

Municipal Budget Committee Meeting
Community Center
8 Whitten Street
Allentown, New Hampshire 03275
December 13, 2018

Call to Order

The Allentown Municipal Budget Committee Meeting of December 13, 2018 was called to order at 6:08 pm by Chairman Klawes. He called for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Present on the Board: Dave Coolidge, Kris Raymond, Tiffany Ranfos, Chad Pelissier, Keith Klawes, Melaine Boisvert, Carol Angowski, Deb Carney, Ron Cox

Excused: Jeffrey Venegas

Allentown Staff: Derik Goodine, Town Administrator; Debbie Bender, Finance Director

Review of Minutes

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve the minutes of November 29, 2018 as amended. The motion was seconded by Ms. Boisvert. The motion passed unanimously, with Mr. Pelissier and Mr. Cox abstaining.

Chair Klawes reported that the proposed total operating budget is \$3,984,023, which represents an impact on the tax rate of seven cents per thousand. The impact on the tax rate could change if revenue changes.

Ms. Boisvert asked for the total tax base.

Mr. Goodine said it is \$283,161,071.

Mr. Cox asked if unexpected shortfalls in property tax revenue would affect the tax rate.

Mr. Goodine explained that there is an overlay account for this.

Ms. Boisvert asked about the equalization rate, given that homes are selling at higher prices than assessed values.

Mr. Goodine said that the equalization rate is 93.4%.

Budget Voting

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the proposed Executive budget of \$190,110.

On motion of Ms. Ranfos, duly seconded by Mr. Cox, it was voted unanimously to approve this budget.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the proposed Tax Collector budget of \$74,050.

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve this budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox.

Ms. Angowski asked if this includes both full-time and part-time personnel.

Mr. Goodine said that it did.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the proposed Finance Department budget of \$106,060.

On motion of Ms. Ranfos, duly seconded by Mr. Cox, it was voted unanimously to approve this budget.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the proposed Tax Collector budget of \$40,200.

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve this budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox.

Ms. Angowski asked if this includes both full-time and part-time personnel.

Mr. Goodine said that it did.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the proposed Assessing Department budget.

On motion of Ms. Ranfos, duly seconded by Mr. Cox, it was voted unanimously to approve this budget.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the proposed Legal Services budget of \$50,000.

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve this budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox.

Ms. Boisvert asked if this was just for the town or if it included the Sewer Department.

Mr. Goodine said that it is just for the town. There could be legal fees in conjunction with Holiday Acres, the town is still involved in a legal case with 4NH Homes, and there are legal expenses because of a class action suit against FairPoint and Eversource.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the proposed Personnel budget of \$728,400.

On motion of Ms. Ranfos, duly seconded by Mr. Cox, it was voted unanimously to approve this budget.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the proposed Planning Board budget of \$13,670.

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve this budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox.

Ms. Boisvert asked if the increase in this budget is because of the Master Plan.

Mr. Goodine responded that the CIP is part of the Master Plan and needs updating in order to charge developers impact fees.

Ms. Bender stated that she is going to change the title of this to Master Plan/CIP.

Ms. Boisvert asked if the town follows the Master Plan.

Mr. Pelissier said that the BOS does not always follow the Master Plan, especially in terms vehicle replacement.

Mr. Goodine said that the town must have a Master Plan in order to get certain grants.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair asked for a motion to approve the proposed ZBA budget of \$3,700.

On motion of Ms. Ranfos, duly seconded by Mr. Cox, it was voted unanimously to approve this budget.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the proposed General Government Buildings budget of \$27,900.

On motion of Ms. Ranfos, duly seconded by Mr. Cox, it was voted unanimously to approve this budget.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the proposed Cemetery budget of \$1.00.

On motion of Ms. Ranfos, duly seconded by Mr. Cox, it was voted unanimously to approve this budget.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the proposed Property Insurance budget of \$56,620.

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve this budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox.

Ms. Boisvert asked who is the town's insurance provider.

Ms. Bender said that it is Primex, via the NH Municipal Association.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Advertising & Regional Association budget of \$4,960.

