

Advisory Budget Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, February 3, 2016

The following members were present: Dick Guy, Dan Brady, Howard Hatch, Barb Dutile, Darwin Clogston, Chris Luurtsema and Jon Hobbs

Selectboard members: Tom Friel

Town Manager: Glenn English

Finance Officer: Jo Lacaillade

Clerk: Karen Hyde

Others Present: Road Agent Stuart McDanolds

Chris Luurtsema called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm.

Chris went through the list of what was remaining to go through. He listed Ambulance, Emergency Management, Health Officer, Animal Control, General Assistance, Patriotic Purposes, Haverhill Heritage Commission, Conservation Commission, Lower Cohase Reg Chamber, Debt Service, Capital Reserves and the remainder of the Warrant Articles. Mr. Brady mentioned that Howard Hatch had mentioned having a page in the Annual Report and he was wondering if that was going to be done and who was going to author it. Chris said that it would be him. TM English commented that Chris may want to review the Minutes. FO Jo Lacaillade commented that they weren't holding the Budget Hearing until February 11, 2016 and as soon as that happens, then she will try to ship the Town Report. She was hoping to ship it on February 12 but it takes a while to compile it, so if she could get the information by the beginning of that week, it would be great. Barb Dutile made a motion to accept the 1/21/16 Minutes of the Advisory Budget Committee as written; seconded by Dan Brady and all approved.

**Ambulance** – Chris stated that the Ambulance line looked consistent with years past. It went up approximately \$10,000 in 2015. TM English stated that the per capita charge to all of their customers is \$14.50 and that is simply multiplied by Haverhill population. Mr. Brady asked about the new billing system and the revenue going up and if that was successful. TM English commented that they were having some issues with coverage. He knew that there was an issue with Upper Valley Ambulance service not providing service to their towns and Woodsville being constantly called. Dick Guy commented that they are now paying Woodsville \$380 every time they do one of their back-up calls. Barb Dutile commented that there was an issue at one time with insurance and they got on track and assumed all was well. Dick said it was fantastic. The

lady that did that job was worth her weight. Howard Hatch made the motion to approve the Ambulance budget of \$68,107; seconded by Dan Brady and all approved. TM English stated that they do a good job.

**Emergency Management** – TM English stated that this was one person, part-time Emergency Management Director with the stipends and fringes, such as they are. Barb asked if this was Steve Robbins and TM English said that it was. Mr. Brady asked if he got partial benefits as his fringes and TM English and Jo stated that he got the standard stuff, FICA and Medicare. He only got the required benefits. Jon Hobbs made the motion to approve the Emergency Management budget of \$1,583; seconded by Dick Guy and all approved.

**Health Officer** – TM English stated that the Health Officer was the same person as the Emergency Management Director. He receives a minor stipend and minimal benefits. He would say that Steve, in this area, puts in a lot of hours depending on the situation. For instance, last year, they had a lot of residences where people let trash accumulate and for various reasons, those have been cleaned up so it's not a big issue right now. It ebbs and flows. Usually when the snow melts, a lot of that stuff shows up, but haven't seen much yet. Mr. Brady commented that County Road hadn't been cleaned up. TM English stated that that was not trash and it was permitted other than the unregistered vehicles. It is stuff and not putrifiable refuse, which is the legal term. He went on to say that the Town was in court with that person and a residence on Route 116 on junk vehicles. Chris commented that that was something they would have to have some sort of written legislation within the Town that would apply. Jon Hobbs made the motion to approve the Health Officer budget of \$2,518; seconded by Dan Brady. Dick asked if the Health Officer was going to be doing some training this year. TM English stated that he could avail himself of some training in certain areas, such as water quality. They were hoping to get something going on well protection and they just never got it going last year. It is available through Primex and NHMA. Chris asked if it was to keep it from getting contaminated. TM English stated that they talked about threats to private water supplies and trying to address them in cooperation with the DES. There are some threats out there. One is residential oil storage tanks, which really aren't regulated, and it's very possible that a lot of individual tanks around Town could be leaking. There is really no State control over that. Chris asked if it was home heating oil and TM English said yes. It is a potential threat and there are some others. Tom Friel mentioned underground gas storage tanks, too. There are a lot of small diesel tanks around. The vote was taken and all approved.

**HW Vehicles** – Chris mentioned that last year they had an appropriation to purchase the truck for the plowing of Mountain Lakes. TM English stated that \$105,000 was budgeted and with the trade, the actual cost was \$99,422. Chris asked if they were going to set aside anything for other vehicles and TM English stated that they hadn't gotten there yet. They weren't buying anything this year, but putting money in the reserve.

