

Budget Committee  
September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Meeting Minutes

**Present:**

Chair Charles Therriault, Walter Waring, Paul Regan, Sue Sodano, and Select Board Representative Shaun Lagueux.

**Absent:**

Vice Chair Joe Caristi and Janet Cavanagh.

**Call to Order:**

Mr. Therriault called the meeting to order at 6:06pm.

**Non-Profits Presentation and Budget Proposals**

01-4652-578 Bridge House Shelter - \$2,000

Cathy Brentwood, Executive Director, discussed what the shelter offers; a room costs \$100 a day and during a person's stay, the shelter works on providing resources for obtaining and maintaining permanent living situations. Bridge House assisted 31 individuals within the past year. Bridge House has a 25-year agreement from 2005 to 2025 and would like to transition into an outreach and recovery shelter. Mr. Lagueux asked where the money would come from. Mrs. Brentwood stated that it was from the GDFA. Mrs. Sodano asked how long is the follow up process. Mrs. Brentwood stated that it depends on the situation and if the individual(s) want follow-up communication.

01-4652-577 Communities for Alcohol and Drug-Free Youth (CADY) - \$2,000 – Nicole Shedd, Restorative Justice Director, stated that CADY's focus is early prevention and intervention from substance abuse. Out of the 248 local youth that CADY worked with, 17 were from Bristol. Referrals to the program come from Bristol Police, Newfound Memorial Middle School, and Newfound High School. Many youth in the program have mental health diagnoses and or have IEP's/Special Education. Mrs. Sodano asked if there was an increase since COVID. Mrs. Shedd answered yes, even now that school has resumed many youth have struggled in the time out of school since the pandemic hit.

01-4652-575 Lakes Region Mental Health (LRMH) - \$3,000

Ann Nichols, Director, expressed her gratitude to the Town of Bristol for their continuous support. She stated that LRMH is based in Laconia and Plymouth, consisting of Concord and Speare Memorial Hospital. Services include ER and a 24-hour hotline for the purpose of stabilizing those in immediate crisis in person, remotely, or with a mobile response team. 4,000 individuals required services through LRMH. 117 were residents of Bristol, 33 needing emergency room services. Many were due to COVID related stressors as a 20% increase seen since the pandemic. Mrs. Nichols discussed that they run on a large deficit, 1.1 million in emergency services and only receiving \$826,000 in payments. Mrs. Sodano asked what members made up the mobile unit. Mrs. Nichols stated the unit consists of at least two master level clinicians and a peer support person who has firsthand and similar experiences to best relate and de escalate the situation.

01-4415-350 Newfound Area Nursing Association (NANA)- \$33,400

Tanaya from Lakes Region VNA/NANA discussed the slow process of the merge but now is able to expand the 24-hour service along with increasing house visits. They are currently maintaining COVID and Flu vaccine clinics including at schools. The foot clinic is on hold due to COVID. Mr. Therriault asked if NANA was still a part of the town even with the merge and Tanaya stated yes.

01-4652- 832 NH Municipal Association - \$3,226

Margaret Byrnes, Executive Director, stated NHMA, as membership organization provides education, training, and legislative advocacy for 240 municipalities. The dues are formula based on population and equalized assessed values. The dues are calculated by the current data of population. Mr. Therriault stated that the website has an abundance of municipal information and resources to help with decision making or comparisons to other towns.

01-4197-837 Newfound Lake Region Association (NLRA)- \$2,500 –

Rebecca Hanson discussed the background of NLRA and the main purpose is to conserve Newfound Lake. NLRA runs the lake host program along with testing for water quality and performing shoreline protection projects. Some of NLRA's projects were focused on the old and new town offices along with storm water management at Cummings Beach. Mrs. Hanson is currently working with Mr. Coates to get a budget finalized for the project. There is currently staffing at the Wellington Boat Launch to identify invasive species which reduce property value by 40%. If caught quick enough, can be rectified. Mrs. Hanson is also looking to expand community programs next year in Bristol.

