

9b-Budget Committee Minutes 02/07/2007

Hopkinton Budget Committee
Final Minutes
February 7, 2007

Present: Karen Irwin, Chair, Jane Bradstreet, Patrice Gerseny, Barbara Unger, Danny Coen, David Lancaster, Bob Carpenter - CVP Rep., Tom O'Donnell = HVP Rep., Peter Russell - Selectmen Rep., Marshall Rowe – School Board Rep.

Chair Irwin began the meeting at 6:35pm. The minutes of the Public Hearing, January 24 were reviewed. BC member Russell moved to accept, BC member Carpenter seconded, Discussion – BC member Rowe had minor corrections. Minutes were accepted with Mr. Rowe's corrections.

The Minutes of January 31, 2007 were reviewed. BC member Russell moved to accept. Bc member Carpenter seconded. There was no discussion. Minutes were accepted.

Final Errata Adjustments **School**

SB member Rowe presented an updated Operating Budget of \$10,000 less that previously submitted. This reduction would mean a 0% increase in the tax rate in the Operating Budget independent of Warrant Articles. SB member Rowe addressed Warrant Article 2. He identified the company performing the HVAC replacement at HMS as Siemens and has a detailed analysis and best estimate from them of \$200,000. This reduction was a result of removing some of the original work to the building. This amount is a reduction of \$80,000. The tax impact on this warrant Article for the facilities is roughly \$.35 per thousand assuming a flat evaluation.

Town

Selectmen member Russell reviewed the MS 7 passed out to the BC. He advised that the Selectmen turned to the Dept. heads for further reductions and received a substantial reduction from DPW, Hermie Blanchette.

on -\$20,000 this reduction will be offset by funds from the Recycling Revolving Fund.

- 2. Police Cruisers -\$7,000
 - 3. Recreation -\$5,280 Eliminated Adventure placePlaceTypeCamp
 - PlaceNameStaff
 - \$5,224 Operational Expenses for Slusser Ctr., it is now a warrant article.
 - 4. Highway & Streets -\$69,086 Shimming & paving of Burnham-Intervale
 - 5. Town Hall Renov. -\$20,000 level funded
 - 6. Building & Grounds -\$28,000 Miscellaneous reductions
 - \$7,212 Operational Expenses for Slusser Ctr., it is now a warrant article.
- The reduced Town Budget will have a tax impact of \$4.175 per thousand for '07 down from \$4.33 per thousand in '06.

BC member Carpenter asked about Warrant Article 7 concerning the placePlaceNameRecycling PlaceTypeCenter.

Selectmen member Russell explained the revolving fund and noted that since the center now has an income history with DRA.

Chair Irwin requested an explanation of 'Unfunded Liabilities' aka Benefits and Human Services in Warrant Article 15.

Selectmen member Russell explained that this was accrued vacation and sick leave. The Human Services amount is for Human Service payments that often exceed the vendor payment line and this is a safety net.

BC member Carpenter requested information on Police Dept. vehicle purchase[s] in 2006.

Selectmen member Russell said the department purchased a Dodge Charger to replace a vehicle that had been in an accident. The Police Department also received a gift of motorcycle in '06.

BC member Lancaster requested clarification of a difference in the proposed budget and the 3.8% target amount. There were two different numbers given.

Selectmen member Russell explained that the lower number which is the one used to bring the town down to within the target % amount did not include sludge removal and land purchases.

Library

Elizabeth Levy advised the BC they removed just about half of the extra hours for part-timers and reduced the materials increase to just half of the original. She advised the plowing and mowing had been removed and they had a level funded warrant. The tax impact is 3.6% without warrants.

placePlaceNameHopkinton PlaceTypeVillage Precinct

HVP member O'Donnell reported they found \$235 of additional income. The water department expenses are now equal to the water department revenues.

placePlaceNameContoocook PlaceTypeVillage Precinct

CVP member Carpenter reported not changes from previous presentations. He brought the MS 37 to the BC.

