

Budget Committee  
February 5, 2018  
Meeting Minutes

**Present:**

Chair- Rob Glassett, Wayne Anderson, Joseph Caristi, Dave Carr, Scott Sanschagrín, Walter Waring, Betsy Schneider, Ashley Dolloff ( arriving after start time), Bob Emerson.

**Absent:** Janet Cavanagh, JP Morrison, John Sellers, Bill Cote.

**Others Present:** Nik Coates–Town Administrator, Bob Blanchette-Finance Officer, Kris Bean-Lieutenant Police Department, Ben LaRoche- Fire Chief, Paul Manganiello- Selectman, Shirley Yorks–Garden Club, Les Dion- selectman.

**Call to Order:**

Committee Chair Rob Glassett called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

**Review and Approval of Minutes:**

Rob Glassett asked the committee to review the minutes from the last meeting. Scott Sanschagrín made a motion to accept the minutes of January 29, 2018 as written, seconded by Betsy Schneider. The committee voted **5 in favor – 0 opposed – 2 Abstained** in favor of the motion.

**Correspondence:**

Rob Glassett stated there was a letter from Shirley Yorks of the Garden Club basically stating what the Garden Club does so the committee will need to revisit that at the club's request. Nik Coates stated that Mark Bucklin was informed that tipping fees are going up from \$86.00 to \$94.00 a ton so the committee will also need to revisit that tonight. He would like the committee to move on to the warrant articles and come back to old business if the committee is in agreement.

**New Business - Warrant Articles:**

**Article 12:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate Two Million Six Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$2,650,000) to pay for the final design and construction of a new Town Office Building and the renovation of the existing Town Office Building into the Police Department with Four Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$400,000) to come from the unassigned fund balance, Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000) from general taxation, and to authorize the issuance of not more than Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000) of bonds or notes, in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act, (RSA 33) and to authorize the Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon. The first principal and interest payments will be included in the 2019 budget.

Walter Waring motioned to recommend article 12, seconded by Scott Sanschagrín. Betsy Schneider stated that it will roughly be a \$400,000.00 upgrade to the police station. After discussion the vote was **6 in favor – 2 opposed** the motion passed.

**Article 14:** To see if the Town will vote to establish a contingency fund for the current year for unanticipated expenses that may arise and further to raise and appropriate \$25,000 to put in the fund.

This sum to come from unassigned fund balance. Any appropriation left in the fund at the end of the year will lapse to the general fund. (Majority vote required).

Wayne Anderson motioned to recommend article 14, seconded by Rob Glassett. Wayne Anderson asked for more information. Nik Coates stated that for many years this used to be a budget item. The ERA about four or five years ago made a decision that it has to be a warrant article. Betsy Schneider what can it be used for. Nik Coates stated it would be used for general ordinary expenses, but the Selectmen usually do not use it until it is the last \$25,000.00 available in the budget. If we have too low of a cash flow and get to zero we would be penalized by the state and the town would need to raise additional revenues and have a special town meeting. Rob Glassett stated that it would be his guess that it would be for emergency purposes. The vote was **8 in favor – 0 opposed** the motion passed.

**Article 15:** To see if the Town will vote to raise an appropriate the sum of Fifty Three Thousand Dollars (\$53,000) to pay for drainage, roadway, and sidewalk improvements on Central Street. (SB38 funds of \$80,399 received in 2017 will complete the \$133,399 project.) (Majority vote required).

Nik Coates stated that this block grant is non-lapsing. A project was proposed last year at Town Meeting to improve Central Street project but on a much larger scale with water and sewer. The pipes on Central Street have a five to eight year shelf life remaining. The Selectmen felt if we could get Central Street paved it would be the last remaining major improvement for this neighborhood until it was time to replace the water and sewer pipes. Scott Sanschagrín motioned to recommend article 15 as written, seconded by Joseph Caristi. Scott Sanschagrín said sidewalks would be a big improvement for the downtown area. Betsy Schneider stated that back in 2016 \$77,000.00 was encumbered to pave Central Street. She said it should come out of the fund balance where it went. Nik Coates stated that the budget committee can't change the warrant article to have funds come from a fund balance, it would be up to the voters. Betsy Schneider said that she couldn't agree with taxing the taxpayers twice for the same project. The vote was **4 in favor – 2 opposed – 2 abstained** and the motion passed.