**Animal Control** – TM English commented that the big increase here was in salaries as the Animal Shelter had to be manned per State law. They have to have a presence there and they do this as minimally as possible. Jon asked when that started and TM English stated that it was in July 2015. Jon asked if the boarding fees increased as a result of that and TM English stated that it really didn't have an effect on the boarding. It's just basically having someone there in case a dog is dropped off and he didn't think it netted any additional revenue. Jon asked if they increased the fee for boarding as a result and TM English said no. Jo stated that she thought that the strays were increased by \$5 if it was a second offense. Jon asked if it was raised \$5 or it was raised to \$5 and Jo said it was raised by \$5 to \$25 if they catch the dog a second time. Jon commented that there was some concern last year on how the Animal Control Officer was doing her job. TM English stated that he couldn't remember it, but it could have been discussed. Mr. Brady thought there were health issues with that person. Jo said there were with the back-up person who is no longer there. TM English commented that Linda Smith also had some health issues. Howard said that there has always been (couldn't understand) on this one. The police used to pick them up and take them (couldn't understand). If they were looking for a motion or looking to discuss, unless they can operate the Animal Control within the budget that it used to be, when there was dog damage, the damages most usually were in the income of that department. He commented on the issue of cats recently and TM English commented that they tried to hold that one off, but it was tough. Howard said that it would be brainy to get out of the dog pound and take them to quite a few agencies. Take them and pay what it is rather than pay every day when there is nothing up there. They say that it isn't very much money but it looks like around 847 hours, which is about 16½ hours a week. It looks about 6,000 miles driven. It would be so clean and dry if it was farmed out. Jo asked how many hours they were going to save by farming them out because they will still have to go and make the call and then deliver to wherever he was talking about, which is the majority of those hours. There will still be the cost of going out on the call. He understands that, but 6,000 miles. They pay someone mileage to go and sit at the dog pound every day for an hour and a half. TM English commented that the other problem with that is that the Town is so big that a run from one end of the Town to the other is a lot of miles. He does agree if the Town didn't run a kennel, it wouldn't have to be staffed. He commented that they tried to bid it out and didn't get any takers some time ago. If they could get someone to do it who met all of the qualifications; one of the problems is that the bidders didn't meet State requirements, which are the ones that the Town has to meet because they are running a kennel. They could attempt to put it out, but he didn't know how successful they would be. It would be a significant amount of money. Darwin commented that he had spent quite a bit of time looking through the logs of last year and he thought that he had disrupted Jo's work because he was laughing so many times as he read through. He randomly picked a dog log from March and he thought this was a pretty typical situation. The entry was "go to Wal-Mart, dog loose, can't find the dog". There are hundreds of those calls. TM English

stated they were wild goose chases and Jo commented that they have to respond. Darwin didn't have the answer to that. He read another entry: "picked up a dog in Woodsville, took it to the kennel and then the next day, the person came and picked up the dog at the kennel" and the Animal Control Officer put down 4 hours. He went on to say that it was \$67 and some change just for that one dog and she charged \$20. If the revenue for the whole year is looked at and it's projected to be \$750 for the revenue and then there is an \$18,000 budget. There were calls after calls to the Wal-Mart parking lot for dogs in a car. He had an issue with the Animal Control Officer opening up the car to let the dog out. He thought that that could be trouble. TM English said that the alternative would be to chase around Wal-Mart to try and find the owner. Her job on a hot day is to relieve the animal and she does it in the fastest way she can. Most of the calls are wild goose chases, but they have to go. He also said that they could raise their fees and fines and probably should. Darwin didn't have an answer. Chris commented that it's like a dog barking and the Animal Control Officer shows up and all is quiet. TM English stated that the problem is unless that person who called is willing to go to court and testify to the case or Linda sees it herself, they can't get anywhere. Darwin said there were hundreds of calls about cats and kittens, too. He went on to say that if anyone wanted a good chuckle, they should read through the logs. TM English stated there was some humorous stuff in there. Jon asked what the process was to increase the fees and come up with what they ought to be and if it was done by the Animal Control Officer. TM English said that it was and Jo said that they would have to check the statutes to see if they have an allowance. TM English stated that they could make that happen. Barb commented that if they had to pay a little more, they might be a little more alert. Jon figured that they were generating about 44% of the overall cost to run the kennel. Jo said that the dog licensing fees offset some of the cost. Barb said that she thought it was crazy money because people ought to keep track of their own dogs, but going back before there was Animal Control, if they were looking at these same hours, they would be paying the Police a lot more money than they are paying Linda Smith. It would be the Police Department chasing these calls. Howard said that it was already paid for because they were on duty. Jo said that it could go into overtime. Darwin asked if there was a loose dog, would people call dispatch or think twice about that and call Linda. Barb said that they are calling dispatch now and that is how Linda gets the calls. TM English said that or they are calling her at home. Jo said that she was sending Linda an e-mail to come in and talk with them. Jon thought that they should try to bridge that gap as much as possible. He agreed with Barb in that they have a need for Animal Control, but it seems like they should be generating more revenue. Howard thought this might be a good item to put on Mr. Brady's page in the Annual Report. TM English let the Committee know that Jo was sending Linda an e-mail. TM English stated that the fee went from \$20 to \$25 and Barb said that was only on strays. Jo said that she didn't think the boarding had increased from the \$20 a day, but she also didn't think they were doing much boarding. Darwin commented that he didn't know about animal cruelty, but if a dog is found at Wal-Mart in a

truck and it's 131 degrees, she lets the dog out but there was not one word about a fine. TM English stated that she could fine them. Barb said that she could take them to court for that. She said that there were more animal laws than people laws with substantial fines. She wished that people would care about babies and little kids in the cars, rather than dogs. She has had people come up to her telling about a dog in a car and she checks it out and the windows are all open and it's not even hot out. Jo said that people will scream if nothing is done and the dog dies in that car. TM English agreed that they should increase the fees. Jo said that she has been summoned to the office. Jon asked if she did her own billing and Jo said that she did. The Town doesn't see anything until she brings in the money. Darwin said that was another thing at the bottom of the dog log. It said that it took 5 hours to write out the animal log. TM English stated that if it made him feel any better, she had just started doing that. There were many years when she didn't put in for that. He thought maybe 20 or 25 years, so they got a bargain before. Jon thought from his standpoint that it wasn't any type of personal attack at all. Whoever has the position has to increase the fines. TM English stated that that was the way they were taking it. Darwin had the numbers and they just didn't add up. Howard Hatch made a motion to approve the Animal Control budget of \$18,161; seconded by Barb Dutile and all approved.

