

Minutes of the Budget Hearing/Selectmen's Meeting

9 February 2011

BUDGET HEARING

Members present: Stephanie Gray, Chairman, Lynn Sweet and R. Stephen Leighton.

Notice of this hearing was published in Foster's Daily Democrat on January 25, 2011, posted at the Post Office, Town Hall and in the Strafford Community Calendar.

Among those attending were Dennis Vachon, Michael Richard, Paul Yergeau Sr., JoAnn Brown, Irving Johnson, Greg Messenger, Mark Messenger, Scott Young, Scott Whitehouse, Andrew Carroll, Linda Pape, Paul Stover and Judith Dupre'.

The public hearing was called to order at 6:02 P.M. The purpose of this hearing was to review the proposed budget and certain warrant articles to be voted on at the March 12, 2011 Town Meeting. This year's Town Meeting will be held at the Strafford School, beginning at 8:30 A.M.

Article 1 is for the election of officers.

Article 2 proposes zoning amendments associated with Conservation Development, as proposed by the Planning Board. Public hearings were held at an earlier date.

Article 3 is a petition article asking that the members of the Planning Board be elected.

Articles 1, 2 and 3 will be voted on by ballot on Election Day, March 8, 2011 at the Strafford Town Hall.

Article 4 asks to raise \$60,000. to be placed in the non-capital reserve fund established for the purpose of funding future bridge repairs/construction. A short explanation of the requirements and available funding necessary, prior to making application for a project under the State Bridge Aid Program.

Article 5 requests \$221,000. for Capital Road Improvements.

Article 6 asks to establish a capital reserve fund for the required reflective road signage. It was noted that some must be done by 2012 and others by 2018. \$4,000. is be requested for placement in this fund.

Article 7 requests \$216,260. for the operation and maintenance of the Strafford Fire Department and Rescue Squad.

Article 8 requests \$69,487. for the final payment due on the new Forestry vehicle.

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Article 9 requests authorization to enter into a 4 year lease purchase agreement in the amount of \$165,000. for the purpose of leasing to own a new ambulance. The \$100,000. for the first year's payment would come from the special revenue fund known as the Rescue Vehicle and Equipment Fund. No funding to come from taxation. A question was raised as to why \$100,000. would be used for the first year's payment. Board advised that this amount was available in the ambulance fund and it would reduce the interest cost.

Article 10 asks to establish a capital reserve fund for the construction of a new Crown Point Fire Station. This article also requests \$20,000. to be placed in this fund. It was noted that Town does own a piece of land.

Article 11 asks to establish a revolving fund for the purpose of Fire Department special details. A question was raised, and the Board clarified the process and the reasoning behind this. It was noted that this fund would be similar to the one previously established for the Police Department. Revenues would come in to offset the cost of the unanticipated details. The contractors would be billed when their construction required a Fireman at the site.

Articles 12 requests \$443,994. for the operation and maintenance of the Police Department.

Article 13 asks to establish a capital reserve fund for future police vehicles and associated equipment. This article also requests \$12,000. to be placed in this fund.

Article 14 requests \$50,000. for the statistical update of the Town. \$25,000. to be funded by a withdrawal from the capital reserve fund established for the same purpose, the balance of \$25,000. to come from general taxation. A resident asked what "statistical update" meant. Mr. Leighton advised that it was a revaluation of the Town.

Article 15 asks to establish a non-capital reserve fund to address unanticipated increases in costs associated with future fuel/oil purchases for Municipal use. This article also requests \$5,000. to be placed in this fund.

Article 16 requests \$2,500. to repair the wooden guard rail located in the parking lot of the Bow Lake Grange.

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Article 17 requests \$1,111,458. for general Town operations.

It was noted that a 4% increase had been allowed on the salary lines, as there had been no salary increases for the past three years. It was also noted that the overall budget and estimated tax impact remains flat, actually a few cents down from last year.

The Road Agent questioned the amount included in the general operations budget for "General Highway and Road Maintenance", and the possibility of increasing that should it be necessary due to the current weather pattern. In preparing his budget he compared several years, however, it started to snow after he had submitted his budget. He was advised that the amount of funding requested in Article 4 for future bridge repairs/construction could be reduced and the article for general Town operations could be increased, by the same amount, to address this. Estimated tax impact would not change.

Copies of informational forms (i.e. Warrant, Budget and Estimated 2011 Tax Rate) are attached as an addendum to these minutes.

There being no further questions the public hearing was closed at 6:25 P.M.

SELECTMEN'S MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 P.M.

Proposed budget and warrant forms were reviewed and signed.

Progress on receiving and compiling information for the 2010 Year End Report book was discussed.

A picture of the Waldron Store will be used on the cover.

It was noted that Mr. Durfee of Dubois & King is scheduled to attend the February 23rd meeting of the Board. He will be doing a "closure" on the Northwood/Bow Lake Bridge Project that has been completed.

Chief Stover has also been scheduled to attend the February 23rd meeting to provide a progress update on the revisions to the Fire Department's policies and procedures.

There being no further business before the Board, a motion was made, seconded and voted to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 6:50 P.M.