

Budget Committee Minutes  
11/18/2004

Members Present: Dick Hickok, Sue Greene, Connie Grant, Bob Brent, John O'Brien, Phyllis Corrigan, Bill Phillips, Diana Goodhue, Derek Tomlinson, Sean Murphy, Dennis Doten

Members Absent: Don Sibson (excused)

After the pledge of allegiance, the Chairman suggested that the Committee and particularly himself, should be careful about their casual comments during these public meetings.

The minutes of the last meeting were approved. JO/SM/11-0

At this point Chief Juris addressed the Committee. He felt that some of the comments reported from the last meeting had to be addressed and clarified as they have had an unwarranted negative effect on his staff. He provided factual information on several topics that had been discussed or questioned during the last few meetings. He offered to answer any additional questions that the Committee may have. Bill Phillips clarified some of the comments he had made and his intentions. Several members complimented Evans and the Police Department. Derek Tomlinson noted that the taxpayers look to the Budget Committee to help control taxes and that it is increasingly difficult when payroll & benefits are continually escalating. He suggested that the Selectmen and Town Administrator work to control the situation. Phil Arel agreed with some of the new members of the BC that questions are useful and welcome but disparaging comments are affecting employee morale.

Phyllis Corrigan mentioned that she was misquoted in the newspaper and asked the reporters to be more careful.

Derek asked if the BC could request of the Selectmen that particular budget requests appear as warrant articles rather than be included in the total budget. Phil and Debbie will research this possibility.

The Capital section of the budget was recommended as requested. (SM/PC/11-0) There was some discussion of the K-9 program and an explanation of the CIP.

The Health Agencies section of the budget was recommended as requested.  
(PC/SM/10-1)

Laconia Water was recommended as requested. (DT/PC/11-0)

The Laconia Airport Authority funding was not recommended. (DT/BB/2-9) There was mention of making this a warrant article so the taxpayers could vote. There was a question of whether the airport is a business or a governmental agency.

The Library budget was recommended as requested. (SM/BB/11-0)

Funding for the Thompson Ames Historical Society was recommended as requested. (DT/SM/7-4) The BC was determined that this would be the last year of funding for this purpose.

Lakes Region Planning Commission was recommended as requested. (PC/DT/11-0) The motion was amended to include \$1000 for the Lakes Region Association but the amendment failed. (DD/BB/0-10-1)

After considerable discussion, funding for the Red Cross was not recommended. (DT/SM/5-6) Chief Juris made several positive comments about the contributions of this organization and pointed out the difference between the fundraising efforts of the national organization and this request from the local chapter. It was noted that this line item may be revisited prior to the public hearing or at the deliberative session.

Funding for the Youth Services Bureau was recommended as requested. (PC/SM/11-0)

Funding for the Humane Society was recommended as requested. (PC/DT/11-0)

The BC considered and recommended the GAVWD budget request for \$260,181. (SM/JO/11-0)

The school district working groups were reviewed and the leaders encouraged to contact their departments to schedule meetings.

Phyllis mentioned that she has heard rumors of the possibility of a "taxpayers revolt".

The BC requested the Town and School default budgets as soon as possible.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25. The next meeting is 12/02 at 6:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Shackett, Finance Director