**General Assistance** – TM English explained that the first grouping was administration, which is the cost of Leslie, the part-time Welfare Administrator and the second grouping is the actual benefits to the clients. He went on to say that what's being proposed is down quite a bit to \$48,300 for assistance and the administration is \$29,468. Dick asked how many hours she worked and Jo told him that she works 22-25 hours per week depending on the time of year. TM English stated that "business is good, thank you housing". Chris said that with things like CAP moving out which they have already discussed, it's hard for people to get the assistance. Leslie doesn't just hand out the Town's money, she works with the clients to access State and Federal grants and churches. A lot of her work is spent offsetting expenses that would otherwise come out of the pocket if they came in and had the talk with Tina (the Town Clerk). If Leslie wasn't here, they would talk with Tina and Tina wouldn't have the bandwidth to search out these other outside funds for these clients. Therefore, they would be paying out of their pockets. TM English stated that it didn't matter what the budget was. The Town pays what it has to pay. Chris commented that Leslie does a lot of work at diverting it from hitting the Town's pocket. TM English stated that, unfortunately, our system, as opposed to Vermont, is town by town and they aren't allowed to talk about individual clients to another town, so fraud is very difficult to pick up. Fraud is one of the big problems. Jo commented that the Town has joined a State-wide database. TM English went on to say that having a person 20 or so hours a week gives the Town much more leeway to investigate the applications. As they can imagine, there are a lot of people that game the system. The other big thing that may have helped lower the cost is that the Town has very active food banks in the area that he thinks help on the food end. There is one at the Nazarene Church on a regular basis, the one in Woodsville and one in

Wells River that takes care of people from both States, so the food banks have helped. The churches help quite a bit giving direct aid. This is not going to go away as long as they have the nature of the population that there is. Mr. Brady commented that they were going up in General Assistance from \$37,000 to \$48,000 next year. Jo stated that they were going down. TM English explained that it was \$66,800 last year and \$48,300 this year, which is about \$18,000. Jo explained that it's been a mild winter. There haven't been as many homeless as they would normally see in the winter. TM English stated that he shared their desire to shave it more but they were taking a chance. Mr. Brady was just looking at the numbers and saw a decline of 27% and how did that work out. Chris commented that it was over last year's budget. TM English stated that they were looking from budget to budget. Mr. Brady said OK and he wasn't anxious to shave it; he wanted to see where they got the numbers. Chris said that some of the numbers could be just a wild stab, because they could have a bad year. Jo commented that they were a little cautious when they were making cuts. They did cut quite a bit when they sat down and discussed it. Chris said that hopefully, it wouldn't come back to bite us. Jo thought they were reasonable cuts, but they could be surprised. Barb commented that if they didn't have Leslie, they would be spending the total amount and then some. Jo said that Leslie has so much time to do welfare fraud investigations than she does a lot. She said that they now have the State-wide database so once a person signs their release form to us, Leslie can enter them into the system and see if they are getting assistance anywhere else. TM English stated that this was fairly new, but it may have an effect. Howard asked if this was in State and Jo told him that it was. Howard then commented that he wished that the ones in Vermont would at least register their cars here. TM English said that the other problem is the State doesn't have a residency requirement because the State doesn't pay for it, the towns do. He said "to get on their reps and Senators". They have tried to change the system and the State loves it. Jo said that it was just something they weren't willing to engage in. She went on to say that she thought that the representatives didn't like it but it is a loser battle for them. Barb Dutile made the motion to approve the General Assistance budget of \$77,768; seconded by Howard Hatch and all approved.

**Stonecrest Culvert Repair/Replace** - TM English asked if they could skip to the Warrant Articles because Road Agent Stuart McDanolds was there to speak about one of the Warrant Articles. TM English stated that he had given the Committee a handout on this project at the last meeting. He went on to explain that what they have is a road to a subdivision that is the Town's road with a 90-foot culvert under it, which is in a stream that contains trout and other fish according to the experts. The bad news is that if there are any repairs done to it, a Wetlands Permit is required, which is already in the works. The good news is there is money available to address these kinds of culverts. It is not tax money or government money; it comes from the Connecticut River Watershed Council. The ultimate source is the dam on the Connecticut River that has to fork up money for environmental reasons so it is coming out of their pockets. What

Stuart has discovered is that the culvert is collapsing; it is a metal pipe and there is some age on it. Basically, it is collapsing from the top. The road is starting to dip. They came up with the project last year and it didn't end up getting in the budget. Since then, the Connecticut River Watershed Council came up with \$14,000 for an engineering study. The results of the engineering study are a description cost estimate, which is on the second page of the handout. That study also covers all of the engineering costs to do the Wetlands Permit and all he has to do is sign it. It's almost done and all of the other environmental requirements that they have to meet that the engineers are doing. The other pool of money that the Watershed Council has come up with was a good chunk of the cost of the project, which is estimated to be \$70,000, they are kicking in \$42,000 of that and the Town share would be \$28,000. Chris asked if that was plus the \$14,000 or has that already been expensed. TM English stated that it had already been expensed and again, that was a direct expense to the Watershed Council. They paid for it. The Town got free engineering, free cost estimate and free permit help. He feels pretty good about the project and they need to address it sooner rather than later because it could collapse totally. Dick asked where Stonecrest was and TM English stated that it was the development where Barb lives. It is not a heavy traffic road so, thankfully, traffic control will be minimal to do the project. Stuart was there to answer any technical questions. Chris asked what they were planning on replacing the pipe with and how long will it last. Stuart replied that he hadn't been privy to what they were going to use and whether it would be a box or conventional culvert. These folks really prefer box culverts or naturally stream bottom culverts. TM English stated that it would be a pipe with a stream bottom. It will be corrugated pipe probably with a poly liner like the one that was put in on Clark Pond Road by the golf course, which should extend the life. Then they are going to want to do a natural bottom if they can for fish passage. Howard asked if it would be lifetime. TM English stated that it would be in ours. Stuart commented that polymer-coated pipe was supposed to be 50- to 100-year pipe. TM English stated that it would be a pretty good life because what is in there is a piece of crap that the developer just threw in there. Chris asked how tall and Stuart said it was 6 feet. Howard commented that it really could be about half of that and TM English agreed. Howard's concern, which he brought up last year, was they were re-doing it and re-doing it and could they get the same grant in funding if they purchased a little bit of property and open it up and not have a culvert there again. TM English said no because they wouldn't get any funding because they wouldn't be solving. The other problem is that they have to resolve the damaged culvert anyway whether they come up with another entrance or not because it's going to impede the stream at some point. That stream had to be kept open. Howard asked why they wouldn't be eligible for keeping the stream bed open. If they let it collapse, they are going to have a problem with water. He was just asking the question so that they wouldn't have to maintain it again. There is land that could be available and they would never have to replace it again. TM English thought that 30-50 years for \$28,000 was a pretty good deal. They don't know how much it would cost them to purchase the land.

