

Approved as amended _____

TOWN OF EPSOM

BUDGET COMMITTEE

DECEMBER 10, 2009

Present: Harvey Harkness, Chairman; Marylou Keane, Vice Chairman; Joyce Heck; Carol McGuire; Carole Brown; Tammy Vaillancourt; David Fiorentino; Mike Wiggett; Joanne Randall; Virginia Drew; Brad Keyes; Jay Hickey

Excused: Kevin Reeves

Other Attendees: Cec Curran; Dan McGuire; Keith Cota; Wayne Preve; Rick Bilodeau; Lee Bartlett; Herb Bartlett; Nancy Wheeler; Bobbie Mongeon; Tony Soltani; Val Long; Stewart Yeaton

Harvey opened the meeting at 7:00 P.M.

Harvey noted there would be time for public comment or questions at the end of the meeting.

Carol made a motion to accept the minutes of December 3rd as amended with Mike seconding the motion.

The minutes of December 3rd were reviewed and amended.

Harvey asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There being no further discussion on the motion, Harvey called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Harvey reviewed the handouts from Nancy Wheeler.

Joanne noted Attorney Soltani was present and available if the Budget Committee members had questions.

Attorney Soltani noted he had been asked to meet with the Committee to keep their perfect record clean. Epsom is one of the Town not held liable under RSA 91-A. There have been some changes in the law which Attorney Soltani reviewed with the Committee. He also distributed a copy of some sections of the RSA. Attorney Soltani noted if an e-mail goes out to more than a quorum it is considered a meeting. If a chain or wheel is used (going to either all members or one person at a time) it is also considered a meeting.

Attorney Soltani noted if another Board meets with the Committee and has a quorum present; it is considered a meeting of both Boards. Another issue is if a meeting or

chance meeting occurs before or after a scheduled meeting it should be considered a meeting and what was discussed needs to be inserted in the next meeting minutes.

Harvey confirmed if there is a quorum present before or after a meeting business cannot be discussed.

There were no other points per Attorney Soltani the Committee should be cognizant of.

Brad asked since Epsom only has 3 Selectmen and if 2 discuss business it is a meeting, Attorney Soltani noted if they discuss business. Joanne noted if she runs into another Selectman they are careful of what is discussed, keeping the conversation to non-town business.

Health:

Harvey expressed to Cec Curran the Committee was interested in the work he has done this year and the amount of hours spent doing the work.

Cec, Health Officer, had not compiled a list of accomplishments; they would be listed on his monthly reports that are available in the Town Office. Harvey will obtain these for the Committee.

Cec feels this position is undervalued by many towns; no one appreciates the work done. Consequently the position is under paid with the requirements having been increased. Epsom is fortunate he is a micro-biologist and is able to address what comes up without other guidance.

Cec noted the food inspections bring in revenue; \$3,338.00 so far in 2009. The Health Officer also can get involved in landlord/tenant issues. After completion of a task Cec often asks the people he dealt with if they feel they received their money's worth, most times they do. Cec is requesting an increase in the stipend due to the fact he is responsible for anything and everything to do with health. Items include inspecting restaurants, failed septic systems, daycare facilities, foster care facilities, schools and rabies problems. Cec does not do well inspections but often assists residents with understanding the results of a well test.

Cec was asked if he provides education for health issues, i.e. swine flu. He does provide the Town and school with information he receives.

Tammy asked how he was paid, Cec receives payment every two weeks based on the budgeted salary amount. Cec works full time in Concord with Epsom receiving his time before or after work and other time off. Joanne noted the number of hours worked per week varies depending upon what is occurring.

Carole asked how he completes the inspections, Cec shows up unannounced. Virginia asked if there was a charge to inspect day care facilities, there is not. Joyce asked what

Cec looks at a child care facility or school. Cec reviews the facility and reviewed the items he checks.

No certification is required to be a health officer.

Welfare:

Lee Bartlett, Welfare Director, noted the Welfare Office is not as busy as she thought it would be. Some areas are being hit – electric and rents. She has not received any requests for oil assistance, however Community Action has received a great deal of money and she believes this is taking care of most of the oil issues. Lee prepared 26 Thanksgiving baskets with most being for single or elderly persons. She has had some requests for toys for Christmas. Last year people took families where this year they are taking one or two children. People have given a lot of food to the food pantry.

Harvey asked if there were special needs not being met by the budget. Lee noted she cut areas of her budget that were not being used, such as mortgages. She has not had a lot of requests for vehicle repairs or food vouchers. The food pantry helps with Loudon Food Pantry also helping Epsom residents.

Joyce asked if there was a criteria for being eligible. Lee noted there is with software programs to assist her. The eligibility is based on basic needs. Lee often assists clients to determine a budget. Over the course of two years Lee has denied 20 people assistance.