**Article 16:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty One Thousand Eight Hundred and One Dollars (\$41,801) for the purpose of hiring a full-time permanent Deputy Fire Chief. This amount includes salary and all benefits for this position for six months. The amount of this article is not included in the operating budget under Article 13. (Majority vote required).

Scott Sanschagrín motioned to recommend article 16, seconded by Joseph Caristi. Ben LaRoche Fire Chief stated that it is his hope that we create a deputy chief position to meet fire and life safety for the community. We are doing it and doing it well. Staffing is an issue right now. We also have more calls. We do have an excellent professional staff and call staff. We do have many that volunteer their time and that is great. The addition to administrative staff will help support that. We will then have a better more responsive department. People want their inspections done so their project isn't held up. This position would be 20% of the EMS budget cost the rest would be on the fire side. Scott Sanschagrín stated that he is in favor of this article and that it is a great succession plan. Ben LaRoche also stated that by bringing in a deputy chief would free up over six hundred hours of time and make every other facet of the job that much better. Right now he has little time to connect with personnel which is important. After discussion the vote was **5 in favor – 2 opposed – 1 abstained** the motion passed.

**Article 17:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) to prepare an architectural design and engineering study for the Fire Department. (Majority vote required).

Scott Sanschagrin motioned to recommend article 17, seconded by Bob Emerson. Ben LaRoche Fire Chief stated that he spent time redesigning with the department's internal building committee and then with the Town's Space Needs Committee. The Fire Department will last longer here with additional bay space and have a cost effective project. The Fire Department would work with an architect to design the building and then go after other funding for construction. Grants generally don't get funded if we don't have solid numbers. One way or the other the Fire Department will need a structural analysis and borings done which should be done first. Wayne Anderson stated that the Fire Department had been out of space for quite a while. After discussion the vote was **7 in favor – 2 opposed** the motion passed.

**Article 18:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000) to complete engineering and permitting, obtain materials, create a new traffic flow and upgrade disposal areas for the Transfer Station (known as Phase 1 of the reconstruction). Said appropriation to be offset by the withdrawal of \$190,000 from the Transfer Station Revolving Fund and the remainder to come from general taxation. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until Phase 1 is completed or by December 31, 2019, whichever is sooner. (Majority vote required).

Betsy Schneider motioned to recommend article 18, seconded by Bob Emerson. Nik Coates stated that this project may come in under \$250,000.00, he is waiting for bids to come in to see. However we need to get the bid and then inform the Select Board at that time. If it comes in at \$190,000.00 we will not need this article and it can be bypassed at Town Meeting. Scott Sanschagrin asked what phase two would be. Nik Coates stated it would be adding a scale. The vote was **9 in favor – 0 opposed** the motion passed.

**Article 19:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) for establishing a fiber optic network, including but not limited to the purchase and installation of fiber optic cables and equipment; running fiber optic cables; equipment upgrades, configurations and installations; contracting for the management of and service for the network, and all other work incidental or related thereto. The purpose is to connect municipal-owned buildings to a high-speed internet connection, to create a more efficient, cost-effective, reliable, and secure municipal computer network, and to create economic development opportunity in the Town's proposed Economic Revitalization Zone (ERZ) along Lake Street. Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) to come from a grant and the remaining \$25,000 to come from general taxation. This article is contingent upon the Town receiving the grant. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the project is completed or by December 31, 2019, whichever is sooner. (Majority vote required).

Scott Sanschagrin motioned to recommend article 19, seconded by Joseph Caristi. Nik Coates stated that there are two existing economic revitalization zones in town. The Selectmen have requested the state allow for two more to help achieve the goal of connecting the downtown to the lake, which was identified as a goal during last year's joint meeting of the Select Board, Planning Board, Economic Development Committee, Historic District Commission and SAU. We want to bring high speed fiber optic networking to the businesses in Bristol. Bristol is talking to a company called First Light who is already working with the school district and in other surrounding communities. Cell phone service is not great in Bristol, and this fiber is a key piece of the puzzle. There will be no money expended until we receive the grant. Betsy Schneider asked if the cell phone carriers needed fiber optic network to make this work. Nik Coates stated that this is the stumbling block. This also would allow for micro cells which are only a couple of feet tall and not have 180 foot towers. Joseph Caristi stated that getting the fiber optic network down the street is a big expense. However when you have the fiber optic network the

businesses and residents will have access not just municipal. Betsy Schneider are if there are other costs that we are unaware of. Nik Coates stated that it would be pulled in on the poles and the company would ensure the system is working. This line would likely go from Ashland and could be pulled all the way to the rotary in Plymouth. The company is aggressively trying to come to Bristol. There are costs such as yearly maintenance. The vote was **9 in favor – 0 opposed** the motion passed.