On motion of Ms. Ranfos, duly seconded by Mr. Cox, it was voted unanimously to approve this budget.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Police Department budget of \$936,591.

On motion of Ms. Ranfos, duly seconded by Mr. Cox, it was voted unanimously to approve this budget.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Ambulance budget of \$118,200.

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve this budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox.

Ms. Boisvert asked if this was Allenstown's portion of the Tri-Town EMS budget.

Mr. Goodine confirmed that it was.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Fire Department budget of \$323,200.

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve this budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox.

Ms. Boisvert asked if there was a warrant article for a ladder truck.

Mr. Goodine responded that there was not.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Building Inspector budget of \$43,650.

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve this budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox.

Ms. Boisvert asked if the Building Inspector was paid hourly or if he had a contract. She said she heard there had been some delays.

Mr. Coolidge said that the Building Inspector has 72 hours to respond to a request, per State law.

Ms. Bender explained that the Building Inspector works with a contract with the town and charges his time on an hourly basis.

Mr. Goodine added that he also takes time to review plans and respond to emails.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Emergency Management budget of \$10,350.

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve this budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox.

Mr. Goodine said that this is under the auspices of the Police Department; they keep all necessary equipment running and schedule emergency management training as needed and required.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Highway Department budget of \$553,170.

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve this budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox.

Mr. Cox said that he wanted to be sure the Highway Department now has a budget enabling them to hire drivers as needed at a competitive wage.

Chair Klawes said that he wants to be sure they can offer livable wages.

Ms. Bender said that the adjustments have been made for this and are included.

Ms. Boisvert asked about road repairs, especially with the sewer project.

Mr. Goodine said that there is a CIP plan for road repairs and Mr. Ronnie Pelissier has been able to move some of these ahead of schedule.

Mr. Pelissier added that most of the road reconstruction related to the sewer project will be paid by the Sewer Department. There is a short section between East Webster and Main Streets – 50 to 100 feet - which the Highway Department will do. They were able to complete a lot of road repair with a recent State grant.

Ms. Ranfos asked about plans for a new Highway Building.

Mr. Goodine said that they are now planning to upgrade the current facility and add on to it. There are no figures for this yet.

Ms. Bender said that there is \$200,000 for this project in a Capital Reserve Fund and that may be adequate for the planned upgrade.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Storm Water Asset Management Plan budget of \$39,000.

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve this budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox.

Ms. Boisvert asked about this budget.

Mr. Goodine explained that this is for the administration of the Storm Water plan in conjunction with Central NH Regional Planning Association for consulting and engineering work.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Street Lights budget of \$16,000.

On motion of Ms. Ranfos, duly seconded by Mr. Cox, it was voted unanimously to approve this budget.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Solid Waste budget of \$195,000.

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve this budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox.

Ms. Raymond asked for the status of the current recycling issue, with half of the loads going to solid waste.

Mr. Goodine said that it is too early to say what is going to happen. Apparently, many residents are not recycling properly. Some educational information has been posted on the website. A manual inspection of recycling containers will be necessary. The contract with Casella involves no cost to the town and had five or six years left. Some money has been allotted in a proposed warrant article for a Capital Reserve Fund for the purchase of a packer, anticipating that Casella will not renew the contract.

Mr. Pelissier said that Casella does not have cameras on its vehicles to check what is being placed in recycling. He said that Pembroke has cameras and men who care about their town.

Ms. Ranfos asked if Casella could void the contract.

Mr. Goodine responded that he did not believe that they could void the contract but they could start charging more.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Health Inspector budget of \$6,250.

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve this budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox.

Ms. Boisvert asked about the duties of the Health Inspector.

Mr. Goodine said that he investigates unfit homes, unsafe decks, and septic system issues, among other things. He provides education about smoke detectors and investigates concerns about viruses such as EEE. He is aggressive and takes his job very seriously.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Animal Control budget of \$200.

On motion of Ms. Ranfos, duly seconded by Mr. Cox, it was voted unanimously to approve this budget.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Welfare Administration budget of \$5,950.

