

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

Work Session for Budget

Monday, October 29, 2018
Call Meeting to Order 5:30PM

DRAFT

Approved on _____ (Date)

or amended on _____

Hugh Curley _____
J Chris Bowes _____
Virginia Drew _____

Present: Hugh Curley, Chair; J. Chris Bowes, Vice-Chair, Virginia Drew, Selectman; and Kelly Dearborn-Luce, Town Administrator/Recording Secretary.

Chair Curley opened the meeting/work session at 5:30PM.

Staff Present: Nancy Wheeler

Other Attendees: Joni Kitson

The group recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Signature:

Accounts Payable/Manifest was reviewed and signed.

Pay rate sheet changes that were previously approved. The Board signed the revisions.

Nancy presented the Board with an updated spreadsheet of the proposed budget. Hugh said there is a \$350,000 increase in the budget from last year and the Board must make a reasonable effort to adjust.

Board discussed tax rates, estimated tax impacts and warrant articles. Hugh noted that \$250,000 was applied from the undesignated funds to offset the 2018 tax rate.

Nancy asked when BCEP would be finalized and Hugh said it was discussed at last Thursday's meeting and he would feel comfortable with a \$5,000 increase until after the public hearings (at BCEP).

The Board held a lengthy discussion about the departments that had significant increases;

Police Department – Hugh spoke about the 6th Officer that may be ready to hire. The Board discussed the cost and hours at the Academy for the new hire. The proposed pay rate for the new hire was discussed and the Board put in a .50cent per hour increase for the vacant position. The Board also discussed the potential part time officers cost. Board held a discussion about being competitive with other surrounding Towns and retention of Officers. The Board decided to cut the proposed amount for part time by \$10,000. The line item for the “vehicles” was discussed and Chris said he would like to hold off one year for a vehicle. Vehicle repairs and replacements were discussed and the Board decided to decrease the vehicles line by \$10,000 and plan to use the Detail Fund.

Legal – The budget is at \$32,000 and Chris said he felt comfortable leaving it that way. Hugh said the expenses in the budget now at \$19,000 may go over by the end of the year.

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The Board and Nancy spoke about the Insurance coverage and on-going legal cases. Chris said 2019 will be a big legal year as the 2 on-going cases are set for trial and possibly 3 or 4 legal cases. Hugh said the annual deductible of the Insurance is per occurrence not once a year. Nancy said the BTLA cases that are settled may reduce the legal. The Board agreed to propose \$28,000 (decreased by \$4,000) for the legal line in the budget.

Health Insurance – Nancy said she is not sure what the new hires would need for insurance but has budgeted for family plans. There is an increase in the insurance premium. Hugh asked about the default budget and would \$190,000 stand and Nancy said it would depend on if it is considered a contract.

Fire Department – Chris said he spoke with the Fire Chief about the stipends and staffing within the Department. Nancy spoke about the specific pay rates the Chief has proposed for the part time and volunteer staff. Kelly spoke about the concerns the Chief has with being competitive in pay and retention of staff (and volunteers). Hugh noted that the new hire will be at a different rate. The Board agreed to move \$10,000 from Part time/Volunteers to Full time Staff. Nancy said she would adjust the retirement and Social Security lines in the budget.

Highway Department – Board discussed the paving increase and road maintenance. Chris asked about the State Highway Block Grant and Nancy explained it is part of revenue for the Highway operating budget. Hugh said he spoke with Gordon and advised him that there would be a significant cut in the proposed budget. Virginia asked about the amount spent this year in maintenance as it is less than the proposed amount. The Board agreed to leave the maintenance line item as is for now until they discuss further with Gordon. The Board agreed to decrease the paving budget by \$100,000.

Library – Chris asked about the management services and Nancy listed the items in the budget under that line. Kelly noted that Robert Paine, Trustee for the Library is scheduled to meet with the Board on November 5th.

Conservation – The conservation commission budget is proposed at a 60% increase. Kelly advised that Alison Parodi, Chair for the Conservation Commission is on the agenda for November 5th meeting to discuss their proposal to purchase easements.

Other Business:

Board signed the deed for the sale of the land on Meadowlark Lane.

Board discussed the concern on Elkins Road and Kelly advised that the Town may be responsible for the debris on the side of the road but the concerns about the house are being discussed with the Fire Department and the property owner at this time.

At 6:55PM Chris Bowes made a **motion** to adjourn. Virginia Drew seconded, all voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Kelly Dearborn-Luce
Recording Secretary

These minutes are in preliminary draft form only and are subject to change before final approval.

10/29/18