

01/17/2008 - Budget Committee Minutes

Hopkinton Budget Committee Town Hall Minutes January 17, 2008

Present: Karen Irwin, Chair; David Lancaster; Danny Coen; Tom O'Donnell, HVP Representative; Joy Bloomfield, School Board Representative; Tom Congoran, Selectmen Representative; Bob Carpenter, CVP Representative; Patrice Gerseny; Jane Bradstreet and Barbara Unger.

Absent: None

The meeting was called to order at 6:36 pm.

School Board Proposed Budget questions:

The Chairman opened with her questions of the Superintendent's Office. They included not using the form 1 definition form that the budget committee had requested that the proposals incorporate. Brian Blake stated that they made more of those changes in their usual format. Chairman Irwin stated that she had noticed a written narrative on the web site that seemed to reflect most of what was asked other than FTE's by school. Chairman Irwin followed up with a question of the \$59,000 being transferred to the Superintendents Office for non-union raises and how many FTE's this was referring to. Michelle Clark said budget adjustments would be made after raises were actually given. Budget adjustments would be requested of the School Board. The increases would be placed back to operational areas where the employee whom received the raise worked. Michelle later stated that the \$59,000 in raises was for 24.33 FTE's for non-union employees. Chairman Irwin also asked about reports of the budget by account code and FTE's by account code. David Lancaster asked questions about the reduction in a second grade teacher last year and he whether the School Board received any parental complaints last year about class size. He also asked about the student numbers and cutting a teacher in first grade. The Committee went over the increases and decreases section of the School presentation. The Chair asked if there were any more questions of the School District from the Budget Committee.

Tom O'Donnell said he had a report to the Committee as a part of the Capital Budget Subcommittee reflected that the committee thought School costs at a 7% increase in the School Boards proposal which is too high. Tom stated that Larry Donahue had reflected that school costs are higher than average wage increases of the community. Danny Coen stated that he did not feel he could personally support the budget as requested and included headlines about cutting \$50 million on State funding and pending retirement costs. Tom O'Donnell stated that the committee thought that the school budget should be closer to \$500,000 increase. Tom also wanted a listing of current union and non-union salaries. Chairman Irwin would like to get FTE's by School. Michelle thought they could get Maple and Harold Martin FTE's. It gets harder by Middle and the High School because some teachers split their time between Middle and High School.

Chairman Irwin stated that we would accept errata adjustments for the entire budgeting process. Danny Coen would like to have some recommendations of the School Board regarding where they would cut their proposal if they had to.

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Alan Bloomquist:

Governor announced \$50 million dollar cut in State funding. What to do if we have less revenue from the State.

Michelle Clark:

Shortfall of revenue will fall back to the taxpayers in how DRA calculates the tax rate. The state has already projected what their revenues are.

Martha McNeil

Assessment values play a factor so let's not forget that.

Peter Yunich:

Stated that the State of New Hampshire had promised that the counties will get an increase in funding. He also asked if there was a way to get a report from the assessor for the potential pick ups.

Diane LaChance:

Unfunded mandates questions regarding school funding.

Marshall Rowe:

Thought we should talk to our Representatives about these issues.

Selectman Proposed Budget Questions:

Chairman Irwin got information from Rick Schaffer that thought that code enforcement was about 40% of the code enforcement/deputy chief time was spent on the enforcement function. Danny Coen went over revenue brought in from Columbia hall was about \$3,500. Danny had a list of employees anyone who gets a check. Chairman Irwin asked for definition forms and they have the FTE's by department. Danny asked for costs of operating the fields in our town. Costs for dispatching in regards to fuel and dispatch are not in the ambulance budget. Chairman Irwin stated that Rick Schaffer billing for the ambulance of this past year is more appropriately reflective to the other towns in the costs of operating the ambulance other than purchasing an ambulance. The current paramedics were operating with the support of volunteers.

Danny Coen stated he would like to get a buildings and grounds itemization of what we are we doing regarding baseball fields and upkeep of buildings. Next the Slusser center was discussed as a separate warrant article. The Slusser center would be a separate

Operating organization or part of the operating budget according to Bob Veloski. Which the Budget Committee thought that it should be a separate operating account. The

Skate Board Park was going to cost \$5,000 in repairs due to be done with only \$455 dollars in the fund to help support this. Summer day camp costs were questioned about program enrollment and whether the town was paying for the operating costs. Why are costs going up by \$5,000 for the summer camp? The plan is to spend more to raise more revenues. Tom O'Donnell and the Capital Expenditure Subcommittee recommended a level budget for the Town. Patrice Gerseny recommended that the Town re-evaluate their budget.

Peter Yunich:

Why not have people be contractors under 1099 versus W-2 for those that are under 1,000 hours. The Town issued 156 W-2's. Recreation department plan for programs and costs of operating those plans.

Martha McNeil:

Questioned whether the Slusser center budget includes all the costs or are some costs still in different budgets. Legal funds why not budget what is being spent. Tom Congoran felt that they were changing some things that would change their expenses on this line so that they should meet the \$43,000 in expenses. Is there is a capital item savings for the \$156,000 grant for the equipment for the Ambulance.

Board of Trustees Budget Proposal Questions:

Fund balances from the library. We received updated pages from the library and the committee did not have any questions.

Contoocook Village Precinct (CVP) Budget Proposal:

Bob Carpenter highlighted the comparison from last year. The CVP is utilizing more part time personnel and is doing more testing. Lighting and water distribution has gone up. A new chlorination system will be installed and \$215,000 is for the relining of water main on Spring Street. Capital reserve fund and new taxes is where the money is coming from for the improvements.

Hopkinton Village Precinct (HVP) Budget Proposal:

The Village has two budget water department which raises money by user fees. The precinct raises funds by taxation. Street lighting, insurance, legal fees and the old fire station building. Tom O'Donnell stated that \$14,200 would be raised by taxes. State mandated a new well. The cost of the well will be about \$99,000.

The budget committee adjourned at 9:28 p.m. The motion made by Danny Coen and seconded by David Lancaster.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Irwin, Chairman