

Advisory Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes

February 4, 2015

The following members were present: Christopher Luurtsema, Dick McDanolds, Barb Dutile, Dick Fabrizio, Andrew Maffei, Laraine King, Jon Hobbs, Dan Brady, Peter Conrad and Howard Hatch. Also present: Selectboard members Wayne Fortier, Lynn Wheeler, Robert Roudebush, Rick Ladd and Tom Friel; Town Manager Glenn English; Admin. Asst./Finance Officer Jo Lacaillade; and Clerk Karen Hyde.

Members of the Public: Road Agent Stuart McDanolds, Darwin Clogston, Kelly Burke, Pauline Aldrich, Rich Clifford, Richard Morris, Josh Hutchins, Jeff Robbins, Dennis Fournier, Don Hammond, Richard Guy and Keisha Luce

Christopher Luurtsema called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Howard Hatch asked to have the Minutes of the 1/28/2015 Meeting amended. On Page 2, he requested Lynn Wheeler's comments about funding of the libraries be added to the Minutes. Jon Hobbs questioned the motion about the Stonecrest Culvert project. The tape would be reviewed. Peter Conrad made the motion to accept the amended Minutes; seconded by Barb Dutile and carried unanimously.

The following Warrant Articles were reviewed:

Tri-County Community Action – Pauline Aldrich has worked at Tri-County CAP for over twenty years. With her was Kelly Burke, the present community contact in Woodsville. At the last Advisory Budget Committee meeting, Jeanne Robillard was representing them, but no one knows the bones of what's going on better than the people who are actually doing it. Pauline and Kelly were attending to answer questions, explain Tri-County CAP's request for funding, why they ask the Town for money and how that money is used. For many years, they have just followed the status quo. Tri-County CAP submitted funding requests to towns and selectmen approved the requests. The requests were for a good cause. The funding is very important to Tri-County CAP. Pauline had passed out a fact sheet from Tri-County CAP explaining what they do. It contained important things that people needed to know. Tri-County CAP administers 57 different programs now, but a few years ago, they were well into the 70s. They have had to trim their budgets as well. The programs listed on the fact sheet were all overseen by Tri-County CAP. The contact offices are looking for funding from the towns to help support keeping them open. The biggest contributor to operate their offices is from the LIHEAP program, which is fuel assistance. They get a lot of money from the State. That program is only funded from December to May. They are taking money appropriated for administrative purposes to run their offices for 12 months when, in reality, they are only getting funds for 5 months to operate. Because the CAP offices are an asset to a

community, CAP decided to go to the Selectboards to ask for support. Pauline also handed out a copy of the request letter, which she had also sent out to other towns, asking the Town for \$8,000 in funding. She commented that if services like what Tri-County CAP provides weren't there, she didn't know what impact that would have on the county. Tri-County CAP owns the building in Woodsville where their office is located, along with 4 other programs in the building. Some of the offices in other towns are rental properties. She commented that there is a formula in place that determines the funding requests for each town. A motion to approve the \$8,000 request was made by Peter Conrad. TM English commented that the Town had sold CAP the building in Woodsville for \$1. Chris Luurtsema asked about taxes and TM English stated that Tri-County CAP was tax exempt. TM English also commented that the fuel assistance money is pass-through money from the Federal government. There are other agencies that distribute fuel assistance. He asked Pauline if she was able to use any of that money for administrative expenses. Pauline responded that the LIHEAP funding comes in in one big bundle from the State; the State distributes it through Tri-County CAP. Rick Ladd asked out of the 77 towns that contribute, how much money, if any money, did they receive from Grafton County. Pauline responded that of the 77 towns that they requested, they all contributed. Grafton County did not contribute. TM English commented that they did not approve the increase (from \$4,000 to \$8,000) in funding because the food bank at Tri-County CAP had moved out of the building and was now going to be through the local churches at the Robert E. Clifford Memorial Building. Dan Brady seconded; Dick Fabrizio opposed and Howard Hatch abstained. The motion passed.

Alumni Hall (Court Street Arts) – Keisha Luce returned to the meeting with handouts and a budget for 2015 as requested at the last meeting. Chris Luurtsema asked Keisha about Court Street Arts' debt service. Keisha responded that they apply to the Mildred Page fund. Keisha commented that in addition to the programs they run, they also have a host of free programs, such as recitals, annual winter carnival dance, and dancing for the seniors. Howard Hatch commented that the free programs should get a donation from the school to help with costs. Keisha replied that Court Street Arts was bringing in people from other towns that don't usually come here. They are buying artwork, food, gas, and lodging here in town, adding to the economy. Dan Brady asked if the Advisory Budget Committee could ask, for next year, an effort to increase fundraising. Keisha commented that they are still growing and they are bringing in more people. A motion to approve the \$12,000 request was made by Laraine King, seconded by Barb Dutile; Howard Hatch voted in the negative. The motion passed.

