

**Minutes of Haverhill Budget Hearing**  
**Wednesday February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019**  
**6:00 PM**

**Draft subject to review, correction and approval at the next meeting.**

**Selectboard Members Present:** Chairman Fortier, Fred Garofalo, Tom Friel, Darwin Clogston and Chris Luurtsema.

**Finance Officer/Administrative Assistant:** Jennifer Collins

**Bookkeeper:** Sandi Pierce

**Welfare Officer:** Leslie Ramsay

**Road Agent:** Stuart MacDanolds

**Moderator:** Jay Holden

**Members of the Public Present:** Howard Hatch, Rich Clifford, Lynn Wheeler, Mike Lavoie, Doug Dutile, Phil Blanchard, Shawn Bigelow, Don Hammond and Dick Fabrizio.

**Budget Overview:** Selectboard Chairman Wayne Fortier thanked the Budget Committee for their work on the budget. Chairman Fortier began with the Executive line item which totals to \$41,531. The next line item, Town Administration, includes the Town Manager's salary, social security, Medicare, etc. and totals to \$85,605. Chairman Fortier is hopeful that by March 5<sup>th</sup>, the Hiring Committee will have three Town Manager candidates for the Board to interview. The Town Meeting line item is \$200 which covers the salary of the Moderator. Trustee of the Trust Funds is set at \$327. The total line item for Town Clerk is \$71,803 which includes the salaries of the Town Clerk and the Deputy Town Clerk. The Elections line item is \$1,084 which is lower than last year's proposed budget as there are less elections anticipated this year than last year. The Accounting and Auditing line item totals to \$132,783 which includes the Finance Officer and Bookkeeper's salaries. The Tax Collector line item which also includes the Deputy Tax Collector's salary among other things totals at \$52,697. The Treasurers line item is set at \$2,974. Information/Technology's budget is set at \$87,086 and includes software, equipment and professional services. Reevaluation of Property includes Tim Northcott's assessment services every Thursday and its budget is set at \$80,160. Legal Expenses has a total proposed budget of \$25,000. Benefits Otherwise not Allocated includes health benefits for all employees and is set at \$269,116. Fred asked why this expense is not broken down into the appropriate departments and Jennifer explained that it's due to HIPAA compliance. The Planning Board line item total is \$3,850. The Zoning Board line item total is \$912. The Robert E. Clifford Memorial Building line item total is \$48,479 which includes part-time salary for Rich Clifford, utilities, telephone, water/sewer and maintenance. The James R Morrill Building line item total is \$142,294. It was noted that SAU 23 rents office space in the JRM at an annual cost of \$32,000 and Olivarian School rents the gym space for basketball. The Haverhill-Bath Covered Bridge line item total is \$9,568 which includes insurance and repairs. ITM English stated that Bath pays the electric bill

for the lights. The line item total for Cemeteries is \$43,168 and includes the cost to maintain cemeteries and the figure has not changed for a few years. Insurance otherwise not Allocated has a total line item of \$2,000 and represents the cost of two deductibles. Regional Associations has a line item total of \$5,341 which includes the cost of dues to the New Hampshire Municipal Association and North Country Council. The Business Park line item total is \$58,500 which includes utilities and repairs/maintenance. It's anticipated that there will be two sewer/water hook-ups this year at \$25,000 each. The Police Department basic line item is set at \$876,549 which includes salaries, repairs/maintenance and benefits. An additional line item for a cruiser is set at \$35,273 which brings the total P.D. budget to \$911,822. The Ambulance line item total is \$92,547. The Fire Departments bottom line item is \$408,204. Emergency Management has a total line item of \$11,924. Dean Memorial Airport has a total line item of \$33,902. The Highway Department basic line item total is \$699,511 but because the Town has a long-standing formula with the Woodsville Precinct, as they maintain roads too, the Town reimburses Woodsville a total of \$265,223 which is a separate line item. The line item for the Reserve Fund for Highway Vehicle is set at \$50,729 which brings the total Highway Budget to \$1,015,463. Darwin asked for clarification on why \$20,000 was budgeted for concrete last year and only \$2,000 is budgeted this year. Sanitation has a proposed budget of \$3,000 and an additional line for recycling if it comes up again, for a total of \$1.00. The Health Officer total line item is \$4,069. The Animal Control total line item is \$16,816. The General Assistance line item is \$32,424, which includes the Welfare Officer's salary. The Maintenance line item for G.A. amounts to \$55,950 and includes funeral expenses, heat/oil and sewer which brings the total line item for Welfare Administration to \$88,374. The Recreation Department is broken down into multiple line items. The first is HARP Counselor Salaries which is set at \$28,538. Director's Salary/Benefits is set at \$50,764. Pool maintenance, lifeguard salaries and supplies totals to \$47,325. The line item for Recreation Programs \$22,575. The bottom line for the Recreation Department totals to \$149,102. ITM English added that the Recreation Department anticipates on generating \$60,000 in revenue to help offset the above costs. The line item total for Libraries is \$47,649 which is a standard figure for the last few years. The line item total for Patriotic Purposes is \$2,200. Cultural and Heritage line item total is \$1,500 which has been a standard figure for several years. Conservation Commission is set at \$100. Economic Development is set at \$1,198. The Debt Service line item total is \$49,889 including interest and fees. The budget total, before warrant articles, is set at \$4,021,954. ITM English stated that \$17,308 will need to be added to the \$4,021,954, as it is a State statute that the Town reimburse Woodsville tax payers for funding two highway department, which is known as Woodsville Road Money. With this figure, the budget total before warrant articles is \$4,039,262.