Budget Vote

placePlaceNameHopkinton PlaceTypeVillage Precinct Budget

Move to accept – Selectmen Rep. Russell

Seconded – SB Rep. Rowe

Discussion – No

Passed – 10 Yes, 0 No

PlaceNameplaceContoocook PlaceTypeVillage Precinct Budget

Move to accept - Selectmen Rep. Russell

Seconded – BC member Unger

Discussion – No

Passed – 10 Yes, 0 No

Town Budget

Move to accept - Selectmen Rep. Russell

Seconded – BC member Bradstreet

Discussion – Yes

HVP Rep. O'Donnell expressed disappointment that the town presented an incomplete MS 7.

Town Administrator Ed Wojnowski advised that it is the job of the BC to fill out the form, they/the town just gave figures for 2007.

Amendment proposed

BC member Coen motioned for an amendment in the Public Safety section of the budget by reducing that section by \$33,000 plus benefits, \$41,368, for the new EMT/firefighter.

Seconded - BC member Lancaster.

Discussion - Yes

BC member Bradstreet spoke against the amendment. Hermie stepped up and made cuts. She noted that the Selectmen can move dollar amounts around to fund the position. BC member Unger spoke against the amendment and also indicated she was disappointed in the town for their last minute adjustments.

BC member Gerseny spoke against the amendment.

Chair Irwin spoke against the amendment saying the town had met the goal of 3.8%.

BC member Lancaster noted the town should have had this information to the BC last week.

BC member Coen listened to the public comments at the Public Hearing and is very concerned the BC didn't get reductions until tonight.

HVP Rep. O'Donnell appreciates the work done on the budget but cannot vote favorably on the town budget tonight.

Amendment vote – To reduce line item 4215 Ambulance budget by \$41,368.

Move to accept – BC member Coen

Seconded – BC member Lancaster

Failed – 8 No, 2 Yes Yes – Danny Coen, Tom O'Donnell

The BC discussed the Recreation Department budget. BC member placeCityLancaster suggested cutting the Program Coordinator to \$0 funding, remove Summer Camp staff funding and reduce the phone by \$1,000. Selectmen Rep. Russell explained that if the funding for the coordinator is cut, the position could be funded through the revolving fund but it would be at the cost of other programs. He then stated if the coordinator funding had to come out of the revolving fund there would be no Summer Camp.

Amendment proposed

BC member Lancaster moved to amend the Recreation budget by reducing line item 4520 by \$28,560. Specifically: -\$12,480 Program Coord.; -\$15,080 Summer

PlaceTypeplaceCamp PlaceNameStaff; -\$1000 Telephone

Seconded – BC member Coen

Discussion – Yes

BC member Coen suggested the Summer Day Camp should not be a town subsidized day care. He believes the camp should be self-funding. There is no overhead and does not want another full time town employee that was indicated by the Recreation Director in a previous meeting, that it was his intent to have the program director become full time at some point in the future.

BC member Lancaster reminded the BC that if a line is brought to \$0 no money can be transferred to pay for it. Mr. Lancaster then asked Selectmen Rep. Russell what the effect would be if the lines were brought down to \$0.

Selectmen Rep. Russell responded the Recreation Budget is roughly 2% of the total budget so it may reduce the \$4.175 by 2 ½ cents.

BC member Bradstreet supports the amendment.

BC member Gerseny asked if recreation summer camp staff brought to \$0 can the staff still be hired.

Selectmen Rep. Russell responded with if \$0 there will be no summer camp.

Amendment to the Amendment proposed

BC member Bradstreet moved to add the amount of the Summer Camp staff to the pending amendment. The amount to be reinstated is \$15,080 leaving the amount to be removed \$13,480.

Seconded – CVP Rep. Carpenter

Discussion – Yes

Chair Irwin asked Atty. Saunders to explain the BC authority to \$0 fund any line item.

