% short of their budgeted numbers. He thought they would be challenged as a committee to find savings.

Mr. Prohl wondered what the surplus percentage was, on average. Ms. Hallquist said ideally they will spend exactly what they have budgeted for but that is impossible; they don't know how much snow they will get, there are legal matters they won't know about, and employees come and go. She added that some of the employees are on hourly/part-time wages and the overtime budget can go over and impact the budget.

Mr. Cardillo said looking historically, they haven't had to borrow money from other departments to make up for short-falls and they have had a trend of having a \$400,000 surplus at the end of the year. Mr. Green thought the budget this year was \$250,000 more than last year. He wondered where they were going as a community. The budget has a 3.5% – 4% increase over last year. Labor-related costs are making up the

increases. Every four years out, their budget will be up \$1 million dollars. They will be reassessed in 2014 and it is possible that the grand list may come in less than they presently have it. He has been involved with the budget for the last five years and they are in the same economic pattern as when he began.

Mr. Cardillo thought they should look at the wage area for the Police Department and the Public Works Department and use numbers that match the trend over the past four years.

It was asked what “Professional Services” was for. Chief Andersen said that is the County Attorney’s fees that are charged to process misdemeanors. It is a flat fee.

The review of the Police Department budget was concluded and the Chair turned to a general discussion of the budget by noting that he sees that the operating budget, removing the extra pay-period, was 3.6% higher than last year. He figured they would need to cut \$125,000 from the budget to get to the 1 – 1.5% maximum they had requested. He said they should consider there was \$92,000 upcoming for the sewer bond. Additionally, there is an added amount for buyout of vacation pay in the amount of \$15,000. Chair Wilson said if they don’t use the money appropriated for wages, they get that money back. That is different than with other things, like making purchases. He also wondered what they were trying to accomplish. He thought they should stick to the 1.5% maximum increase and ask the Department Heads to find a way to do that by adjusting their budgets. Mr. Dufault didn’t think it was the Budget Committee’s job to cut things from the budgets and thought the Department Heads should do it.

Mr. Dufault thought it was the Town Administrator’s job to work with the department heads to cut the budget. Mr. Homan said it was the job of the Department Heads to come up with a budget that would get to the 1.5%. Mr. Cardillo thought about \$60,000 could be found in the Police Department and the Public Works Department payroll area alone.

Ms. Hallquist disagreed with the premise that it is up to the department heads to cut the budget to meet the goal established by the Budget Committee. She explained that the department heads have submitted what they believe they need to accomplish their goals, so now it is up to the Budget Committee to decide which, among those needs, should be excluded from the budget, or added to the budget, to be presented at Town Meeting. She asked if the Budget Committee wants her to decide where to cut \$125,000? Mr. Homan said she, along with the departments, have to prioritize or find another \$125,000 in the budget. Ms. Hallquist stressed that the department heads have already prioritized their needs, and that is what is reflected in their budget requests. Now that the Budget Committee has those requests, the Budget Committee can now say “we’ve heard what you’ve said” and now these are the choices we feel will best fit the needs of the town. The choices the Budget Committee makes is the budget that the voters will see at Town Meeting. Ms. Hallquist stressed that the department heads understand that the Budget Committee may disagree with them and put less in the budget than was originally requested, and that they (department heads) will have to work with what they have in their budget. Ms. Hallquist noted that the voters decided to have a Budget Committee to present a budget at Town Meeting, using their best judgment as to how much should be budgeted for the town’s needs. Ms. Hallquist observed that if the Budget Committee was only interested in a percentage increase, they could have figured out the bottom line figure months ago and avoided looking at any department head requests. She pointed out that this is not how the budget is supposed to be prepared. Instead, the Budget Committee is supposed to be making choices and saying they agree or don’t agree that an amount is needed for “x, y or z.” The Budget Committee has the best estimates from the department heads who are experts in their areas. She stressed that she was confident that the department heads were well aware of the Budget Committee’s desire to stay at a 1.5% increase and that the budget requests they submitted are based on what they felt they need, however they all understand that just because they include it in their budget does not mean that it will

ultimately get funded. She thought it unreasonable to go back to the Department Heads and ask them to cut even more.

Mr. Green said at the first meeting they established the 1.5% and Ms. Hallquist preferred that the department heads budget by telling them what they need. Ms. Hallquist agreed and noted that it is her opinion that the only way the Budget Committee will know what the department heads feel they need is to allow them to submit a budget without a set limit. She stressed that even without a set limit, the department heads are well aware of the need to submit a reasonable budget request and to understand that the Budget Committee may have to make choices about where resources will be dedicated.

Ms. Piotrow said when they tell a department to cut a budget further, they will do so by cutting maintenance. They have seen what happens in this town when maintenance in a department is cut lower than it should be. These departments can't cut any further unless they want to cut personnel costs by 5%. There are consequences for delaying maintenance of important equipment and will end up paying more in the end. When asking them to come up with their best budgets, the Budget Committee owes a certain respect of the opinions of the department heads. She thought a 1.5% increase was totally arbitrary and didn't apply to one department or another. The book that describes what the Budget Committee is supposed to do follows the guidelines that Ms. Hallquist has pointed out. It may be glamorous to say they cut the expenses by 1.5% rather than to say they cut the copier from the Police Department's budget.