#### **Warrant Articles:**

- **CASA:** Traditionally, \$500 is allocated for this line item; however, CASA requested it be increased to \$1,000 this year. The Budget Committee included \$1,000 for this line item in their recommendation which the Selectboard approved.
- Chairman Fortier stated that the other Warrant Articles stayed with the same budget as previous years. These Warrant Articles include: sewer-line study, Ammonoosuc Community Health, North Country Home Health, RSVP, Horse Meadow Senior Center, Visiting Nurse & Hospice, White Mountain Mental Health, Tri-County Community Action, Birch House, CAP Homeless Outreach, Good Sheppard Food Pantry, Court Street Arts at Alumni Hall, Capital Reserve for the Vehicle, Capital Reserve for Fire

Vehicles, Capital Reserve for Buildings and Expendable Trust Fund.

- **Capital Reserve for Highway Reconstruction:** This warrant article has increased from \$150,000 last year to \$200,000. Chris Luurtsema explained this increase in more detail.
- **Capital Reserve for Buildings:** Last year, this budget was set at \$5,000 and this year's proposed budget is \$60,000. ITM English recommended that \$20,000 was added and the Budget Committee recommended adding \$40,000. Last week, the Selectboard met and decided to request an additional \$20,000 making it a total of \$60,000.
- **Warrant Article/Budget Total:** The total line item for Warrant Articles is \$477,297. With the addition of warrant articles, the total of the Town budget is: \$4,516,559, including the Woodsville Road Money.
- **Article 24:** Chairman Fortier read the article which requests that the Town vote to raise and appropriate \$25,000 to be used towards the purchase of playground equipment to be used on the VFW field behind the James R Morrill Building. Lynn Wheeler explained that the Recreation Department has funds raised already and events scheduled to raise additional money but will still need the Town's help to purchase the equipment. C

**Questions/Comments:** Budget Committee Chairman Dutile made a spelling correction on a road name in a warrant article. Dutile asked whether the funds allocated to concrete under the Highway Department were spent and ITM English stated it was not spent and went back into Unreserved Fund Balance. Budget Committee Chairman Dutile stated that the Selectboard, ITM and Budget Committee agreed on most line items except for the ITM's salary proposals. Dutile explained that ITM English recommends giving the Police Department employees a pay raise of \$1.50 per hour and a pay raise of \$1.00 per hour for all other Town personnel. Dutile stated the Committee didn't agree in treating employees differently based on department and that all Town employees should be given the same pay increase. The Budget Committee recommended a 2% pay raise for all Town employees, taking into consideration that health premiums are paid for. It was mentioned that the Selectboard approved a warrant article that will allow residents to vote to eliminate the Residents Tax or not. Dutile asked for the Warrant Article total line item, should they all pass, and Chris Luurtsema stated the total would be \$502,297. Last year's budget was \$5,480,335 and this year's proposed budget is approximately \$4,541,559 which is about a \$948,776 reduction. ITM English stated the tax rate will drop this year as well.

**Revenues:** The bottom line for anticipated revenues in 2019 is \$1,983,479.

ITM English stated that last year's property taxes were \$2,507,515 and this year they will decrease to \$2,433,080. Chris Luurtsema expressed gratitude towards the Budget Committee for their hard work. ITM English reminded folks that Town Meeting is scheduled for March 16<sup>th</sup> beginning at 9am with the Town portion followed by the School's budget.

Tom Friel made a motion to pass the budget at the projected amount of \$4,541,559. Chris Luurtsema seconded the motion. There was discussion about the concrete line item in the Highway Department regarding bridge repair. The motion carried unanimously.

**Adjourn Meeting:** Tom Friel made a motion to adjourn the meeting and close the Public Hearing at 8:21 P.M. Chris Luurtsema seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.