

**BUDGET COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING
MINUTES**

JANUARY 13, 2016

PRESENT: Elizabeth Dubrulle (Chair), Peter Georgantas (BOS Rep), Dennis Lynch, Craig Campbell, David Pierce, Liz Mitchell, Joe Spoerl, Dick Fletcher (Village Water Precinct Rep), David French, Lee Sperry, Dian McCarthy (School Board Rep) and Bryan Fournier.

TOWN BUDGET PRESENTATION

E. Dubrulle: The proposed operating budget is \$19,844,912, which is an increase of \$435,860 over last year's budget (default budget). This represents an increase of 2.5 percent. Town wide for non-union employees, there was a 2 percent wage increase. However, the BOS have been slowly undergoing a review of all personnel. They have been making substantial modifications. Non-union personnel are paying more next year for their health insurance. Health insurance costs increased by 7.5 percent. This is the result of changes that have already been made. If the changes had not been put into effect, the increase would have been 11 percent. Fuel costs went down substantially. This is my fifth year on the committee, and I have never seen such responsible budgets presented. The departments have done a terrific job.

Town Hall increases reflect \$107,000. There are going to be four elections this year with substantial costs. The upper floor of town hall is getting new flooring, due to worker safety found by the State.

Police Department increased by \$167,000. This is due to salary and associated benefits and replacement Tasers.

Fire Department shows a \$44,000 increase. There are several warrant articles related to the fire department.

DPW shows a decrease of \$95,000. Mainly this was in storm water operations. Fleet and solid waste saw a savings. CIP shows a slight bump in the road plan, vehicles/equipment show an increase, cemetery improvements and the Parker Station bridge deck are also included in CIP.

Parks and Rec shows a slight increase of \$12,000. This is due to the difficulty of hiring lifeguards for the swimming pools. They are getting more expensive. CIP includes a new playground at Roy Park for \$60,000.

Library has an increase of \$937.

CIP Program shows an increase of \$139,000. The Town will be retiring its last significant debt payment in 2016.

The tax impact shows a 27 cent increase with the proposed budget. This does not include any warrant articles.

WARRANT ARTICLES

Article 13 - \$2,300,000 - Church Street Fire Station

Chief O'Brien: The Town has been studying this for a number of years. A renovation expansion option was the most cost effective means to address our issues. We looked at each station, and in 2014, we tried to pass a bond for all stations. We did not achieve the 60% required for the passage of a bond. We spoke with CIP and the BOS. The decision was made to go with a station by station approach. We evaluated all three stations. We decided to go with the Church Street Station as the first project. This Station was built in 1959. We did approximately 2,300 calls this year. The facility is unchanged since 1959. The apparatus is much larger than it was in 1959. With the renovation and expansion project, this project improves on the existing structure and adds to it. The project is \$2.3 million dollars. The bond payments would not start until 2017. The payments we are retiring are substantially higher than the new payment for the fire station. It would be about 2/3's of what we are currently paying for other bonds.

Article 16 - \$225,000 - Capital Reserve Fund for Fire Apparatus

Chief O'Brien: By putting the money in this fund, we prevent spiking in the tax rate. No amount would be raised by taxation for this article. The funds would come from the Fund Balance.

Article 17 - \$280,000 - Self Contained Breathing Apparatus and Jaws of Life

These units need to be replaced. The Jaws of Life are also due for replacement, as they are from the late 1980's early 1990's. This would come from the Fund Balance also.

Article 18 - \$230,000 - Replacement Ambulance

The Town currently has an EMS Special Revenue Fund. Whenever we transport someone, we bill for services. The funds received go back into this fund.

Article 15 - Collective Bargaining for Professional Firefighters

Selectman Gross: One of the primary goals was to align some of the non-union with the union on the matrix, as well as get further contributions for health insurance. They were two years out of contract. Our old contract had nine steps. This is going to a 20 step matrix. The challenge was to try to come to an agreement to accomplish our goals, as well as the Firefighter goals. The costs include 2016-\$35,097, 207-\$33,181, 2018-\$17,344. We will no longer be offering the Blue Cross three tier plan.

E. Dubrulle: This is the only contract we need to consider this year on the town side.

Article 19 - \$250,000 - Goffstown Road Improvement Program

Selectman Georgantas: A few years ago, our road program was \$2 million. It was since cut to \$400,000. The BOS increased the amount on the budget side. One of the most important things in town is the condition of the roads. It is important to get them up to a reasonable rate.

Article 20 - \$20,000 - Main Street Program

Peter Grigorakakis, Executive Director: We are asking for \$20,000 from the taxpayers, as we have for the last five years. We definitely show a value. It reflects 25% of our budget.

Article 21 - \$20,000 - Crispin's House

Al Baines: We are asking for \$20,000 for our fourth year in a row. This represents 25% of our revenue. We go after grant money. We never know what we are going to get. We do raise funds through other activities. Our net revenues are usually around \$15,000 for our basketball event. We also run a softball tournament, which raises about \$5,000-\$6,000. We also have our

annual campaign, which raises about \$2,000. We have an enormous list of people that donate. We service the kids at risk here in town. We have youth forum at the high school every month. We provide after school care scholarships.

Article 22 - \$15,000 - Goffstown Waterway Association and Namaske Lake Association

This is for milfoil abatement.

Michael Allard: I can answer any questions you may have. The State of NH has offered to match 40% of any funds we can raise. Milfoil has been in the lake since the Mother's Day flood, and we have been fighting it ever since.

Ms. Dagnault: The State has a plan to clean up. We can use all the financial help we can get.

SCHOOL OPERATING BUDGET

Elizabeth Dubrulle: The proposed operating budget is \$39,315,266. This is approximately a 2% decrease. The food service fund shows a slight increase. The special revenue fund is the same. Overall, the proposed budget and default budget are very close. Some of the differences are personnel costs. The health insurance costs went down, fuel, transportation costs went down. Enrollment is stable. There were not very many changes or new programs. Glen Lake shows an increase of \$57,000, due to technology, supplies and maintenance costs. Maple Avenue has a 263,000 decrease due to changes in utilities. Bartlett shows a 27,000 increase due to general supplies and special education equipment and staffing. MVMS shows a decrease of 167,000. GHS shows a decrease of 432,000. Revenue projections show a slight decrease of \$55,000. Tuition revenue is up because we have additional students from New Boston. The tax impact shows a decrease of .47.

Article 3 - Collective Bargaining Agreement/Goffstown Education Association

Steve Dutton, School Board member: We wanted to provide a competitive compensation package for our staff. We also wanted to make up the step that we missed by having no contract. We wanted this to be fiscally responsible to the taxpayers. We modified the timing of the agreement to run from July 1-June 30. We gave the Superintendent to give credit for industry experience when hiring. Cost sharing insurance shows changes. The prescription language was changed. We also changed the driver to a site of service plan.

2016-\$677,771, 2017-\$237,912, 2018-\$724,992.

Substantial changes will be seen in the second year of the contract, due to the changes to the health insurance plan.

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E. Dubrulle: This is the public portion of the hearing. I believe Sue Desruisseaux had a comment about sewer.

Sue Desruisseaux: When the BC cut the requested amount from sewer they cut 50,000 and they requested you cut 55,000. That will also change the revenue.

E. Dubrulle: The BC is meeting tomorrow night at 7 p.m., where we will address that. The public hearing is now closed. Hearing adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Ann Duffy