**Article 20:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of Fourteen Thousand Dollars (\$14,000) for the purposes of a Fourth of July fireworks display, operations, and ancillary costs of the event. (Majority vote required).

Walter Waring motioned to recommend article 20, seconded by Rob Glassett. Scott Sanschagrín what was spent last year. Nik Coates stated that \$11,000.00 shows in the expense report he had, but he knows there were other costs that still were being accounted for. The town also has the credit for unused fireworks last year which will be applied because it was so windy on the lake and hard to stabilize things on the barge. The vote was **8 in favor – 1 abstained** the motion passed.

**Article 21:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) to be added to the Police Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund established in 2017. Said appropriation to be offset by the withdrawal of \$30,000 from the Police Detail Revolving Fund, established in 2015, and the remainder to come from general taxation. (Majority vote required).

Ashley Dolloff motioned to recommend article 21, seconded by Scott Sanschagrín. Betsy Schneider said in her opinion we should wait until next year and raise more funds. Lieutenant Kris Bean stated that the plan he would recommend to an incoming chief would be to hold off on a cruiser purchase until August or September. He also said that all of the cruisers have high mileage and it is the chief's car that is set to be replaced. We received the 2017 cruiser in August. There have been many problems with it. After getting it fixed, he picked it up and found the radio didn't work. We have had it at Irwin's twice. After Irwin's having it for a month we just received the cruiser back and hope that it is fine. Betsy Schneider asked about the lemon law buy back. Kris Bean said that is something they are going to look into. After discussion the vote was **8 in favor – 1 opposed** and the motion passed.

**Article 22:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum Three Hundred Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$325,000) to be added to the following capital reserve funds previously established. (Majority vote required)

Accrued Wages Capital Reserve Fund	\$75,000
Assessment Reval Capital Reserve Fund	\$35,000
Bicentennial Capital Reserve Fund	\$10,000
Fire Department (Fire Engine) Capital Reserve Fund	\$50,000
Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund	\$140,000
Town Building Maintenance Fund Capital Reserve	\$15,000

Bob Emerson motioned to recommend article 22, seconded by Rob Glassett. Betsy Schneider stated that she didn't agree with having all of these in one warrant article it's very confusing. Nik Coates stated this has been past practice from when he got to the town and is just carrying that forward. Scott Sanschagrín asked if the figures were comparable to last year. Nik Coates stated that they were pretty comparable and that accrued wages is up because of retirements anticipated in the next few years. After discussion the vote was **9 in favor – 0 opposed** the motion passed.

### **CIP Follow up:**

Rob Glassett asked if there was anyone there to give the committee an update. There was none.

### **Revenues:**

Rob Glassett asked what the committee needed to vote on. Nik Coates stated revenue projections. Bob Blanchette and he spoke about this and the revenue projections now go on Form 737 for the state. Betsy Schneider motioned to acknowledge that the committee received the revenue projections report for 2018, seconded by Wayne Anderson. Scott Sanschagrín stated that the numbers are at \$2.1 million in the general fund and it was estimated at \$1.5 million. Nik Coates stated that we did better with apartment rentals, ambulance receipts, hauling fees, cell tower reimbursements and \$500,000.00 in CBG grant, and water collections. The vote was **9 in favor – 0 opposed** the motion passed.

### **Old Business:**

Shirley Yorks from the Pasquaney Garden Club spoke about what they are doing. She said they do all of the hanging baskets, plantings in front of the bank, five trash containers spread around downtown, plantings for all signs and ladies to plant, walkways at the library, butterfly garden, senior center, community services. The downtown committee does the long island and the Historic committee also the rectangle. We need our budget back. Walter Waring motioned to increase Section 01-4197-836 Garden Club from \$1,000.00 back to \$1,809.00, seconded by Wayne Anderson. The vote was **9 in favor – 0 opposed** the motion passed.