Mr. Prohl said the Budget Committee could generate the cuts they prefer and then Ms. Hallquist could pick and choose from those cuts. Ms. Hallquist said her point is that the Budget Committee should be making these decisions as to where resources should be allocated. Would they gang up on Mr. Lee and decide to take ¼ of his paving budget away? Would the Budget Committee put that budget out to the voters? The Budget Committee needs to decide, once hearing from the experts, that these are things they need. Everyone has provided a budget that they can stand behind. They have already cut things out. The Budget Committee has a goal to stay at a 1.5% increase, which is fine. The Budget Committee needs to be the one to stand up at Town Meeting to explain what the cuts were. That's the hard part of being on the Budget Committee.

Mr. Green asked if the Budget Committee was as familiar with the department heads as she was. Ms. Hallquist agreed that the Budget Committee does not have the day-to-day contact with department heads that she has, however, the Budget Committee should have enough information to make the decisions required to prepare a budget. They had subcommittee meetings and each department head made their presentations and were questioned by members of the budget committee. The department heads have gone through the Selectmen and cuts have already been made. It is now their budget and their decisions on what needs to be cut.

Mr. Homan said they could make a 2% cut across the board which would be easier than making decisions on individual lines. He said the rate of inflation is 1% and they are in the worst recession of their lifetime. The Grand List might go down in 2014. He wondered what percentage of the increase were employee wages and benefits. Ms. Johnson noted that she did not have the figure available, but observed that 73% of the \$125,000 (the amount that exceeds the 1.5% Budget Committee goal) is the sewer bond.

Ms. Hallquist said it isn't the function of the Budget Committee to cut 2% off across the board. They wouldn't have a Budget Committee if the only thing they had to do was come up with a set number. They are to look over all materials provided by the department heads and the other places they get their information from. Members of the Budget Committee must be residents of New London because knowledge of the town and its needs are important to preparing the town's budget. They need to be able to say to voters "this is what we think we need to run the town the way it should be run." The Selectmen

have the authority to transfer funds throughout the budget, but the Budget Committee submits the budget to the town voters.

Mr. Homan said Ms. Hallquist has statutory responsibility to provide information to the Budget Committee. Ms. Hallquist observed that all information requested has been submitted. Mr. Homan asked if they ask her to come up with a list of cuts, could she? Ms. Hallquist said she and the department heads have given the Budget Committee a budget explaining what they think the town has to have. Collectively they have come up with a higher than 1.5% increase. This is the Budget Committee's budget; the decisions about which cuts to make are for the Budget Committee.

Mr. Prohl read RSA 32:16 regarding the Budget Committee's duties. Ms. Hallquist felt, per the RSA, she and the Department Heads have fulfilled their responsibility to the Budget Committee.

Peter Bianchi, Selectman, said the Board of Selectmen went through the budget after talking to the same department heads that the Budget Committee did. The Selectmen made some cuts, have had a lot of discussion and admitted that it is not a fun process. The Budget Committee now has to do the same thing. They need to make the cuts they feel are appropriate. The Budget Committee has had the same information the Board of Selectmen had. It is their chance to look at it with new eyes. It is their decision to make the cuts they think appropriate.

Mr. Homan thought if the Budget Committee made cuts, they would be more random than if the department heads did it themselves. Ms. Hallquist disagreed that it would be random. She pointed to the comments made by Mr. Cardillo regarding the salaries where he stated that a historical review showed that reductions could be made because the full amount appropriated is never expended. If reductions are made in these areas there would be basis for the cuts, it wouldn't be random at all. Mr. Dufault said if they cut something the department heads need, the department heads can go back to the Selectmen to ask that money be moved between departments to enable them to get what they need.

Mr. Green didn't think this was the most productive and positive way to budget; without a percentage in mind. Ms. Hallquist observed that she didn't want to take the authority away from the Budget Committee; the Budget Committee chose 1.5% increase which is fine, it is their budget. The department heads have given budgets of what they need. They won't have hurt feelings if the Budget Committee decides to allocate resources to other areas; this is how it (budgeting) has to be done.

Mr. Prohl agreed that these decisions fall on the Budget Committee. Ms. Kidder said they have listened to the budget proposals. By the time they vote, they may disagree with the 1.5% and it may be up to 3%-4%. After listening to the presentations, their minds may change.

Chief Andersen said he presented his budget and expects that things will be cut. If the door strikes aren't replaced and the building burns down, or if the firearms malfunction and someone is hurt or worse, at least he has brought these things to them to make them aware. Mr. Dufault said they would be giving each department a sum of money and it is up to them to decide what to do with it. Ms. Blanchard said they need to decide if the departments can run on the amount they were giving them.

Mr. Lee said in the past, a Budget Committee member said that it was their job (the Budget Committee) to prioritize the things departments needed, not the department heads, themselves. Mr. Homan disagreed that this was what was said.

Chair Wilson said if someone comes forward about needing \$75,000 for the 1941 Building that will drastically change his views on the budget at hand.

Chair Wilson asked the Budget Committee members to review the budget closely, line by line, to be able to discuss possible cuts.

**IT WAS MOVED (Doug Homan) AND SECONDED (Bill Green) to adjourn.
THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:37pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of New London