On motion of Ms. Ranfos, duly seconded by Mr. Cox, it was voted unanimously to approve this budget.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Welfare Expenses budget of \$39,000.

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve this budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox.

Ms. Boisvert asked if this might be reduced since we are in a booming economy.

Chair Klawes said that \$29,000 of the total budget is for rent.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Charitable Donations budget of \$22,210.

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve this budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox.

Mr. Goodine explained that this is comprised of \$18,210 for Community Action; \$3,500 for Child & Family Services; and \$500 for Court Appointed Special Advocate program. CAP asked for \$21,000, but was flat-funded.

Mr. Pelissier said that we want to do our fair share, and he asked why they were not given the amount requested.

Ms. Boisvert said that Thanksgiving baskets for seniors were not done this year, and the seniors count on them.

Chair Klawes said that CAP always ask for more than the town gives.

Ms. Ranfos asked if there is a way to monitor their expenses, and asked if they could go to Welfare?

Mr. Goodine said that people in need can come to the town via our Welfare Department with needs for heat, electricity and other expenses.

Mr. Cox asked if the town could give CAP the full amount of their request, with the understanding that they would return any surplus.

Chair Klawes indicated that they were not likely to return funds.

Ms. Bender said that if people get help through the Welfare Department, we have more direct control. However, CAP may have resources and discounts the town does not have.

The motion carried, with Ms. Boisvert opposed.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Parks & Rec budget of \$62,280.

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve this budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox.

Ms. Raymond said that she wanted to \$10,000 to this budget because the Economic Development Committee is working on a skate board park, which will require fencing and security cameras.

Mr. Pelissier said that the proposed site for the skate board park is the parking lot next to the convent. However, the convent and surrounding land are going up for sale next month.

Ms. Raymond said that the School Department has been involved with this project, along with an ice-skating rink proposal. She said that there are lots of children skate boarding and riding scooters all over town. It would be much safer to have a place for them to skate. The Police Department liked the convent parking lot site because of its visibility. This would be for daytime use. It would not be staffed.

Chair Klawes said that kids often don't wear helmets and often don't use common sense, which makes this risky in terms of liability.

Ms. Ranfos said that Mr. Goodine has checked on the liability issue.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Conservation budget of \$1.00.

On motion of Ms. Ranfos, duly seconded by Mr. Cox, it was voted unanimously to approve this budget.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Old Allenstown Meeting House budget of \$1,300.

On motion of Ms. Ranfos, duly seconded by Mr. Cox, it was voted unanimously to approve this budget.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Economic Development Committee budget of \$900.

On motion of Ms. Ranfos, duly seconded by Mr. Cox, it was voted unanimously to approve this budget.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Debt Service budget of \$15,000.

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve this budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox.

Ms. Boisvert said that the town has not used TAN for several years.

Mr. Goodine said that this is budgeted as a safety valve.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve the Capital Outlay budget of \$196,930.

Ms. Ranfos made a motion to approve this budget. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox.

Mr. Goodine said this a for annual vehicle lease payments.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Klawes next asked for a motion to recommend Warrant Article #2, Operating Budget, in the amount of \$3,984,023. The impact on the tax rate is seven cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. The default amount is \$4,000,427.

On motion of Ms. Boisvert, duly seconded by Ms. Angowski, it was voted unanimously to recommend Warrant Article #2.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to recommend Warrant Article #3, Sewer Department, in the amount of \$2,280,567. There is no impact on the tax rate. The default amount is \$2,276,145.

On motion of Ms. Boisvert, duly seconded by Ms. Angowski, it was voted unanimously to recommend Warrant Article #3.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to recommend Warrant Article #4, Fire Safety Equipment Capital Reserve Fund, in the amount of \$10,000. These funds come from the Unassigned Fund Balance, so there is no effect on the tax rate.

On motion of Ms. Boisvert, duly seconded by Ms. Angowski, it was voted unanimously to recommend Warrant Article #4.