The development was designed for the road to come in that way. Barb asked about the land coming up from and if it was her house, she wouldn't want the road coming up through there. It would have to come between two houses. Howard said he was talking about coming up from Lavoie's, right up the side of the bank. Stuart said that just below their present culvert were, he didn't think that they could cut into that bank far enough to get the road to come down through there because of the house up above. TM English stated that it wouldn't be done for \$28,000. Stuart said that when they thought about doing this project, they thought about coming off of the cul-de-sac and coming down through Mike Lavoie's similar to what the old road that accessed that property originally was but they would have to gain all off of one or go up the middle of a boundary and then have to purchase a piece of property from Mike to get back onto the highway. By the time all of that is done address traffic concerns and the whole development drives by a house at 50 mph as compared to having two slow-moving cul-de-sacs. TM English said that it was a valid suggestion, but for the tax money they are spending and the kind of product they are getting, which is going to be a lot better than what is there now, he thinks it is a good way to go. Howard said that other than retainment of the wall, somewhere in the vicinity of 5/8 of material just relocating the material. The material that is in there could be relocated and he asked if they were going to reuse the material. Stuart asked if that was when they excavate the culvert and he said that probably 90% of the gravel. TM English said that they didn't know what was there. He wasn't here when that development was done and didn't know what was buried there. He hopes it's good, clean fill. Stuart said that what he has seen from the split in the culvert, it was reasonably quality bank gravel. Howard was just bringing up that sometimes there isn't too much difference in cost if they could do away without having to do it again. TM English said that it was a good thought, but again, he thinks they will get a lot of years out of this. Barb commented that she and her husband own the two lots coming in on the right and they have offered to Stuart when they are digging stuff out that they can stockpile it on one of those lots and try to save trucking. TM English thanked her. Stuart said that he has the ability to stockpile by Mike's U-Store-It, too, so either way there are two places to store it on the same side of the brook. Jon asked if Stuart and his men were going to be doing the placement and TM English said that it would be put out. He said that they would see on the estimate where he made notes that the Town is supplying some assistance, but not doing the job. They would have to get a good-size excavator in there to do the work. Jon asked if Horizons had actually gotten the bid and TM English said that it was an estimate. The bids weren't out yet. Usually, engineer's estimates are high. Chris asked if there was any idea how long this would be down. TM English stated that they would get people in and out every day. Stuart commented that when they first proposed the project after discovering the condition of the culvert, they got a bid price from a local contractor to maintain a passable portion of the road so that people could come and go all day long. If there was a fire or whatever, there would be a one-lane access up into there. They can't just go in there and dig it up they have to do half and

half. TM English said that they could do that. Stuart said that their cost estimate didn't include repaving it and he believed that this estimate does. Jon asked if they had any important fish passages on Lily Pond Road. TM English said that was a good thought and these same folks actually did an inventory of all of the Town's culverts on every road and made an inventory of which ones were critical for fish passage and this one was fairly high on the list. They have already done the inventory and there were a lot of them that the Town could take care of with normal maintenance and replacing small culverts. He said that they love us because this was one of the towns that are actually doing something about fish passage and they are paying for it. Howard said that it would be a long time catching fish down there and TM English agreed with him, but if they say that they are there, they are there. He said that this was not the government. These were the good guys that are trying to do good stuff. He said that they love him because he has worked these guys pretty good. Dick Guy made the motion to approve the Stonecrest Culvert Repair/Replace budget for \$70,000; seconded by Dan Brady. Mr. Brady asked if the budget was going to carry \$70,000 or \$28,000 and TM English stated that they have to appropriate the whole amount and the revenue coming in is \$42,000. The vote was taken and all approved with Barb Dutile abstaining. Chris thanked Stuart for coming in.

**Patriotic Purposes** – Chris commented that this is a consistent amount that has been budgeted each year. TM English stated that there was a \$500 donation to the Fourth of July Parade Committee and the rest is for flags for graves in the cemeteries for Veterans. Barb Dutile made the motion to approve the Patriotic Purposes budget at \$2,000; seconded by Jon Hobbs and all approved.

