

TOWN OF HOPKINTON
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 9, 2016
DRAFT

CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Janet Krzyzaniak called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm, at the Town Hall.

ATTENDEES

Janet Krzyzaniak, Mark Zankel, Don Houston, Ken Traum, Richard Houston, Deborah Norris, John Wuellenweber, Amy Bogart and Bill Chapin, Jr.

PUBLIC ATTENDEES

Mary Kusturin

MINUTES

Ken Traum motioned to accept the October 12, 2016, draft minutes, noting that there were a couple of typos in the draft minutes. Amy Bogart seconded. The two corrections were noted; corrections will be made. The minutes were approved unanimously as amended.

Board Members were asked to make their own copy of the Agenda and Board Minutes to bring to each meeting.

The agenda order will change to accommodate Mr. Zankel having to leave early.

INTERPRETATION OF THE RULES OF RSA 32 PERTAINING TO THE BUDGET COMMITTEE

Please see the additional pages with the Questions & Answers that took place on October 27, 2016, between Legal Services Counsel, NH Municipal Association, Stephen Buckley, Janet Krzyzaniak, Rich Houston and Don Houston.

Discussion and further information was shared on the following questions:

Question 2: On the Warrant Article presented at the Annual Meeting – only the Budget Committee’s dollar amount should be presented in the Warrant Article, not the Budget Committee and Board’s recommendations.

Question 3: The Budget Committee should reach a **majority vote with numbers of yes/no** (not consensus) as to the appropriations for each governing body.

Question 4: The Budget Committee **will** (not can) present their recommended budgets. After discussion, it was decided that at the Public Hearing: 1) the Budget Committee will present its budget with a simple statement we differ by this amount, 2) the Governing Body will present its Budget, 3) if revisited, the Budget Committee designee simply explains why the difference, 4) then open to public discussion.

Question 5: The Budget Committees budget number goes on the MS forms that are filed with the Department of Revenue. The final numbers, by the community, need to keep within 10% of that number (the Budget Committees Budget).

At the School District Meeting and the Town Meeting, the governing bodies must present the Warrant Article that has the Budget Committee budget. The Governing Bodies then present their Budget(s) and explains if there are the difference(s) between the Budget Committees numbers and theirs and why. Amendments can be made before it goes to general discussion. The final budget number has a 10% up or down limit to the Budget Committees number.

Further discussed about time management for the Public Meeting and if it would be possible to make sure speakers weren't repeating the same issues, go on and on for an item, or can speak if non-voting age? It was suggested that before the Public Meeting begins, either by handout/poster/public announcement, that the people know that if they want to speak they keep their statements to 2 minutes. It was determined that somehow a time limit will be established.

It was asked that the ramifications of the tier cuts be made known to make sure cuts are being made appropriately.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mary Kusturin said she moved to town about a year ago and wanted to attend community meetings to find out what was going on in town and with the taxes. She shared that she thought that students should be allowed and encouraged to voice their opinions and that the public should be educated on how to share their comments in a public setting the right way. She wanted to know why school and town employees weren't paying more for their insurance and why the town taxpayers are paying so much towards that insurance.

FINANCIALS – Board of Selectmen

Ken Traum presented the Town's financials through the end of October 2016. Actual revenues will slightly exceed what was budgeted. Line 3186 Payment in Lieu of Taxes and Line 3352 Room & Meals Tax, they expect to be fully reimbursed for those items by the end of the year.

Expenses at the end of the year are anticipate to come in slightly below budgeted appropriation. Between revenues and expenses, they're hoping (if there are no snowstorms or blizzards) they'll come in a little under \$100,000 excess for the year. The expenses running over budget are 4220 Fire and the Select Board is considering that in detail and deciding if a reorganization is in order. 4312 Highways & Streets looks like they're below budget but that will change when the bill come in for work done recently. The question was asked if the grant money had come in yet for 4290. That will be looked into. Line 3190 Interest & Penalties Taxes was asked about and Mr. Traum said that it was people paying their taxes late.

FINANCIALS – School Board

Bill Chapin, Jr., presented the 9/30/16 report that included this year's budget numbers to date, last year's budget numbers for reference and last month's budget numbers. See attached Hopkinton School District report dated 9/30/16.

Bill explained that the School Board Budget presented this year will have a major increase in health insurance – with a 23% increase (which is the same as the Town). Currently the insured pays 8% and the town pays 92% of that cost. 2003/04 was the last increase that was close to this increase at 25%.

It's important for the Budget Committee to know what the teachers' pay in for insurance is versus what the tax payers pay in. The Budget Committee wants to know what surrounding towns or towns close in size to ours pay in for their teachers.

The teacher's contracts are not a part of the Budget Committees privileged information, but public documents of the last year budget and expenses regarding pay and insurance are available and can be looked at. This information is available monthly under the general fund, each department, line by line, detailed expenditure status report, upon request. It is not broken down percentage wise but the total amount spent per month is available if you want a giant, multipage explanation. It was asked why shopping around for the best insurance rates wouldn't be a point of interest to tax payers, since the tax payers are paying for the major part of the insurance.

It was suggested that Budget Committee members visit towns nearby or close in size to ours to see what they do or say regarding budgets presented and how they deal with contract negotiations/changes.

FINANCIALS – Hopkinton Village Precinct

John Wuellenweber shared that there were no changes in the budget. He explained that the chimney damage/roof leak was investigated at the old firehouse and the leak can be repaired, cost numbers will be reported.

FINANCIALS – Contoocook Village Precinct

Don Houston presented the Profit & Loss Budget stating nothing has been changed and they are on schedule. They will come in right on budget.

OTHER BUSINESS

We need to ask the health insurance representative(s) to explain the costs for the town and school benefits – who pays what is most important.

It asked if our Chairperson couldn't reach out to towns around us if we could sit in and/or ask if we could sit in and ask how they handle their meetings,

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Wednesday, December 7, 2016, 5:30 pm (Presentation of Town Budget) with continuation on 12/14 for continuation of the presentation, at the Town Hall.

ADJOURN

John Wuellenweber motioned to adjourn at 7:30 pm. Amy Bogart seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Tammy Clay