

• April 21, 2008

Present: Regular Members: Jack Boyer, Barbara Brown, Jack Field, Michael Jackson, Craig Schoon, Rex Swain

Alternates Members: Liddy Adams, John Allen, Arthur DuBois, Jr.

Selectmen: Mark Lyon, Nick Solley

Treasurer's Report: Accepted as submitted. Michael reported the Trust accounts held by FNBL on behalf of the Town are separate from bank funds and he feels comfortable the Town funds are secure. Information on how these funds are invested and their average rate will be obtained from the Treasurer.

Minutes:

March 19: Minutes of the March 19th, 2008 meeting were accepted as submitted.

April 14th: Rer WCHT: Jack Field suggested minutes of this meeting be amended to read: "The Board of Selectmen recommended approval of the *multi-year* subsidy for \$25,000, which will be considered further for inclusion in the forthcoming 2008-2009 capital budget." Minutes accepted as amended.

Financials:

General fund and Capital Fund: Funds were reviewed and accepted.

Town Aid Road Funds: Mark reported while the balance in this account appears high a portion of the funds were had previously been budgeted to offset capital projects. Once complete, the Finance Board will be asked to approve the transfer of these funds to the Nonrecurring Capital account to offset project expenses.

Open Space & Housing Funds: These accounts will be discussed in further detail at the next meeting.

Preliminary 2008-2009 General Fund & Capital Expenditures: The Selectmen provided their initial proposed budget expenditures. Items were reviewed in detail. Specific areas included:

- 004: Town Clerk - Preservation of Historic Documents: CGS 7-34a provides grant funding to preserve historic documents. The Town Clerk has requested these funds be segregated into a separate fund expressly for this purpose rather than deposited into the General Fund in order that she may accumulate them for larger items used expressly for the purpose of preservation. The Town Clerk will be asked to provide additional clarification of the Statutes prior to approval of this separation.
- 006: Building Inspector: Income offsets expense in this line item due to the Town's contract with the building inspector, which states the Town's expenses shall be determined as 72% of the income received. This would insure an income of 28% of all fees received. It was suggested both income & expense be budgeted higher to be more realistic. This will be discussed further.
- 008: Election: Training and supplies have increased due to unfunded State mandates.
- 014: Inland Wetlands: Clerical costs were transferred from 006 (Building) to 014 to provide additional staffing requested by the Commission for enforcement issues and inspections. Legal fees were reduced. Consultant costs were increased. It was noted if a consultant is required during the application process,

the fee is borne by the applicant; whereas, if a violation occurs, the consultant fees are borne by Town. All Land Use staffing and responsibilities are being reviewed.

- 017: Town Hall: Heating fuel & electric costs were based on use in the current fiscal year. As a member of a fuel consortium, a lower fuel price has been maintained. Grounds: The Village Improvement Society has provided assistance with lawn maintenance and preparation during the past fiscal year. This cost will now be covered with Town funds. Thank you V.I.S.!
- 019: Insurances: Worker's Comp has increased due to unusual experience rating over the past year. It is anticipated these cases will be closed. Liability & Property remain as anticipated in three-year contract with CIRMA.
- 020: Accident & Health Insurance:

Health Insurance: The initiation of a \$1,500 self-insured deductible in the Town's health plan has reduced costs and has fared well.

Dental Insurance: Dental benefits are currently self-insured by the Town at \$500/employee, thus eliminating dental insurance costs. This self-insurance has also reduced Town costs.

All funds remaining in the self-insured Health and Dental accounts at the end of the fiscal year will be transferred to the Town's Health Insurance account. Review of various health cost saving measures will continue. Consideration may be given to an increase in the dental allowance.

Michael suggested the Town remain cognizant of the fact that as employees age, experience is higher, and funding the maximum liability might be considered in order to insure no risk. Rex noted he is uncomfortable about increasing the benefit level and feels the employees have better medical coverage than others. He felt we should be looking at getting more employee participation and share the risk. Michael suggested comparable union packages be reviewed. Mark reported the Town's coverage compares to the State's employee package, but at a lower cost. If future plans consider going to a health savings account, employee participation will be required. Mark noted changes in the health plans over recent years has proven to provide good coverage for employees, while offsetting targeted cost increases. Rex did not feel that this required additional benefits to employees. It was agreed that a review of positions and responsibilities should be done as planned.

Budget discussion continued in the following areas:

025 Fire Co.: General repairs are needed to overhead doors, exterior pedestrian door replacement, interior painting. These items may be transferred to Annual Repairs to Town Buildings.

026 Police: Building utilities are included in the Police budget. These include utility expense for both the police offices and the upstairs tenant. Rent received from tenant takes these costs into consideration.

027: Emergency Management: Add Safety Net. \$2,970.

031: General Maintenance:

- Contracted services are now regrouped into General Maintenance. These included road striping, machine rental: (vac-all, curb machine, dirt roller for rebuilding roads.) Tree Work has also been transferred into the General Maintenance category.
- Inventory stock of culverts and catch basins is low - replenishment costs included.