The Committee then moved to the Fire Department budgets. They started with Haverhill Corner's budget. Richard Morris, Haverhill Corner Fire Chief, stated that he needed 6 sets of gear as they are running with over 10-year-old gear. Chris Luurtsema asked if it was mandated to update gear and Richard stated that it was. Laraine King asked what shots were being referred to and was told that they were for hepatitis. Dan Brady asked about the Fire Inspector and Richard commented

that he had been on a few inspections with the prospective Fire Inspector. Richard thought he was a young, smart guy. The stipends for each Chief have been taken out of each individual Fire Department's budget and put into the FD Prof Services-Inspections line item for the Life Safety/Fire Code Inspector. All of the Fire Department's Equipment line items have been moved to the Town's Capital Reserve-Fire Vehicles. Richard Morris commented that they had to install a new furnace and a generator in 2014 at the fire station. Dick Fabrizio asked how the \$20,000 for Inspections had been arrived at and TM English stated that it was an estimate of \$25 hour at an average of 20 hours per week. Mr. Fabrizio then asked what types of buildings were being inspected and TM English stated that it would be multi-family and commercial buildings and based on square footage. Peter Conrad commented that it would be much better to be doing these inspections than to have someone die or be injured in a fire. Chris Luurtsema asked how long the program had been going and TM English stated that it had not started yet because they hadn't hired an Inspector. Rick Ladd commented that the Inspector would mostly be looking at single-family homes that had been turned into multi-family homes. There is no charge for the initial inspection, but for each subsequent inspection, there will be fees. Jon Hobbs asked what the time frame was for shutting a building down. Rick Ladd stated that it could be immediate. Jon Hobbs asked what qualifications they were looking for in the inspector. TM English stated that he didn't have it with him, but there was a full job description. The inspector also needed to carry his or her own liability insurance. Before moving on to North Haverhill Fire Department, Richard Morris commented that Haverhill Corner would be looking to get a new truck next year.

The Committee then moved on to North Haverhill Fire Department. Don Hammond asked to add \$1,000 to the 2015 budget for their share of using the Woodsville Fire Department's washing machine. He commented that Haverhill Corner had backed out of using the machine. Don commented most everything stayed the same except that station repairs and supplies included replacing windows in the old part of the station and to replace the side door that got hit by wind. Don had given AA Lacaillade some inspections that needed to be billed. Dan Brady asked what North Haverhill was going to do with the 2014 surplus and Don told him that the difference would be applied to their truck note to lower the principal. Howard Hatch asked who owned the Fire Departments. TM English stated that it took a lot of negotiation to equalize funding throughout the Town. Don commented that by taking out the \$1,000 stipend and adding in North Haverhill's share of the washing machine, their budget would be \$96,316. Jon Hobbs commented that there were some issues within the Fire Departments as far as billing out, making sure the money was coming back in and following up. This seemed to be a time issue for the Chiefs being able to handle billing. How is that going to be handled under the new Inspector position? Chief Hammond stated that AA Lacaillade would be doing the billing. She stated that she should know as soon as they are done with an inspection and can get the bill out. TM English commented that the goal of properly budgeting the Fire Departments, was to eliminate the fundraising necessity and to encourage the Departments to not raise money for necessities. They would be encouraged to raise

money for scholarships or charitable purposes, not something that was an ordinary expense. They should not feel the pressure to raise money for necessities. Chairman Luurtsema disagreed with that concept.

The Committee moved on to Woodsville Fire Department. Jeff Robbins, Fire Chief, stated that Woodsville's budget was down about \$5,000. The numbers were pretty level from last year. Richard Guy stated that they had done some negotiating on an insurance policy. Jeff stated that they had taken the \$5,000 stipend out of their budget. They had a surplus of \$3,695, which would go into the Fire Department's general fund. TM English stated that they were taking baby steps. Rick Ladd asked who was paying the debt from previous purchases of trucks, since a Capital Reserve for Fire Vehicles has been established. TM English stated that after any reserve funds have been exhausted, they should be dedicating towards the payment. The net burden would be on the Town's reserve account. Jon Hobbs asked Richard Morris why Haverhill Corner had backed out of the washing machine and Richard responded that he felt the money could be used for gear.