**Haverhill Heritage Commission** – TM English explained that this was a Town Commission, small in ranks right now. Their main project has been the Hazen property, which was really Jim Hobbs's project who has since resigned. They are kind of in an inactive state right now and they need people, but they are concerned with representing the Town in terms of preserving historic properties. Jo explained that the caboose at Railroad Park was also one of their projects. TM English commented that they need a little more energy and some people. Barb asked something (couldn't understand) about Railroad Park. Jo said no, not the Heritage Commission. Originally, in the start-up of the park they did but they don't. They are working on the kiosk at RR Park and selling the Memorial bricks. By statute, just so the Committee would know, anything the Heritage Commission doesn't spend out of the \$1,500 a year gets transferred to their account which is not under the guides of the Town of Haverhill. It's under the Heritage Commission and the Town's Treasurer. They have been using it to offset tractor repairs for the mower at Hazen Park. The Town is lucky enough to have a volunteer from the campground that mows at the Park. TM English stated that what they need more than money is people. Barb asked if anyone was on the Commission right now and Jo stated that it was Mike Dannehy, Wayne Fortier and Dick Ekwall. TM English stated that it should be five (5) people. Howard commented that they could almost combine the Heritage and Conservation Commissions. The

Conservation Commission is inactive in Town and put the two together, they might get enough. TM English commented that they could do some joint work. Jo said that the Conservation Commission does meet once a month. Howard said that towns below Haverhill, such as Piermont, Orford and Lyme, their Conservation Commissions are active. TM English stated that they can't get people to serve; he would love for them to be active but nobody wants to do it. Howard said that they had to have a dedicated purpose. TM English said they were governed by statute. They don't have any regulatory power but they have a lot of advisory power. They pass on all wetlands permits. Those two Committees are really hurting for volunteers. He went on to say that if anyone felt the urge to serve, they could use their help. Barb Dutile made the motion to approve the Haverhill Heritage Commission budget for \$1,500; seconded by Dick Guy and all approved.

**CC Conservation Commission** – Chris commented that the budget is \$100 and TM English said yes. Jon Hobbs made the motion to approve the Conservation Commission budget for \$100; seconded by Dick Guy and all approved.

**Lower Cohase Reg Chamber** – TM English stated that there was a request from the Chamber of Commerce for their annual donation of 50 cents per capita of the population. They are actually getting a bargain because the Town's population estimates are higher than that. He revised that it was 25 cents per capita. Chris asked TM English that, as a Manager, he utilized these folks. TM English said that he did because they are a great organization. He hopes that they are helping area businesses and he thinks that they are. They do good work. Mr. Brady said he didn't see any request for funds. TM English stated that they acknowledge the request from last year and they want the same. They are happy with anything the Town can give them. Darwin Clogston made the motion to approve the Lower Cohase Reg Chamber budget for \$1,174; seconded by Dan Brady and all approved with Jon Hobbs abstaining.

**Debt Service** – Mr. Brady asked what TAN stood for. Dick told him that it was Tax Anticipation Note. TM English stated that there were three things here. TANs are money that the Town has to borrow if they don't have cash flow to pay primarily the school payments. They get times a year, usually right before tax billing, where they are really low on cash. This is the statutory provision that allows towns to borrow money in anticipation of taxes and that is why it's called a TAN. The last one that they got was at a pretty good rate and they only pay on what they use. Dick asked why the school didn't pay those fees. TM English stated that, by law, the towns have to do that. Jo explained that they have to pay whether they have the money or not. Dick said he got it, but he thought that the people who were using it should pay for it. TM English stated that the Town gets to keep all of the delinquent money from taxes not being paid, which is a sizeable revenue number. It's roughly \$90,000 a year, so any fees or penalties the Tax Collector charges on all of the taxes, the Town gets to keep that and it's called the float. In exchange for that, the Town has to incur the debt to pay the village districts, the county, the school and everybody that they collect taxes for. He thinks that they are ahead of the game if they look at

the amount of the float. The Town pays the Precincts quarterly and Jo corrected him that it was biannually. She said that they used to be paid once a year and now it is twice a year. He thinks that is the best that they are going to get in terms of the TAN. The other debt is for two loans outstanding. One is for a paving job on French Pond Road that is a 20-year note and they are in the 16<sup>th</sup> year. The other one is the sewer line that was built in 2000 and that was a 20-year note with the State and they are closing in on that one too. That is the only debt that the Town has. The principal and interest have been pretty consistent or dropping. Mr. Brady asked if the paving was going to continue on French Pond Road. TM English said that it wouldn't be next year. They have to switch to part of Brushwood Road and another project on Clark Pond Road. They are working their way down. When they get to the district, there are waterlines in there and there has been some settlement so it won't be just an overlay. Barb Dutile made the motion to approve the Debt Service budget for \$76,840; seconded by Dan Brady and all approved. Chris asked if it included French Pond paving and the Business Park sewer line install. TM English said that it was. The sewer line is actually offset by a grant that they got from the same agency of \$9,300 a year so they get a grant of \$9,300 a year and they pay on the note so they are pretty even on that. Chris said that they expected it to be paid off by 2020 and TM English said that was so. Mr. Brady commented that he knew Mountain Lakes carried a line item for payment to the Town for French Pond's sewer or water. TM English said that it wouldn't be the Town because Mountain Lakes doesn't pay the Town anything. Mr. Brady then said maybe that debt went directly to the district. TM English said that the district had their own water system so they couldn't mix the payments. Mr. Brady then asked if the Town carries a note for paving on French Pond Road. Jon clarified that it was for work that is already done and it was for a 20-year bond. Mr. Brady said that he wouldn't have thought it was that much. TM English commented that he wouldn't do a 20-year bond in the future. Dick said that the road doesn't last as long as the bond does. TM English stated that French Pond Road looked like a bombing run of B52s before that paving job was done. Chris said that they have a new system set up and as long as they stick with that, they will be able to keep ahead of it without borrowing.