- Signs: Increased costs due to new street signs mandated by State. Will be continued over next year.
- Education/Safety classes for Class 1 licensing. Town's insurance carrier will also provide training.
- Drug & alcohol testing as mandated by state.

032: Winter Maintenance:

- Sand prices have decreased while salt has increased. Some sand still needed for dirt roads. Use of "magic salt" has results in less wear and tear on the plow blades and melts ice more quickly. This past winter had many week-end and overnight storms resulting in more overtime required. Hopefully an anomaly.

036: Recycling:

Increase in budget for Electronic (E waste) expenses - +\$1,000. It is anticipated these costs will be offset by income received at transfer station. Additional signage will also be required at transfer station.

041: Parks & Recreation:

- Part-time returning workers (i.e. lifeguards, summer workers) receive \$.25/hour.
- The beach will be open on Memorial Day on a trial basis.
- No lifeguards on rainy days; however, beach directors will be there to man boat ramp.
- Selectmen considered 6 a.m. to dark seven days/week. Would cost an additional \$3,300. Decided the currently expanded hours were enough.
- Contracted mowing - turf maintenance. Felt it would not be required after July so this request was reduced.

042: Senior Center:

- Leo Pickett, Jr., the town's Senior Van driver has retired after many years of assistance to our seniors. While the Pickett family has never required payment for rental of garage space to house the van, the Selectmen suggest \$100/month be paid to continue the use of this garage. Jim Babiyan will replace Leo, with Luke Tanner assisting. The Board acknowledged Leo's many years of service to the Town.

047: Annual Repairs: Building and Property Committee continues to review town-owned buildings in need of necessary annual repairs. These include the Senior Center/Legion Hall, new Police office, Boys Club, and town garages. Fire company buildings will be included in this budget area.

049: Animal Control Officer: An increase in salary is planned for Cindy Brissett based on her documented time and duties spent. The Selectmen felt this was well-deserved. If assistance is required from her two assistants, Cindy will pay them.

051: Welfare: Reduced by \$1,000.

Capital Budget: Initial presentation of Capital Budget included:

Roads/Bridges:

Requested: \$1,160,000; Selectmen Proposed: \$1,080,000; Grant reim: \$535,000; Net: \$545,000.

Included:

- Paving & Drainage - Ongoing road program, to be offset by Town Aid Road grant
- Bridge repairs to two bridges on Walker Brook Road and one on Rabbit Hill
- Special Project - Painter Ridge Road - recycle and pave
- Special project - 2nd year of paving and drainage on Plumb Hill Road
- Chipsealing, reclaiming and repaving - mile - offset by Town Aid Road grant
- Refurbish dirt roads
- Guardrails

Original estimate for Painter Ridge Road project had been \$385,000, for which Town would have been responsible for \$85,000. An updated estimate provided by COG increased cost of project to \$550,000, due in part to State grant requirements. Selectmen will review further to determine if this would be a worthwhile project due to these increased costs or whether the Town's method of repaving would be adequate. Refurbishing dirt roads - 2 miles of 27 miles total. Project would continue on a 10/12 year cycle. Much of the Town's guardrail is considered substandard and has not been replaced in many years. Effort is being made to address these issues.

Vehicle & Equipment: Requested: \$409,376; Selectmen Proposed: \$326,176.

Original request include:

- Fire Co.: Hose, turnout gear, Hollmatro Rescue equipment., Laptop Computer, GPS Units, Fire vehicle replacement (1st year of 2 year plan). Request for additional Rescue equipment, computer and GPS units deleted. Fire Co. commended on their planning for new vehicle to use current chassis and tank to be fitted with new pump.
- Police: Vehicle to replace Explorer with 140,000 miles, equipment & signs.
- Highway: Large truck to be replaced with two smaller trucks, miscellaneous equipment, signs, used air compressor, used bucket truck, miscellaneous equipment includes new signage required by State over next two years, smaller trucks to replace larger , which would be more efficient for plowing, etc. Used bucket truck deleted.

Building & Property: Requested \$778,000; Selectmen Proposed \$600,000; Grant reim. of \$320,000, Net \$280,000.

- Discussion on continued need for Open Space and Housing Land Acquisition funding. It was noted that the 2003 Plan of Development should be revisited. Also noted that anything with regard to acquisition of land must be presented for vote at a town meeting.
- Beach/Beachhouse: Rex suggested this item be considered by a separate vote at the town meeting and not a part of the overall Capital Budget vote. Others felt this would complete the Beachhouse/Boat Launch project with the assistance of a \$300,000 STEAP grant that has been approved and a \$20,000 LoCIP grant. It was also noted this is an improvement of an existing town facility and must meet all land

use requirement. It was agreed the presentation of this issue would be at the discretion of the Board of Selectmen.

The Selectmen noted a line item for review of town hall office organization and procedures as previously discussed had not been included in their initial proposal. Board of Finance in agreement to add it. A special meeting was scheduled for April 28th at 5 p.m. to further review the proposed budgets. Meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Gollow, Secretary