AA Lacaillade commented that she had looked at the North Haverhill warrant for this year and there was \$8,727 left in the Fire Department's budget. The Commissioners voted to carry over the \$2,000 unspent from last year for the washing machine so that lowers that to \$6,727. They also have a Warrant Article to use \$1,000 of ending fund balance toward the washing machine so it does not need to be added to this year because it was taken out of last year's ending fund balance. The Warrant Article says that carryover money would be applied to the note is \$6,727, \$2,000 for the washer and \$1,000 for the additional cost of the washer, so the washer doesn't need to be budgeted. The budget would then be \$95,316.

Barb Dutile made the motion to approve \$26,600 for Prof Services-Inspections; seconded by Laraine King and carried unanimously. Barb Dutile made the motion to approve \$142,940 for the Woodsville Fire Department; seconded by Jon Hobbs and carried unanimously. Barb Dutile made the motion to approve \$76,515 for the Haverhill Corner Fire Department; seconded by Laraine King and carried unanimously. Jon Hobbs made the motion to approve \$95,316 for North Haverhill Fire Department; seconded by Dan Brady and carried unanimously. Jon Hobbs made the motion to approve \$12,062 for Mutual Aid, Dispatch and Forest Fires; seconded by Dan Brady and carried unanimously. The total budget for the Fire Departments is \$353,433.

Chairman Luurtsema asked a few more questions about the Information Technology budget, specifically the Professional Services line item. He asked for a refresher on what that included and AA Lacaillade stated that it was for salary of the IT Director, tax map maintenance, quarterly tax map revisions, logmein, Avenet, Start Logic and Gov.office. Chairman Luurtsema then asked what the IT Director's salary was and AA Lacaillade stated that it was \$19,500. Last year, he was at \$50/hour; this year, he is at approximately \$60/hr. AA Lacaillade stated that there was a lot of IT in the building. The IT Director maintains all of the Police Department's records and the server. He is setup on his phone that warns him if the system is down for more than five minutes.

The Committee then moved on to the reopened Highway budget and the Stonecrest culvert project. Chairman Luurtsema stated that there were a couple of things “up in the air” and was asking for clarification from RA Stuart McDanolds. There was a new truck proposal with new information coming, the culvert proposal and the bond for the road. If the bond was not approved, the Highway budget would be adjusted accordingly. RA McDanolds stated that he had received numbers for the culvert replacement at \$47,000. The numbers he received for pouring the box culvert were \$34,000, the pipe would be \$9,000, and the excavation would be \$7,000 or \$8,000, so that really wouldn’t save any money. Stuart contacted Howard Hatch’s contractor for cement work and the cement was over \$9,000. The contractor could do the job for somewhere between \$25,000 and \$30,000 for the box culvert, with no excavation costs. Jon Hobbs asked what the total cost would be for a box culvert. Stuart replied that it would be \$72,000. Howard Hatch asked if Stuart had received another pipe run and Stuart said he had not.

The next issue was the purchase of a new truck. RA McDanolds stated that the choice was between the International TerraStar and the Dodge 5500 series. The TerraStar has an 80,000 psi frame and the Dodge has a 60,000 psi frame. He has heard good things about both vehicles. The Dodge was approximately \$95,000 and the TerraStar was approximately \$107,000. Chairman Luurtsema asked if the price of the TerraStar included the side wing, four-wheel drive, plow and sander with an International frame and Stuart said that it did. Laraine King asked if this was the truck that would have the warranty and Stuart said that it would. Laraine then asked Stuart which truck he would prefer. Stuart replied that the TerraStar would be considered top of the line for the size truck they were looking at. Howard Hatch stated that Stuart had to want the TerraStar; he couldn’t be asked to have a truck that he didn’t care for. The biggest things that Howard could see were not being able to get extra years out of the truck and the other was the wing. He didn’t feel that a 6- or 7-foot wing were necessary; a standard wing would suffice. Jon Hobbs asked if one truck or the other held its value better. RA McDanolds did not know. Robert Roudebush asked Stuart if any truck with any engine would have a standard warranty and Stuart said it would, but it would only be 3 years or maybe 60,000 miles. Stuart commented that the whole purpose of looking at the 5500 series was its ability to carry a wing. TM English asked Howard or Stuart if they would receive more bids on one truck over the other based on the number of distributors around. Stuart responded that multiple bids could be received on both trucks. Closer would be better as far as repairs were concerned. Howard commented that truck usage has changed over the years; the International is more rugged than the Dodge. Howard Hatch made the motion to recommend \$105,000 for the purchase of a new Highway truck; seconded by Dan Brady and carried unanimously.