Atty. Saunders noted the BC does not have the authority, citing previous legal findings, the BC can give guidance to town/school as to where to reduce the budget. Only Town meeting attendees can bring a line item to \$0.

Selectmen Rep. Russell suggested BC members Coen and Lancaster propose their specific reductions at the town meeting.

BC member Lancaster reminded the committee that at one of the first meetings in October he requested legal counsel to be present at the final meetings to advise on isPersonNamesues because last year the BC did have legal isPersonNamesues to handle.

Amendment to the Amendment vote – to restore \$15,080 to the pending amendment

Move to accept – BC member Bradstreet

Seconded – CVP Carpenter

Passed – 6 Yes, 4 No No-Danny Coen, Dave Lancaster, Karen Irwin, Tom O'Donnell

Amendment Vote – To reduce the Recreation Budget by \$13,480

Move to accept – BC member Lancaster

Seconded – BC member Coen

Passed – 7 Yes, 3 No No- Karen Irwin, Peter Russell, Marshall Rowe

Amendment Proposed

BC member Unger moves to take the \$13,480 just removed and put it into Highways & Streets.

Seconded – BC member Bradstreet

Discussion – No

Passed – 9 Yes, 1 No No-Danny Coen

Vote on Town Budget as amended

Move to accept - Selectmen Rep. Russell

Seconded – BC member Bradstreet

Passed – 7 Yes, 3 No No-Canny Coen, David Lancaster, Tom O'Donnell

Vote on Warrant Articles

Warrant Article 22 - to purchase digital recording equipment \$400.....

Move to recommend - Selectmen Rep. Russell

Seconded – BC member Bradstreet

Discussion – No

Passed – 10 Yes

Warrant Article 23 – Motion to recommend withdrawn no raise and appropriate money involved.

Warrant Article 21 – to raise and appropriate \$4,000 to plow specific private roads.....

Move to recommend - Selectmen Rep. Russell

Seconded – SB Rep. Rowe

Discussion – No

Passed – 6 Yes, 4 No No-Danny Coen, David Lancaster, Patrice Gerseny,

Tom O'Donnell

Warrant Article 30 – any amendment needs to be done can occur at the annual meeting.

School Budget

Vote on Warrant Articles

Warrant Article 2 – to raise and appropriate \$372,000 for facilities improvements.....

Move to recommend - Selectmen Rep. Russell

Seconded – CVP Rep. Carpenter

Discussion – Yes

BC member Lancaster does not support the warrant due to the public speaking out at the public hearing against the HMS parking lot addition. And the \$10,000 can be taken from Building Maintenance.

Selectmen Rep. Russell recommends the any changes be done at the annual school meeting, he would prefer not to amend the warrant.

Chair Irwin advised the dollar amounts and wording of warrants in warrants cannot be changed by the BC. The warrant notes would indicate the SB recommending one amount and the BC recommending a different amount. Then the voter can decide.

HVP Rep. asked what the total percentage of increase including warrants.

SAU Finance Director Clark said the budget including warrants increased 6.97%.

BC member Unger expressed concern with a BC vote on the entire facilities warrant, no one on the BC is in favor of the entire warrant.

SB Rep. Rowe suggested all items are critical and the warrant can be amended at the annual meeting.

Vote on Warrant Article 2

Move to recommend = Selectmen Rep. Russell

Seconded – CVP Rep. Carpenter

Failed – 8 No, 2 Yes Yes – Peter Russell, Marshall Rowe

Warrant Article 3 – School Operating Budget - \$15,110,755.....

Move to recommend - Selectmen Rep. Russell

Second – CVP Rep. Carpenter

Discussion – Yes

SB Rep. Rowe gave a brief overview of percentage increases for non-mandated and mandated items.

Amendment Proposed

BC member Lancaster moved to remove an additional \$140,396 from the operating budget.