**Hazardous Waste Collection Day** – TM English stated that they did a tire collection last year, which was no cost because they charge for that. The last time they did a combined tire/electronics/paint and hazardous waste collection was four years ago. This year the proposal is to do another one, which would be electronics/tires and paint and oil. The paint and oil are losers because it has to be paid for. The tires pay for themselves because the guy that picks up the tires charges people to bring their tires so that is a breakeven. The electronics is a break even. The \$6,600 is an estimate to do a paint and hazardous waste day this year. They are done at the Clifford Building where it seems to work out pretty well. They used to do them here, but there is more space there and there is a covered area. He thinks that people have taken advantage of it. He knows when they did the tires, they filled a huge container with tires

and the tires don't cost the Town anything. He doubted that they would spend the whole \$6,600 but it was an estimate and it certainly wouldn't be more than that. Dick Guy made the motion to approve the Hazardous Waste Collection Day budget for \$6,600; seconded by Barb Dutile and all approved.

**Recycling** – TM English explained that there was a big change coming for Recycling. They have been paying \$16,500 a year for Haverhill's share and the Town's people have been paying \$5 a year for their ticket to use the facility in Newbury. It has been so successful and Vermont has gotten so strict with their recycling requirements that they can't keep up with the amount of recycling on one pick up a week so they have to look at if they want to keep Haverhill for one more year, their costs are going up because they have to get two pick ups a week. He stated that on a Saturday, that place fills up. Chris commented that he got ushered out last Saturday. TM English stated that Haverhill was up to 50% of the use. Barb asked how many permits from Haverhill and TM English stated that it was about 450 from Haverhill and about 490 from Newbury, which is typical it's about 10% of the population. Haverhill's numbers have been growing relative to Newbury's and they have caught up to the 50%. The bottom line is their costs are going up and the Town has been asked for this year to go to \$24,746. Next year, they may say that Haverhill has to leave because they can't handle the volume. During the year, somebody should look at a new recycling arrangement. He would suggest strongly that they have places to do it but he wouldn't have Town employees doing it. He would put it out and there are trash companies in Town that may be interested or other people interested in getting all of the permits, getting everything set up, supplying the dumpsters and charging for the use with either a sticker or so much per volume. He would suggest that the Town put it out in 2017 and see if they can get a bid. There are several pieces of Town land so that wouldn't be a problem. Barb commented that they checked into a few years ago but there were no bids. TM English responded that Pete's had talked about it at one time and he may be interested. Dan Brady made the motion to approve the Recycling budget for \$24,746; seconded by Barb Dutile. Chris thought this might be an item to add to their page in the Town Report. Barb said that would be a good reference for everybody to go back to. TM English said that it leaves a record and it's always good to have a record. The vote was taken and all approved.

**Sewer Line Study** – TM English stated that this takes a little explanation. Some of them may know that the Town inherited the County sewer line that runs from the County institutions up to the Woodsville Treatment Plant because that is where they tied in our new sewer line from the Business Park. That line is relatively old and it's ductile iron and it's had three breaks in the past year, which they have patched up with new pipe. He has budgeted money in the operational budget for a couple of breaks this year, but he wanted to do and he has done some investigation on sources of funding. He has talked to CDBG and they weren't eligible. He then talked to USDA, who has plenty of money, and there is an application in to USDA to do a study of the line and see what they should do with it. That study is \$25,000, of that the Town's

portion is \$6,250 and the USDA will give the Town \$18,750 to give some recommendations on what to do with that line and what some alternative projects could be such as replacing it or repairing. He would like to have some soil tests done where the breaks occurred and see if there is something corrosive in the soil. The corrosion is coming from the outside in and he thought it was road salt because that line pretty much runs along the State road so it could be road salt or something else. The pipes are failing before they should fail. Dick commented that they were only 35 years old. Howard commented that they really weren't old at 35-36 years old. TM English thought that 35 years was too soon to be having corrosion problems. They have the old pipe so the engineers can test the outside of the old pipe to see if there is something going on in the soils. Howard asked if the breaks were right close together and TM English said that they were and right close to the road. Howard asked if it was off the railroad bed and TM English said that it was. He explained that the line runs down the railroad bed initially and then it jockeys over to Route 10 not that far up from the County and then it runs up Route 10 and then down Route 135. If they put in a new line in, obviously, they would put it in the rail bed as far as they could. Howard said it would be easier than before and TM English said absolutely. It will be a horror show to work on Route 110 or 135. He said that on Route 135, they could use the same trench and go on top of the existing pipe or close to the existing pipe. Chris asked what side it was on. TM English said that it was on the river side and then ties into the sewer plant where there is a manhole in the road at the sewer plant entrance. He said that it was mostly open farmland. Another thing they could do is go up the rail bed, cross 135 and the rail bed continues on the other side all the way down to the electrical substation and then cross back over. There would be two (2) road crossings, but there would be much less linear frontage along the road. That is what they want the study for to give them a couple of alternatives. Howard commented that would get them out of the flood plain, too. Chris commented that that land flood. TM English said that they could probably get an easement through the Water & Light to connect back into the road. He wouldn't want to try and get one from Elliott because he would want a fortune. Dick Guy asked about connecting back up over by D&P somewhere and TM English said it was a possibility. The engineers would look at the system and the plans and see if they couldn't tie in in a different place. Barb said that they got it figured out so they could save the \$25,000 and TM English said that he didn't have it figured out and it was beyond him because it was technical stuff, but there were some alternatives. Dick asked if it was a very big line and TM English said that it was 6" force main. Howard said that there will be resistance to it and the Town took it over but a good portion is used by the County and it was too bad. It is operated by sewer costs, but in capital expenditures, it would be nice to be able to go to the County and get some input so that the rest of the town, such as the hospital, paid into it. TM English stated that his whole career has been negotiating with the village districts and the County and the State and they are not on our side. It is always adversarial; it's always about their interests. The County drove a hard bargain. They knew that our alternative was to