Laraine King stated that the road bond would be discussed on February 11th at the Hearing. Howard Hatch commented that the Highway budget could be increased by \$100,000; Woodsville would get their share, but there would be no interest. A committee should be formed to look at

the road issues. TM English stated that last year, the Selectboard was considering a \$1 million bond for roads, and they wanted a multi-year comprehensive plan. He does not have a position on the bond, but the Board had asked for information and he had provided that. TM English also commented that if the Town continues to pay-as-you-go, the road issues would never get caught up. Laraine King needed clarification on Howard's plan of not doing the bond, but allocating \$100,000 each year in the Highway budget to repair roads. Howard asked if the \$1 million bond included Woodsville's share and interest or was it \$1 million plus Woodsville plus interest. TM English explained that it was the \$1 million bond plus Woodsville plus interest. Howard then stated that by throwing the Stonecrest culvert job into the Highway budget would make it higher. TM English commented that on a \$1 million bond with interest at 2.69%, the principal would end up being \$100,000, total annual interest would be \$26,974, and Woodsville's share would be \$33,296 per year. The interest goes down over the life of the loan and the Woodsville's share stays the same because it is based on the principal, which Woodsville has agreed to. RA McDanolds asked if \$100,000 would be added to the Tar budget and TM English stated that it would be split between Tar, Machine Hire and whatever other line items as necessary. Chairman Luurtsema stated that by increasing the allotment over the next five years to the Highway budget and not doing a bond, it may take a little bit longer to get the job done but there would be no interest. Rick Ladd stated that he would rather it was pay-as-you-go. When he looks at the total interest and adds that up over a period of time, this is money that is lost. He stated that why not build up the Highway budget, do the maintenance and reconstruction as you go, rather than take out a bond. Dan Brady suggested a compromise, which was to accept Howard Hatch's recommendation of putting four (4) senior people together who know the industry to work with the Town Manager and others. He has been reading the papers for three years since the Selectmen have been working on this issue. He calculated his own premium, based on the taxes that he pays. From his point of view, based on the conditions of the roads that are driven every day, it's a fair value. He thinks that if Howard and his group monitor the work and contributed talent that maybe some didn't have, there is a value to that and things could move ahead. If that group collectively says to the Selectmen "no" and in their judgment, only 30% should be done instead of 85%, fine. He stated that they seem to go back and forth. Wayne Fortier commented that an Advisory Committee is warranted. There are individuals in Town who have spent their careers in the construction business and building roads. However, he wouldn't want the committee to micromanage TM English and RA McDanolds, just simply act as a source of direction and guidance and give their input to what they know. Mr. Fortier stated that the voters should have the right to weigh in on the bond, but the committee would provide expertise on how the roads would be repaired. Rick Ladd agreed with having a committee providing their expertise. Mr. Fortier asked TM English how they would go from the 10-year plan to designing road specs. TM English responded that, normally, it would be an engineer or some kind of professional help. Jon Hobbs stated that whether the bond goes to the voters and gets turned down or if the bond does not go to the voters, there is still an underfunded Highway

budget to take care of some of the major road concerns. If it doesn't go to the voters, there is an issue with the Highway budget as it is. If it does go to the voters and gets shot down, he doesn't think that there is enough money in the budget to take care of some of the immediate needs that some of the roads in Town have.

CASA – Barb Dutile explained that CASA is an advocate for children going through the court system; people volunteer their time to assist. Motion to approve by Barb Dutile, seconded by Laraine King and all approved.

Hazardous Waste Collection Day – TM English was proposing a Hazardous Waste Collection Day, which would include hazardous waste (oil-based paint), electronics and tires. There would be funds collected for the electronics and tires. This would be for household hazardous waste. Motion to approve by Jon Hobbs; seconded by Laraine King and all approved.

Recycling – Motion to approve by Jon Hobbs; seconded by Dan Brady and all approved.

Chris Luurtsema made the motion to approve the Highway budget with the \$45,000 Stonecrest culvert project added in; seconded by Peter Conrad. Howard Hatch voted no and Barb Dutile abstained. The motion passed.

The Budget Hearing will be Wednesday, February 11th at 7:00 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 pm.

Minutes transcribed by Karen Hyde.