Chair Klawes told the Committee that the amount of Warrant Article #5, Library, won't be available until early in January, before the Public Hearing.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to recommend Warrant Article #6, Public Safety Facilities Capital Reserve Fund, in the amount of \$20,000. These funds come from the Unassigned Fund Balance, so there is no effect on the tax rate.

On motion of Ms. Boisvert, duly seconded by Ms. Angowski, it was voted unanimously to recommend Warrant Article #6.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to recommend Warrant Article #7, Street Light Capital Reserve Fund, in the amount of \$6,500.

This Article was tabled to allow for a change in the wording.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to recommend Warrant Article #8, Landfill Capital Reserve Fund, in the amount of \$1,600. These funds come from the Unassigned Fund Balance, so there is no effect on the tax rate.

On motion of Ms. Boisvert, duly seconded by Ms. Angowski, it was voted unanimously to recommend Warrant Article #8.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to recommend Warrant Article #9, Highway Department Capital Reserve Fund, in the amount of \$51,500. These funds come from the Unassigned Fund Balance, so there is no effect on the tax rate.

Ms. Boisvert moved to recommend this article. Ms. Angowski seconded the motion.

Mr. Goodine said that \$30,000 of this amount will be placed in a fund in anticipation of purchasing a packer.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to recommend Warrant Article #10, Town Building Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund, in the amount of \$10,000. These funds come from the Unassigned Fund Balance, so there is no effect on the tax rate.

On motion of Ms. Boisvert, duly seconded by Ms. Angowski, it was voted unanimously to recommend Warrant Article #10.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to recommend Warrant Article #11, Economic Development Capital Reserve Fund, in the amount of \$15,000. These funds come from the Unassigned Fund Balance, so there is no effect on the tax rate.

Ms. Boisvert moved to recommend this article. Ms. Angowski seconded the motion.

Mr. Goodine said that the Economic Development Committee is working on several projects, including town line welcome signs.

Ms. Angowski asked what is wrong with the current signs.

Mr. Pelissier said that they are rotting, especially the one on Route 28. He said this is a curb side appeal issue; the State made a presentation to the Economic Development Committee which was very enlightening. He said he hopes that the presentation can be made to all of the departments in town. The presentation included many ideas for encouraging development of business in Allenstown, and signage was the first suggestion.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to recommend Warrant Article #12, Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund, in the amount of \$16,800. These funds come from the Unassigned Fund Balance, so there is no effect on the tax rate.

This Article was tabled to allow for a change in the wording.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to recommend Warrant Article #13, Storm Water Asset Management Capital Reserve Fund, in the amount of \$30,000. These funds come from the Unassigned Fund Balance, so there is no effect on the tax rate.

Ms. Boisvert asked why this required a three fifths vote.

Mr. Goodine said that it was because it involved a bond. Although it is 100% reimbursable, the vote is required in case the funds dry up. This is the MS4, which the town is required to do.

Mr. Pelissier asked about future costs associated with Storm Water Asset Management. He said that the software the Sewer Department is using is complicated and they may have to hire someone at the Highway Department to do this.

Mr. Goodine said that it would be one to two hours a week and would not have a huge impact. It has to be done.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Klawes asked for a motion to approve Warrant Article #19, Rescind SB2.

Ms. Boisvert moved to accept this warrant article. The motion was seconded by Mr. Raymond.

Ms. Raymond said that this eliminates the default budget, which is very complicated and difficult.

Ms. Carney said that people like the default budget and that two hours isn't much time to learn about the budget. She added that some people work on Saturdays and have to miss Town Meeting.

Ms. Boisvert rescinded her motion and Ms. Raymond rescinded her second.

The motion was tabled to allow time to present this to the BOS.

Chair Klawes added that this could be done as a petition warrant article.

Ms. Raymond made a motion to approve a Parks & Rec Capital Reserve Fund in the amount of \$10,000. The motion was seconded by Ms. Angowski. The funding would come from the Unassigned Fund Balance and would not affect the tax rate.

The motion carried unanimously.

On motion of Ms. Raymond, duly seconded by Ms. Angowski, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:26 pm.

DRAFT