Seconded – BC member Bradstreet

Discussion – Yes

BC member placeCityLancaster suggested the cuts could come from:

1100 Salaries - \$74,000 [a first grade teacher due to low numbers]

2222 Media - \$52,312 [Data Specialist and Student Information System]

Principal Offices - \$12,084 [cut office staff holiday pay and keep PlaceNameplaceOffice Mgr. PlaceTypeschool year only]

1400 Other Programs. - \$2,000 [for wireless scoreboard repair]

SB Rep. Rowe reminded the BC the operating budget does not increase taxes and the BC set a target of 3.8% not a cap. Mr. Rowe believes there should be equal emphasis on revenues.

BC member Coen noted the revenues received from the state this year amounted to \$660K and asked about the state coming through with any dollars in the up coming years.

SB member Rowe said there was nothing proposed at the state house that would effect current funding.

BC member O'Donnell stated that after listening to public comments at the Public Hearing, the BC could do better. Hopkinton is pricing young families out of town, more established families, those with high school age children are moving in.

BC member Bradstreet concerned with lower overall enrollment and the school budget keeps increasing. She would like to see cuts that don't affect the kids.

Chair Irwin offered some cuts totaling over \$200K. Most of these cuts come from accounts having a history over the last 3 years as having a surplus. She suggested taking part of some of the surpluses, not all of the surpluses. These suggested reductions would not affect any services to the students.

BC member Bradstreet supports a recommendation to reduce the amounts of surpluses in specific accounts. The cuts would not be dramatic as some proposed by the School Board in response to the BC request to bring a budget within 3.8%. Most BC members agreed. SAU finance Director noted that if surpluses are taken now the money will not be there next year to return to the town to reduce the '08 - '09 FY budget.

Amendment Vote – to remove \$140,396 from the Operating Budget

Move to accept – BC member Lancaster

Seconded – BC member Bradstreet

Passed – 7 Yes, 3 No No-Barbara Unger, Peter Russell, Marshall Rowe

Vote on Warrant Article 3 as amended – Operating Budget of \$14,970,359

Move to recommend - Selectmen Rep. Russell

Seconded – CVP Rep. Carpenter

Passed – 8 Yes, 2 No No – Barbara Unger, Marshall Rowe

Warrant Article 4 – to raise and appropriate \$50K for the General Contingency Fund.....

Move to recommend - Selectmen Rep. Russell

Seconded – BC member Gerseny

Discussion – No

Passed – 10 Yes

Warrant Article 5 – to raise and appropriate \$55,938 for schools repair and maintenance.....

Move to accept - Selectmen Rep. Russell

Seconded – CVP Rep. Carpenter

Discussion – No

Passed – 10 Yes

Warrant Article 6 – to raise and appropriate up to \$50K to educate educationally disabled children.....

Move to accept - Selectmen Rep. Russell

Seconded – CVP Rep. Bob Carpenter

Discussion – No

Passed – 10 Yes

Warrant Article 8 - to purchase digital recording equipment \$400.....

Move to accept - Selectmen Rep. Russell

Seconded – CVP Rep. Carpenter

Discussion – Yes

SB Rep Rowe and members of the SAU are concerned that this could be a larger expense than first glance.

Chris Lawless is the driving force behind this petition warrant. He explained the cost of equipment \$100 - \$150; website fee is \$8 per month, and the rest batteries. He would do the installation/initial set up for both town and school and maybe even create the website. He would use his resources and donate his time.

Vote on Warrant Article 8 – in the amount of \$400

Move to accept - Selectmen Rep. Russell

Seconded – CVP Rep. Carpenter

Passes – 8 Yes, 2 No No-Patrice Gerseny, Tom O'Donnell

SB Rep. Rowe made a motion to restrict consideration on any of the budget voted on tonight.

Seconded - Selectmen Rep. Russell

Passed – 10 Yes

The meeting was adjourned at 10:22 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth Clark
Secretary