Lee has requested an additional \$3,000.00 for daycare assistance. The State has cut this assistance in its budget. Lee will also use this money for care while people are interviewing for jobs.

Virginia noted the funeral line was only \$600.00 and would not pay for a funeral. Lee contacts a crematory that covers costs above what Epsom pays.

Planning Board:

Dan McGuire, Chairman, noted the Planning Board should end 2009 with over 50% of its budget unspent. A lot of spending depends upon the number of applications received and this has been a slow year.

Harvey asked if this was a big year for the Master Plan. Dan noted the Board has been working on some areas of the Plan. Joanne noted there is a requirement to have a Master Plan.

Marylou asked if the Board intended to have the CIP updated in 2010, Dan noted they were due to work on it.

Zoning Board of Adjustment:

As Glen Horner, Chairman, was not present Keith Cota represented the ZBA. He noted its budget spending was similar to the Planning Board's with it being down due to the economy. In 2009 it was planned for 21 cases with only 7 cases coming before the ZBA. For 2010 13 meetings are planned.

Tammy asked what the ZBA did. Keith explained it was a quasi-judicial board that listens to appeals for the zoning variances or special exceptions to the rules. They hear cases as to why people should be allowed to deviate from the rules. Currently the Town has a very educated Board with its decision being defendable in court.

Emergency Management:

Rick Bilodeau, Emergency Management Director, handed out information to the Committee as to his responsibilities and the number of hours spent accomplishing the duties.

Carol asked what NIMCAST was, Rick noted it was reporting to the Feds training, exercises completed or what the Town intends on doing.

Harvey asked the number of hours Rick works on the average. Rick has not kept track, but noted he had listed the hours for trainings he has attended.

Tammy asked if the telephone lines have all been installed at the Fire Station, Rick indicated they had been. Tammy questioned the \$1,200.00 for telephones; Rick noted the Town has to pay a monthly fee for the lines at the Fire Station.

Joanne asked the number of meetings Rick might attend each month, Rick determined approximately 10 a month. Harvey asked who Rick's supervisor was, Rick noted the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen. During an incident he would be under the Incident Commander who is usually the senior official present.

Rick suggested in the future the Budget Committee liaison meet with him so the Committee would have the necessary information for Emergency Management.

Joanne noted there was an approximate \$12,000.00 increase in the Fire Department's health insurance line as an employee who formerly took the buyout is now taking the insurance.

The Committee took a break from 8:02 P.M. to 8:10 P.M.

Harvey suggested a list be made of sections of the budget the Committee would like to review.

Marylou noted the Morrison money was non-tax impact (4130.1-730) and should not be included in the budget. Nancy Wheeler noted not all the budget is raised by taxes. They could not just pull this out of the budget; the law says to look at the gross budget. She noted that there are a number of items in the budget that do not impact the tax rate, as they are in part or whole offset by revenues, but still need to be approved as expenditures by the Town. Brad wanted to review salary lines.

The attached list is the items the Committee felt they would like to review. It was determined 50% of the lines were salaries (110, 130, 150).

Brad would like to get an almost zero percent increase to a zero increase. He is conflicted on salaries as the office staff did not receive an increase in 2009. He is concerned with increases of 5%.

Brad wanted to discuss things that decreased:

- Police Department Dispatch
- Library Bond
- Heat/Oil
- Welfare Lines

Further discussion occurred regarding salary increases for employees. Tammy asked with the change in benefits if the employees would be paying more. Nancy Wheeler noted anyone on the two-person or family plan would be paying more for health insurance. The prescription costs will also increase.

Mike is inclined to see a blanket percentage increase, the Police and Fire Departments still need to be increased. He suggested a 3% increase.

Virginia noted with a blanket increase the people on the higher end would be taking more of the increase, she thinks the budget did a good job with the increases. She is concerned with the Fire Department.

Carol does not agree with a blanket increase as the Board of Selectmen asked the departments what they wanted. She is satisfied with the proposed increases except the Fire Department.

Joanne noted the reason they do not see a blanket percentage increase is the Selectmen asked the departments to determine what their budgets should be and the Board of Selectmen agreed to leave the salary lines as they were presented. The Selectmen only changed one. The health insurance costs depend upon information from the department heads.

Marylou noted a \$10,000.00 bottom line increase. The budget should be \$80,000.00 less. She does not disagree with increases, but is concerned, realistically she feels they can't go to the Town and sell this budget.

Joanne noted if they decide to take and vote and give increases, they can vote to decrease the bottom line by \$10,000.00 or some monetary amount.

Harvey noted they have a week to think about the budget. The majority of the concerns are salaries and then they can take care of the other items. Carol noted they have to agree to find the money elsewhere.