01-4197-836 Pasquaney Garden Club - \$2,500

Jane White, President, and Shirley York, liaison to the Town presented the budget request. Mrs. White stated an increase of \$500 for the Butterfly Garden, originally funded by the library. Mrs. Overton and the Trustees believe it should be budgeted for under the PGC rather than the library. Other fundings include mulch, woodchips, and weeding. The club continues encouraging businesses to endorse their town efforts and rely on volunteers, calculated at 1,000 hours. PGC is unable to work closely with the school currently due to COVID, however can use Bridgewater Hebron Village School's green house for growing plants in the winter. Mr. Therriault asked if hiring new volunteers was difficult due to COVID. Mrs. White stated yes that many of the current volunteers are taking up the initiative and extra work. Mr. Regan asked if they cover any other towns then just Bristol. Mrs. White stated they plant along the lines of Bristol/Hill, Bristol/Alexandria, and Bristol/New Hampton.

01-4652-576 Pemi River Local Advisory Committee (PRLAC) - \$300

Max Stamp stated that PRLAC Guidance and direction of work comes from the NH Department of Environmental Services along with accounting services from the Lakes Region Planning Commission. The Volunteer River Advisory organization is responsible for any instruments, training, supplies, and chemical standards. Mr. Stamp stated that PRLAC receives a copy of a permit from DES, and then a member of the committee contacts the owner to make an on-site appointment to evaluate and determine any concerns or to take water samples. Testing takes place from early April into sometime in September, six-day times a year. They work off bridges or wade in centers of the river to get samples. They have been testing rivers for over 20 years. Mr. Therriault asked if they worked with those who want to build along rivers. Mr. Stamp stated yes, within a quarter mile and have worked with 13 individuals this year. Discussion followed regarding breakdown of financials and total budget. Mr. Regan asked if PRLAC had representation from each town. Mr. Stamp replied yes that all 8 towns have representatives. Mr. Lagueux asked regarding sign off time frames and authoritative responsibility on sign offs. Mr. Stamp stated that DES alerts them and has a 30 day turn around, along with authority from the RSA-483.

01-4520-890 Tapply-Thompson Community Center (TTCC) - \$103,803

Les Dion stated that the Revenues number is different due to COVID shut down last year. Summer camp functioned on a limited capacity and prices increased. The TTCC did receive two rounds of PPE and childcare funding to help. There will be an increase next year to after school programs and summer camp costs as bus costs and staff wages have increased. Mr. Lagueux asked if they received any other grants or expecting any. Ms. Dion stated that a grant of \$67,220 will be coming in, \$40,000 to be spent next year and \$20,000 to go towards 2023. There is also an Admin increase due to adding a Bookkeeping/HR staff member. Operations line also saw an increase for purchase of new windows upstairs and two-way radios needed. Mr. Alpers, a TTCC Board Member, also stated that costs have been stagnant over the years but to retain employees, the wages must stay competitive. Mr. Lagueux praised the TTCC's programs, also stating that if the Town were to ever create their own recreational programs would spend way more in funding, then the TTCC.

#### 01-4652-569 Transport Central - \$2,000

Bill Bolton, newly appointed Executive Director, stated that the organization, in business since 2013 has just broke in a million miles. Mr. Bolton is attempting to create incentives to attractive new drivers along with promoting the organization and it's cause to give rides to those 60 years or older, disabled, or have veteran status. He is also working on a capacity of ridership. Many of the current drives reside in Plymouth, Thornton, and Campton. Mr. Bolton stated that some funds are received from DOT which help cover costs up to eight months. Mrs. Sodano asked if the drivers are reimbursed, and the criteria needed to be met to become a driver. Mr. Bolton stated they receive fifty-six cents per mile compensation. Drivers must pass a drug test, background check, and pass a defensive driving test. Mr. Therriault asked if TC takes satisfactory surveys to rate the ride and drivers. Mr. Bolton stated yes that many riders also request the same driver which says a lot for the service and servicer. Mr. Regan questioned the large increase in requested funding. Mr. Bolton responded that they need more revenue to grow the program and deliver more services. This higher request is based on a new funding model based on town population. It was shared that the current lower funding level is based on a service model where the town gets billed \$2.00 per ride per resident from Bristol. Mr. Bolton also stated that many riders have medical needs or need dialysis treatments, so free of charge rides help those in need of transportation and no limits are set for destinations.