Rob Glassett stated that the committee needed to get to revisit section 01-4324-366 Tipping Fees as Mark said the fees were going up and he is requesting \$180,000.00. The committee reduced it from \$165,000.00 to \$160,000.00. Wayne Anderson motioned to increase Section 01-4324-366 Tipping Fees to \$180,000.00 as requested by Mark Bucklin, seconded by Scott Sanschagrín. The vote was **8 in favor – 1 abstained** the motion passed.

Betsy Schneider motioned to increase Section 07-4331-731 DB Read Meter Project from \$24,255.00 to \$30,000.00, seconded by Ashley Dolloff. The vote was **9 in favor – 0 opposed** the motion passed.

Nik Coates stated that the committee needed to vote on bottom lines for debt service section 4711 and 4723.

Ashley Dolloff motioned that the bottom line for section 01-4712 Interest L/T Debt at \$44,918.00, seconded by Joseph Caristi. The vote was **9 in favor – 0 opposed** the motion passed.

Ashley Dolloff motioned that the bottom line for section 01-4723 Tax at \$1001.00, seconded by Bob Emerson. The vote was **9 in favor – 0 opposed** the motion passed.

Ashley Dolloff motioned that the bottom line for section 01-4711 Principal L/T Debt at \$231,610.00, seconded by Betsy Schneider. The vote was **9 in favor – 0 opposed** the motion passed.

Rob Glassett asked Wayne Anderson to take over as chair so he could make a motion. Rob Glassett motioned to move \$39,948.00 back into the Police Department total budget, seconded by Bob Emerson. Wayne Anderson said he had done the research comparisons on other town's police departments the size of Bristol and he is opposed to the motion. Lieutenant Kris Bean stated that you can compare these towns population to Bristol, however, population is not the only thing to look at. The demand on Bristol Police Department is a lot higher. Our in house arrests last year were 265 and felony indictments are one of the largest in the county. Scott Sanschagrín stated that there was an incident at the schools that the PD had to respond. Lieutenant Bean stated that Alexandria and Danbury assisted. Lieutenant Bean stated that we definitely need a crossing guard but maybe it could be put into the schools budge. Maybe we could look into that for next year. He feels that cutting almost \$40,000.00 from the police

department is going to be significant. Rob Glassett stated that he agreed with saving money but he does not want to gamble with the town's safety to save a minor amount. Betsy Schneider said that she finds it hard to believe that we can't cut \$40,000.00 from this budget. Dave Carr stated we are missing the point, this budget is too high and normally the committee looks at the large departments first. Rob Glassett motioned to increase the bottom line of the police department from our amended amount of \$1,000,000.00 to \$1,039,948.00, seconded by Joe Cristi. The vote was **6 in favor – 3 opposed** the motion passed.

Rob Glassett motioned to Increase line 01-4155-192 Merit Raises from \$24,570.00 to \$36,859.00, seconded by Bob Emerson. Rob Glassett stated that he felt we are sending the wrong message to our employees. I have been getting negative feedback on this from multiple people. Bristol needs to retain good help they are our best resource. The vote was **6 in favor – 3 opposed** the motion passed.

Rob Glassett motioned to set the bottom line of section 01-4155 at \$536,965.00, seconded by Bob Emerson. The vote was **6 in favor – 3 opposed** the motion passed.

**Member Comments:**

Scott Sanschagrín said he wanted to thank Wayne Anderson for taking his thoughts under advisement.

**Select Board comments:**

Audience member Dave Hill stated that he feels disappointed that there was no opposition from the committee on article 12. This is way overpriced police department should have priority and the town offices should remain here.

**Staff Comments:**

Dave Hill spoke about the 6 wheeler if it breaks down we have level funding we can cut it now and pay later. Rob Glassett said we do not need a debate. Wayne Anderson said this can be done next week or at town meeting. Nik Coates said a public information session about the Town Office/Police Department project is at the library on Thursday at 7:00 P.M.

**Adjournment:**

Scott Sanschagrín motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ashley Dolloff the motion passed with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathleen Vogan, Secretary