

TOWN OF ALLENSTOWN
Budget Committee
16 School Street
Allenstown, New Hampshire 03275
November 7, 2013

Call to Order.

The Allenstown Budget Committee Meeting for November 7, 2013 was called to order by the Chair at 6:00pm.

Roll Call.

Present on the Board: Dave Eaton, Larry Anderson, Carl Caporale , Jerry McKenney , Dave Coolidge , Mike Frascinella , Deb Carney, Chris Lavalley, Jeff Gryval, Penny Touchette, Carol Merrill, and Andrea Martel.

Excused: Roger LaFleur

Others Present.

Residents of Allenstown: Chad Pelissier, Ed Higgins, Daniel Baufford

Others Present:

Other Public Officials:

Allenstown Staff: Shaun Mulholland, Town Administrator; Sandy McKenney, Selectman; Cyndi Hetu, Minutes Clerk; Keith Melanson, AFD; Daumanic Fucile, AFD; Jon Harry, AFD; Scott Silkman, AFD; Paul Paquett, APD, Michael Stark, APD; Ron Pelissier, Road Agent; Dana Pendergast, AFD and Diane Demers, Finance Director.

Mr. Gryval announced that they have a quorum of the Select Board present at tonight's meeting so that tonight's meeting was posted. He explained that Mrs. McKenney is present as a member of the audience and that he is the Select Board representative for the Budget Committee.

The Chair asked that everyone sign the attendance sheet that is going around.

Resignation of Robin Richards

The Chair stated that he has received a letter of resignation from Robin Richards which he is going to turn over to the Secretary. He asked that members would ask around to see if anyone was interested.

The Chair read Mr. Richards resignation aloud to the members of the Budget Committee explaining that changes in responsibilities at this company would not allow for him to do an effective job as a member of the Budget Committee.

Motion. Mr. Anderson made a motion to accept Robin Richards's resignation. Mr. Caporale seconded the Motion. There was no additional discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Anderson-Yes; Mr. Coolidge-Yes; Mr. McKenney-Yes; Mr. Caporale-Yes; Mr. Gryval- Yes; Mr. Lavalley-Yes; Mrs. Carney-Yes; Mr. Frascinella – Yes; Ms. Martel-Yes; Mrs. Touchette-Yes; and Mr. Eaton-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

Space Needs Committee

The Chair stated that the Select Board has asked for a volunteer from the Budget Committee to be part of the Space Needs Committee. He asked Mr. Gryval to explain the Space Needs Committee for the audience.

Mr. Gryval stated that they have established a Space Needs Committee and that it will be must different from the Space Needs Committees that they have had in the past. He explained that in the past, they have formulated them to specifically target an area of need; however, this time around they are looking to maximize the space that they have and possibly consolidate things. He stated that they are trying to find ways of reducing the cost of keeping the buildings open.

The Chair asked when they are looking to get that committee started. Mr. Gryval stated that Mr. Tardiff is on that committee and that he will find out from him when they will be doing that.

Budget Presentations.

Police Department

Chief Paquett stated that the Select Board directed them to come in at default for their individual budgets. He stated that coming in at default left him the option of reducing overtime and eliminating the ACO (Animal Control Officer) position. He explained that the impact to the residents on this would be that there would be more dogs running around and more dog bites. He also stated that the ACO does a lot of maintenance work around the police station which will also be a loss in services.

Chief Paquett stated that they were further instructed to cut an additional \$56,000 from the Police Department budget. He stated that the best option for them was to not fill a currently vacant position. He stated that they recently hired a patrolman, however; they will not see his services until next fall because of training. He stated that there is a possibility that they will be losing another officer within the next couple of months.

Chief Paquett stated that this would mean no coverage on Tuesday and Thursday nights between midnight and seven am. He stated that he has spoken with other towns for mutual aid but that they cannot rely on them. He stated that there is a significant drug problem in town which he suspects will increase with the lack of coverage. He also discussed increase in burglaries and how they will try to counteract these things.

The Chair stated that the bottom line for the Police Department is \$889,964.

The Chair stated that they are not going to be voting on the budgets tonight. He stated that they will hear the presentations and then call everyone back for November 21, 2013 for finalization. He asked the members if they had any questions for Chief Paquett.