#### 01-4652-573 Voices Against Violence - \$3,330

Meg Kennedy Dugan, Executive Director, stated that VAV helps those in domestic or sexual violence situations. They assist 700-800 individuals a year, with Bristol being the second highest out of the 21 towns serviced. VAV works with law enforcement, mental health agencies, advocates, Speare Memorial Hospital, DCYF, along with court assistance with restraining orders and other legalities. Their motto is that of the empowerment model; not 'telling' what to do but offering out all options. Confidentiality is key, no zoom or emails, however with Resource Connect, VAV was able to connect video and text messages with encryptions. Last summer into fall numbers doubled, though due to COVID had dropped as many were in home with out a way to connect to get help. Many situations end up in fatalities and those numbers are high. Mr. Lagueux asked what Bristol's numbers were or focus. Mrs. Dugan stated that those coming from the town were fleeing, coming into the shelters, but finding housing was difficult due to shortages. Mr. Regan asked if VAV focused on Bristol or other areas. Mrs. Dugan stated that their main office is in Plymouth but cover Eastern Grafton County.

#### **Absent Agencies:**

01-4652-579 CASA NH Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) - \$500 – Absent

01-4652-580 Day Away – \$0 Absent

01-4652-571 Grafton County Senior Citizen Council (GCSCC) - \$8,5000 -Absent

01- 4652-570 Tri-County CAP - Energy Program & Homeless Program - \$6,200 - Absent

**Discussion: Outside Agencies, Health Agencies and Regional Associations**

Mr. Lagueux stated that Voices Against Violence were very crucial to the Town, along with many of the other outside agencies. Mrs. Sodano agreed, stating that there have been many recent deaths to domestic and sexual violence and looks like it will continue to increase. Mr. Therriault stated that Tri-County Cap, though absent, was also important as they offer many services to the area. TTC used to be two lines and is now combined to one. Mr. Regan and Mr. Lagueux discussed Transport Central, agreeing that they understand the increase however do not agree with the reasoning behind it. Mr. Lagueux stated that as a Select Board Rep, he understands the importance for outside agencies but personally does not like to use tax dollars for political reasoning. He wants to make sure tax dollars are being used for full, resourceful purposes. Mr. Waring stated that Transport Central is very helpful to a few town residents that he knows, one who needs dialysis treatments in Concord. He also stated that Pasquaney Garden Club also does a marvelous job.

**Discussion: Goals, Priorities, Metrics/Measures**

Mr. Regan asked Mr. Lagueux if the Select Board had any goals or standards for the Budget Committee. Mr. Lagueux stated that the main discussions have been the tax rate, revenues, and expenditures. The Board is highly recommending a 4% COLA increase for employee wages and pay bumps. Currently the town is locked into the health insurance coverage so that will be a discussion when appropriate. Mr. Lagueux reminded the committee that the responsibility is to approve or discussion the bottom line of each department and create a budget that is reasonable. Mr. Regan asked about the retirement pay shifts. Mr. Lagueux stated that there is no anticipated shifts currently. He also stated that the town overall has accomplished tremendous things in difficult times and will continue to do so.

**Old Business:**

None

**Correspondence:**

None

**Member Comments:**

Mr. Waring asked about details regarding the Safety Building. Mr. Lagueux stated that the Board is considering adding this project to the Warrant Articles. If so, then more meetings and details would be made available to the public.

**Select Board Comments:**

None

**Staff Comments:**

Mr. Therriault stated that the Department Heads' budget will be released on October 7<sup>th</sup> with Select Board's budget on the 26<sup>th</sup>, the day of the next budget meeting at 6pm.

**Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn meeting at 8:31pm by Mr. Regan, seconded by Mr. Waring. Motion passed 5-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Shannon Wharton