continue our line all the way to Woodsville, which would have been a lot more expensive or to tie into theirs. They wanted to charge the Town for it. He really had to play hard ball to get them to give it to us. He wouldn't mention names this time, but it wasn't a pleasant experience. They had the County attorney, which he didn't think they should be using the County attorney for their legal advice, contact the State and try to find something that the Town did wrong when the Town put their sewerline in. That was how dirty they were playing. Chris said they were efficient in the sewer. Dan Brady made the motion to approve the Sewer Line Study budget for \$25,000, of which USDA will be granting \$18,750, leaving the taxpayers responsible for \$6,250; seconded by Barb Dutile. Darwin commented that on the revenue page, he saw where it said USDA Sewer Survey Grant of \$18,750 and then just below that, it said State Sewerline Grant of \$9,403 and TM English replied that was the other annual grant that he had talked about. The Town has received this for approximately 20 years and offsets the other loan. The vote was taken and all approved.

**Capital Reserve-Vehicle** - Chris commented that they were down to their last line item and it felt good. The first was for Vehicles. TM English stated that there was a big increase this year because they have gone along with \$20,000 a year for quite a number of years. He did a capital budget 10-year projection on equipment. They have some expenses coming up, such as the grader, loader and trucks sooner rather than later and he thinks that they should start building up the reserve. It is at zero right now and they really need to start accelerating those payments. Again, it is the same mentality that rather than borrowing, let's establish a savings account, fund it reasonably and the money will be there when needed. \$40,000 may not be enough, but it is double. Dick mentioned that the PD cruisers had their own line item. TM English stated that they could use that for cruisers but they haven't for years. This is strictly for highway equipment. Dick Guy made the motion to approve the Capital Reserve-Vehicle budget for \$40,000; seconded by Barb Dutile. Howard asked Jo with interest rates where they are, did they borrow money ahead to raise money ahead to put into or did they borrow when they need it. Jon commented that the way the rates are now it would be better to borrow. Howard said "borrow it when you need it". Jon said yes. TM English stated that they wouldn't do that and the Selectmen won't do that. They won't borrow and they don't want to bond politically. If they went that route, they will be caught short. Dick commented that there were advantages to this in that money is put in at a controlled rate and only let them buy vehicles as the money is there. It limits their access. Darwin said that he didn't think that was true because the Fire Department is borrowing money for a truck. Dick said that Fire Departments are a different cat altogether. Darwin said that the capital budget projection that TM English has put out is \$125,000 next year for a dump truck and even at this rate, it will only be \$80,000. Mr. Brady commented that municipal accounting is distinctly different from non-profit or for-profit accounting. The constraint of the political will has to be taken into account. Mr. Brady said that they heard TM English say that political will does not support any approach to premature

borrowing. TM English responded that he agreed with Howard and in looking at the cost of money, it's cheap right now compared to what is being made in interest. But this Town has, for years, not wanted to borrow money. They want to save it and then spend it. That is the political decision the Selectmen made, very strongly, and the townspeople support it. He thinks that if the reserves are eliminated or not funded properly, they will be caught short and it won't be the will in any given year to borrow a lot of money. Dick stated that they had the opposite experience for fire equipment in Woodsville. They do borrow over time but they made it clear at the last go-around that it was going to be 10 years before he heard them back at the table asking for anything more. TM English commented that fire guys if the decision is a Precinct decision, they have the votes. If they want a truck, they will get a truck because they can produce the votes. It is a totally different political situation. The Precinct is still making the decision on buying the truck and the Town is kicking in. Howard said that it's changed the whole climate. TM English stated that the only reason they did it was to equalize taxes. Jo commented that they don't know what the interest rates are going to be by the time the equipment needs to be purchased. It could change tomorrow and TM English said that right now, it was good. TM English said getting back to the fire situation and it was an important point. Some of them were Precinct tax payers, the Commissioners of these Precincts have to sit on these Fire Departments because they still run them and if they don't and say it's all Town money, then it's going to break down. The Town doesn't run the Fire Departments. Mr. Brady said that the dictum from the Selectmen was no borrowing. TM English said it was "pay-as-you-go". The vote was taken and all approved.

**Capital Reserve-Fire Vehicles** - Chris commented that this line item has been consistent. Dick Guy made the motion to approve the Capital Reserve-Fire Vehicles budget for \$60,000; seconded by Dan Brady. TM English commented that this particular line was a little bit brighter because after this \$60,000 is gone and the reserve is zero, they will hopefully have ten years of no major purchases. So after ten years, there will be \$600,000 and that will be a pretty healthy reserve in 10 years. He went on to say that somebody really needed to look at the Fire Department fleet and what they have and what they need. The vote was taken and all approved.

**Capital Reserve-Hwy Cons/Recons** - TM English commented that they have "beat this to death". Dick Guy made the motion to approve the Capital Reserve-Hwy Cons/Recons budget for \$150,000; seconded by Barb Dutile and all approved.