Mr. Caporale asked Chief Paquett around the shifts that won't have coverage and if they could take an officer from a day shift and put them on the night. Chief Paquett stated that they can't right now because they are down those two officers and possibly losing a third. He stated that it would also leave himself to cover days which means he can't do his duties outside of catching calls.

Mr. Coolidge asked how many officers they have. Chief Paquett stated that they have six officers. Mrs. Merrill asked how many hours the prosecutor works. Chief Paquett stated that she works 40 hours. He explained that if they cut back on her hours they will lose the service of putting people away and getting restitution. He stated that along with the detective, the prosecutor has been one of their best areas. Mr. Caporale asked if the prosecutor is worth what they are paying and if she is getting convictions. Chief Paquett stated that she is staying on top of things and getting things done. There was further discussion of the benefits to having their own town prosecutor.

Mr. Caporale asked if they had to reduce the budget by the \$56,000 without reducing officers, where would he take it from. Chief Paquett stated that he looked at those options and that there were no other areas that could be reduced. He explained that they did take some more of the overtime away for the coverage of Halloween and Old Home Day.

Mr. Gardner stated that he had an opportunity to work with Chief Paquett and stated that the work that they did on the case was amazing. He asked if with not covering the midnight shift, that would open the town to liability. Mr. Mulholland stated that it would not as there is not statute requiring a police department.

Fire Department

Mr. Gryval introduced Chief Pendergast to the Budget Committee. He explained that shortly after he was appointed, he was asked to cut an additional \$56,000 from the Fire Department Budget.

Chief Pendergast stated that Deputy Chief St. Germain submitted the Fire Department budget prior to his appointment. He explained how many calls and the types of calls that they have received in the past year. He stated that 52% of the calls are from 8am to 5pm which gives them a six minute response time. He also stated that the Fire Department did 282 hours of logged training to this date. He stated that they have done 94 inspections and 931 hours of additional service.

Chief Pendergast stated that he was asked to cut \$56,000 from their budget which brought them down to \$261,947. He explained that they were able to do that through a reduction in a number of lines including part-time salaries by \$18,000. He stated that they also cut the personal protection by \$3,500. He discussed other line cuts such as the overtime budget by \$5,000, outside training by \$3,000, inside training by \$7,000, vehicle repair and parts by \$3,200, cell phone for fire department and two air cards for the iPads by \$1,200. He also explained how this would affect residents due to longer response times.

Mr. Frascinella stated that he finds the format of the budget to be difficult to follow in comparison to the other budgets. Chief Pendergast stated that they will use the new format this coming year to match the format of the other budgets.

The Chair asked when the new truck would be coming in. Chief Pendergast stated that last he had heard, it would be in sometime in February.

Mr. Frascinella asked Chief Pendergast what type of training was going to be cut. Chief Pendergast stated that he cut the outside training which covers training for apparatus class, fire fighter I class at an outside agency. He stated that he also cut the in house training and that they won't be doing as much in house training.

Mrs. Merrill asked if there was a way that the Fire Department doesn't have to go on a call when there is already ambulance going. Chief Pendergast stated that it is a matter of response times. He also explained that with the complexity of the calls, assistance is often needed therefore they may have both agencies there. Mr. Gardner stated that they can call each other off if someone arrives on scene and assistance is not needed.

Mr. Frascinella asked about the creation of an ambulance service as a replacement for the privately run service. Chief Pendergast stated that is off the table and is not being discussed. Mr. Lavalley asked about houses that they are burning down and how that is funded. Chief

Pendergast stated that those are town owned homes. He stated that they use them for training purposes in a semi-controlled situation.

Highway Department

The Road Agent explained to the Budget Committee the condition of some equipment and trucks at the Highway Department. He stated that their newest truck is a 2000 and their oldest truck is a 1990. He stated that their oldest one ton truck is a 2001 which has been worked a lot. He stated that to keep up on a 20 to 25 year rotation of paving, they should be doing .75 to 1 mile per year, however, his budget does not allow for that. He explained that the Highway Department does a lot of the preparation work and only pays for the paving of the road. The Road Agent stated that with the cuts that they are facing this year, they will lose about 20-30% of their paving line which will put them further and further behind.

The Road Agent stated that their building is approximately 50 years old. He stated that there are many things that have not been done for repairs such as siding and roofing. He stated that overall the transfer station is running very well.

The Road Agent stated that with the MS-4 project they are mandated to comply with it which adds a line for \$54,000. He stated that the street lights are \$23,000 per year which is out of their control.