Discussion as to how to determine the salary increases, bottom line and decreases continued. Harvey wanted to know where the committee was leaning – he has heard not 3% increases for all employees, Fire Department 3 to 5% and the office staff 3%.

Mike noted the Road Agent did not request a raise, Mike feels that will be hurting the Town. The Selectmen gave the Road Agent a 6.74% increase and his helper a 9.16% increase. Nancy noted the person recently hired was more qualified than the previous helper, starting at a higher salary than the person who left. There was a consensus of 4% for these salaries.

The Police Department has requested an 8% increase; a consensus was for a 5% increase. Tammy felt the Administrative Assistant should receive the same 3% as the Office Staff.

It was decided to leave the Zoning Compliance Officer, Welfare Director and Health officer as is.

Nancy will give the Committee several options to consider for next week.

Harvey noted next week the School and Water District will be presenting and this discussion will continue. There was a consensus to go through other items before considering the salaries.

Discussion as to having an extra meeting ensued, with a January 7th date suggested.

Mike requested a breakdown of the Highway Vehicle Maintenance Line.

Joanne noted if the Committee feels a particular line needs to be eliminated it should be kept open with \$10.00 so people could have the opportunity to discuss it and add it back in if they wanted to at the deliberative session.

Nancy is working on estimating revenues for 2010. She estimates them to be approximately 1.2 million with 2009 being 1.4 million.

The next meeting will be December 18th at 7:00 P.M. at the Town Office.

Joanne made a motion to adjourn the meeting with Brad seconding the motion.

Harvey asked if there was any discussion on the motion. There being no discussion on the motion, Harvey called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Harvey adjourned the meeting at 9:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Bosiak
Recording Secretary

LINES FOR BUDGET COMMITTEE REVIEW

AREA	LINE ITEM	ITEM	WHO REQUESTED IT BE REVIEWED
Secretarial/Administrative	01-4130.2-110	Salaries	Brad
Town Clerk	01-4140.1-130	Salaries	Brad
Deputy Town Clerk	01-4140.1-150	Salaries	Brad
Administrative/Financial	01-4150.1-110	Salaries	Brad
Tax Collector	01-4150.4-130	Salaries	Brad
Deputy Tax Collector	01-4150.4-150	Salaries	Brad
Zoning Compliance Officer & Assist	01-4191.2-150	Salaries	Brad
Joyce noted the salaries have not been more than \$34,000.00 for 2009. Joanne stated there has not been assistant with one hired recently.			
General Government Buildings	01-4194.1-430	GGB Repairs & Maintenance	Marylou
Police Department Administration	01-4210.1-110	Administrative/Chief	Brad
Police Department Administration	01-4210.1-760	Vehicles	Marylou
Police Department Full & Part-Time	01-4210.2-110	Full/Time Positions	Brad
Police Department Secretary	01-4210.5-110	Administrative Assistant	Carole
Fire Department Administration	01-4220.1-110	Full Time Positions	Joyce
Fire Department Administration	01-4220.1-150	Training Pay	Joyce

Fire Department Administration	01-4220.1-370	Training & Conferences	Dave
Fire Department Special	01-4220.5-430	Fire Road Maintenance	Carole
Emergency Management	01-4290.1-341	Telephone	Tammy
Emergency Management	01-4290.1-370	Training	Tammy
Emergency Management	01-4290.1-775	Grant Match Funds	Tammy
Roads Administration Road Agent Position	01-4311.1-110	Road Agent	Brad
Roads Administration Full Time Position	01-4311.2-110	Full Time Position	Brad
Roads Administration Full Time Position	01-4311.2-120	Overtime	Marylou
Road Maintenance	01-4312.4-430	Highway/Street Maint	Marylou
Road Maintenance	01-4312.4-440	Rentals & Leases	Tammy
Road Maintenance	01-4312.4-450	Reconstruction of Highway	Marylou
General Administration & Vehicle Expense	01-4312.6-430	Vehicle Maintenance	Mike
Roads Building Expense	01-4312.7-411	Hwy Bldg Heat & Oil	Carol
Health Administration	01-4411.1-130	Health Officer	Brad
Pest Control	01-4414.1-691	Animal Control Expenses	Carol
Welfare Administration	01-4441.1-130	Welfare Officer	Marylou
Welfare Administration	01-4441.1-150	Deputy Welfare Officer	Joyce

Welfare – Vendor Policies	01-4445.2 -	All Categories	Joyce
Library	01-4550.1 -	Bottom Line	Brad
Conservation Commission	01-4611.2 -	All Categories	Tammy
Conservation Commission	01-4612.1-310	Land Acquisitions & Easements	Carol
Debt Service	01-4711.2-001	Library Bond Debt Principal	Marylou