**Capital Reserve-Buildings** - TM English commented that the building reserve was pretty thin. Some was spent on the JRM Building parking lot restoration and they will have to do another parking lot at the other building at some point and some other repairs. This is a modest increase to start the build-up of this reserve for the buildings. It's not a lot, but it will help. Chris said maintenance is key, which is cheaper than new construction. Barb Dutile made the motion to approve the Capital Reserve-Buildings budget for \$5,000; seconded by Dan Brady. Howard

commented about the air conditioners in the windows upstairs and the reason for it was that it was so hot that they had to have the air conditioners on to cool it down. He thought that the heating and cooling system could have been paid for now by inefficiencies in the building. He thought it needed to be addressed. TM English commented that it was a steam system and steam is great when it's really cold. When the weather is like it is now, steam is horrible because it's hard to control. There is too much heat. He has said before that they need to insulate pipes in the basement; a lot of the extra heat in this building is not coming from the system, it's coming up from the basement. They need to clean the steam traps and he has put money in the operating budget to do that. Then for the other section of the building going with the mini-splits will help. Howard suggested low-pressure steam. TM English said hot water would be good. There is a dual pipe system and they could go with hot water. Howard said that that would be an improvement. TM English said that there would need to be circulating pumps, which would be some investment, but having a two-pipe steam system makes a difference. At some point, he thinks they should go with hot water. Jon asked if Howard recommended increasing this budget now. Howard thought in another year it should be increased. The vote was taken and all approved.

Barb, speaking as a former Selectboard member, wanted to thank Tom Friel, who has been at every meeting and Wayne Fortier for the ones that he has attended because it makes a lot more sense for them to be sitting in and listening to the Committee's recommendations. Tom stated that he had been taking notes on it. TM English disclosed that the office had received a call from a Haverhill Corner Precinct Commissioner saying that they were going to revisit their Fire Department budget. They have not seen it as of this meeting and he wanted the Committee to know it wasn't an attempt to go by them. If they come in with a revised budget before the Budget Hearing, the Committee would not get a shot at it. Barb said that it was a reduction of \$7,200 because of something that was put in twice and they caught it. Howard commented that another one of the items for the Budget Annual Report was the manner of Precincts making their reports. A lot of it had to do with Fire Departments. Watching this for a number of years, the Fire Departments started to get funded by their real estate values it was about 82% was between Woodsville and it was only 3 or 4% between North Haverhill and Woodsville. 18% was in Haverhill Corner and they insisted that they needed more money to operate on and then to go on through the years and find things that it was the method of how their records were kept. It was money from Fire Departments and commons. They are not all reported evenly. There have been different times when Woodsville built the new station there was some rent involved. There have been little things that are not being reported equally. TM English said that Howard was looking at him and both he and Jo have the same frustrations when they look at the Precincts and see how they are managed. There have been some issues in all of them. They go by what the DRA tells them to do and the Precincts don't. They have a

whole different system and there are issues in all of them. Again, the Town cannot address that because they are independent, municipal units. The State could address it, and an individual Precinct taxpayer can address it with your individual Precincts. Jo helps them all the time with accounting, with ideas. They are willing to help but the Town can't make them do anything. Mr. Brady commented that the approach that was used for the Libraries and the Warrant Articles was excellent with the questionnaire with the detailed data on where the money was spent. Maybe, the Selectmen (Rick Ladd) could use that fire planning group to work up a uniform planning system. Not every line needed to be filled in if they can give an explanation of why it isn't, but he thinks it would be useful to encourage that approach for the fire services. He felt that it worked on the Warrant side for the nonprofits. TM English stated that he believed in democracy and local control, but the political system is very expensive because of the way that it is broken up and designed. He went on to say that it was absolutely ridiculous for a town of this size the way they run the government, the Fire Departments and the libraries. The only one that makes sense to him are the water systems being separate because of geography. It is a political decision. Howard commented that he was looking at the bottom line of what it costs to run each department and he asked a question of his son: "Where's the money; they have a raffle, they have an auction and a lot of times it's \$12,000 or \$15,000" This money is not accounted for. TM English stated that it was their money and they claim that they can do that. Howard said that it's their money but it should show in the bottom line. TM English stated that that was an issue that the Precinct Commissioners never wanted to tackle - those independent accounts and they all have them. Jo commented that the North Haverhill Fire Department was putting in a report from their Chief which talks about how they are spending those funds, not how much, but on how. She felt that it was an improvement and a step. Dick didn't think that Woodsville was fundraising any more. Howard commented that it was good that Jo had received that report. TM English stated that it was very much a "we" mentality. The fire guys are tough; they don't like government; they don't like politicians. It is their money and they don't like being responsible to politicians about it. Barb said that Howard was right in that saying if that control was taken away from them, there would be no fundraisers. Jo said that the report talked about how they used the money to buy equipment and gear. Darwin asked that a recommendation for the revenue side of the budget could show the percentage of increase or decrease. Jo said that she could, but it was going to be skewed because one year, there would be a lot of grant money and then the next year, there isn't any and it's going to skew the numbers by a lot. TM English commented that the number he looks at on the revenue side is the tax number. That is the number people focus on. Jo said that she wouldn't mind adding percentages, but just felt that it would skew the numbers. Darwin's second question was per \$1,000 it was 28 cents? TM English said that \$100,000 was approximately 30 cents based on assessed values. Darwin thanked TM English and Jo for the well-presented and well-represented budget and they answered all of the questions and were always there. Barb said

that she has been sitting on the Committee since 1998 and gone through all of the budgets since then with TM English and she gave kudos to TM English for keeping costs down. She thinks that he has a pretty sharp knife at times and hopes that the next Town Manager does as well. TM English said it has been a pleasure working with the Committee and he was going to miss them. Howard asked him if he was going to work for the school now and TM English said that he wanted to get him in that school system so bad. Chris wanted to talk a few minutes about the page for the Annual Report. He remembered there were items regarding the Fire Departments, Precinct reporting, timeliness for submission to Town Manager. Chris also wanted to thank everyone for attending. It does him good to see people are still focused and paying attention.

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Luurtsema at 8:00 pm.

Minutes transcribed by Karen Hyde