

Budget Committee
May 20, 2019
Meeting Minutes

Present:

Joe Caristi, Les Dion, Walter Waring, Janet Cavanagh, Thomas Kaempfer, and David Carr.

Absent:

Joseph Dillier

Others Present: Town Administrator: Nik Coates, Fire Chief: Ben LaRoche, Police Chief: James McIntire, Assessing, Land Use, and Health Officer: Christina Goodwin, Town Clerk: Raymah Simpson, Library Director: Brittany Overton, Water/Sewer Superintendent: Jeff Chartier.

Call to Order:

Mr. Caristi called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Mr. Caristi told the board that Joseph Dillier will no longer be on the committee. Mr. Coates said that Scott Sanschagrín had run but lost by a few votes and there were some write in's. He will post the open position on the website and give any information he receives to Mr. Caristi for the next meeting. The committee members would like to see Scott back on the board saying he was a good member.

Review and Approval of Minutes:

The minutes were not complete they will be voted on at the next meeting.

New Business:

***Meet with Department heads**

Explanation of Budget lines:

Mr. Coates said the committee will have the materials and have an open discussion on the line items with department heads. Ms. Dion said we need to know where the department heads are at. Mr. Caristi said we need to try and keep the budget steady and the department heads will need specific information from us. Mr. Waring stated he wants to hear what the department heads need and that he is happy with the way they are doing things. However we do need to think about the voters saying to hold the line. Fire Chief Ben LaRoche said we can increase or decrease budget lines but we need to hear numbers from the Select Board and this committee which will definitely help the department heads. Mr. Caristi said there will be a template however things do come up unexpectedly. Mr. Carr asked the fire chief about the students he has. Fire Chief Ben LaRoche explained that he has 3 student interns they do a 2 year course at school and live at the station 24 – 7 working for us. They are paid as call firefighters we give them a stipend of \$2,500.00 a school year. They also sign an agreement that they will not work anywhere else. After 6 months they will have their fire 1 license and after 1 year they will have EMS license. They also fill shifts at a part time rate instead of OT rate. We do have a non-transport fee of \$60.00 we do try to keep it reasonable.

Goal Setting:

Mr. Caristi said he has come to a consensus that the committee needs to give guidance to the department heads. Ms. Dion said the percentage could be anywhere from 0 to 3%. Mr. Carr said he would like to hold

the line if possible. Ms. Cavanagh said she would like to see it lower but it is definitely a catch up year. Mr. Kaempfer said he would like to stave off some of the issues and go with 2%. Ms. Dion said that health insurance is a big expense and it would be nice to see a level budget if at all possible. Mr. Caristi asked for a non-binding vote for the budget. Ms. Dion made a motion for a 2% increase, seconded by Mr. Kaempfer. The motion failed. Mr. Carr made a motion to keep the budget level, seconded by Mr. Waring. The motion failed. Mr. Coates said the committee wants to see restraint and keep in mind there may be extenuating circumstances. Ms. Dion motioned to have a non-binding vote of 1.5%, seconded by Mr. Caristi. The vote was **4 in favor – 2 Opposed – 0 Abstained**. The motion passed as an unofficial vote.

Priority identification:

Mr. Coates asked what priorities the board had for this year. Ms. Cavanagh said we usually go year to year she would like to see a 5 year outlook to plan for things that will be needed down the road such as a fire truck or cruiser. Mr. Coates suggested the committee look at the CIP minutes to see what Mr. Millibrand had to say and said we could bring him in to speak to the committee. He went on to say that CIP produces and the Select Board puts it on the warrant. Ms. Dion said she is not comfortable prioritizing a project right now. Mr. Caristi said the town has a lot in play right now that is unfinished such as the new town offices, the fiber project and the transfer center. Mr. Coates said that there are 2 meetings scheduled on holidays that need to be changed to other dates. One is Columbus Day the other is Veterans Day. The committee decided to change October 14th to October 21st and November 11th to November 25th.

Correspondence:

Mr. Caristi said he received a letter from Mr. Paul Simmard he read the letter to the committee. He seems to have questions such as how much has been expended to date on the town offices? Mr. Coates said he will get that information for the committee. Mr. Coates went on to say that costs have increased and we have a limited budget and we are being responsible to the voters so some items have been cut out.

Old Business:

There was no old business.

Member Comments:

There were no member comments.

Select Board Comments:

There were no select board comments.

Staff Comments:

Mr. Coates said the next meeting will be June 10th and you will also be able to visit the Library and the Tappan Center to see how they operate and work with the public. Mr. Kaempfer said he is a trustee at the library and asked if he should abstain from voting. Mr. Caristi said he could attend but abstain from the vote. Mr. Coates agreed.

Adjournment:

Ms. Cavanagh motioned to adjourn at 7:00 PM, seconded by Mr. Kaempfer, the motion passed with all in favor.

The next meeting of the Budget Committee will be June 10, 2019 at 6:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Vogan