The Road Agent stated that as far as reductions, they reduced the paving line and the solid waste line. He stated that the recycling market fluctuates a lot. He stated that they have had to pay as much as \$45 a ton to receiving \$20 a ton for recycling. He stated that they if they reduce that line too much they could be in trouble if the market swings the other way. He stated at that point they would have to stop curbside pickup. Mr. Gryval stated that the solid waste line pays for the tipping fees to get rid of the trash; therefore, if they got rid of curbside they would have to get rid of the transfer station as well.

Mr. Coolidge asked if they were out of the Concord Co-op at this point. Mr. Gryval stated that they will be out of the co-op in 2014 and that they have already begun looking at other options. There was further discussion of curbside pickup and what would happen if they didn't have it.

Mr. Frascinella asked if they are taking the recyclables to Casella. The Road Agent stated that they have been taking it there and that Casella offers the best price around. Mr. Pelissier explained that the paper and cardboard drives the market. The Road Agent stated that they constantly watch the prices but have found that Casella is typically better priced. He explained that right now they are going to pay \$90,000-100,000 to get rid of trash. He stated that the other \$32,000 in the solid waste line will cover the recyclables if the market goes back to \$45 a ton.

The Road Agent stated that if something happened to their packer right now, they would not have the money to pay someone else to come in and remove the trash.

Mr. Caporale asked what the new bottom line was for the Highway Department. The Road Agent stated that the new bottom line is \$192,000 for Solid Waste and that his bottom line for all of the budgets under Highway is \$630,560.

Mr. Frascinella asked how the new Saturday program is working with the Concord inmates. The Road Agent stated that it has been working very well. He stated that with the inmates on the trucks, it allows for his employees to do highway tasks such as catch basins and paving repairs. He stated that he has heard that the inmates have been an asset at the transfer station.

Discuss presentation schedule

The Chair stated that the plan for next week is to finish the presentations on the rest of the town budgets. He stated that they discussed having the Sewer present their budget next week as well. Ms. Martel stated that Mr. Clement doesn't want the budget presented if she is not there. The Chair stated that one of the things that are new this year is that the Sewer Department is on their own warrant article. He also stated that the School Board will be presenting on December 5th so that he would like to get the town down this month and spend December on the School's budget.

The Chair stated that on November 21, 2013 they will finalize the town budgets and have the Sewer Department present their budget as well.

Mr. McKenney asked that the way the budget sits right now, are they \$130,000 over last year's budget. Mr. Mulholland stated that the tax rate is 6.4 percent higher than last year. The Chair stated that there are a lot of things that they will see next week which has caused increases such as the Ambulance Budget.

Mr. Gryval asked The Chair who he would like to have present at next week's meeting for the presentations. The Chair stated that he would like to have all of the committees present.

Review and Approve Minutes

Motion. Mr. Caporale made a motion to accept the minutes of May 23, 2013. Mr. Anderson seconded the Motion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Anderson-Yes; Mr. Coolidge-Yes; Mr. McKenney-Yes; Mr. Caporale-Abstained; Mr. Gryval- Yes; Mr. Lavalley-Abstained; Mrs. Carney-Yes; Mr.

Frascinella – Yes; Ms. Martel-Yes; Mrs. Touchette-Abstained; and Mr. Eaton-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

Motion. Mr. Caporale made a motion to accept the minutes of August 15, 2013. Mr. Anderson seconded the Motion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Anderson-Yes; Mr. Coolidge-Yes; Mr. McKenney-Yes; Mr. Caporale-Yes; Mr. Gryval- Yes; Mr. Lavalley-Yes; Mrs. Carney-Yes; Mr. Frascinella – Yes; Ms. Martel-Yes; Mrs. Touchette-Yes; and Mr. Eaton-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

The Chair stated that as a note, if they are abstaining from a vote, they need to say so because he is not going to ask for it.

Motion. Mrs. Touchette made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Carney seconded the Motion. There was no additional discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Anderson-Yes; Mr. Coolidge-Yes; Mr. McKenney-Yes; Mr. Caporale-Yes; Mr. Gryval- Yes; Mr. Lavalley-Yes; Mrs. Carney-Yes; Mr. Frascinella – Yes; Ms. Martel-Yes; Mrs. Touchette- Yes; and Mr. Eaton-Yes. The Chair declared the Motion passed.

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 7:08pm.