

Budget Committee Minutes 04/08/09

Contributed by Lisa Fellows-Weaver
Friday, 11 September 2009

Budget Committee

Minutes

April 8, 2009

July 29, 2009

Chairman Daniel McNally calls the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman Daniel McNally, Selectmen Representative Alden Dill, School Board Representative Colleen Pingree, Ken Rick, Nona Holmes, Kate McNally, Lucy Edwards, Babette Morrill, Jim Vaillancourt, and Board Secretary Lisa Fellows-Weaver. Kevin Ash arrives at 7:05 p.m.

ABSENT: Herb Johnson; excused. Water District Representative John Jacobsmeyer, and Robert Bailey.

Public Comment:

Selectman Bob Holden thanks the members for the opportunity to serve on the budget committee. He adds that he appreciated the fact that all members always treated everyone with respect. Mr. Holden states that there are a few open seats on the committee and he asks that the committee consider the people that were on the ballot for the vacant positions as they took the time to campaign. Mr. Holden thanks Lucy Edwards for her nomination of him as vice chair to the budget committee. He explains that he enjoyed working with Chairman McNally and adds that Mr. McNally has done a fine job

Kevin Ash arrives at 7:05 p.m.

Election of Officers

Chairman:

Mr. Dill nominates Dan McNally as the 09-10 chairman. Second by Mr. Rick. With no additional nominations, the nominations for chair are closed. VOTE: 9/1. Mr. McNally is opposed.

Vice-Chairman:

Mr. Rick nominates Kate McNally for vice chair. Second by Mr. Dill. Ms. McNally appreciates the nomination; however, declines the nomination. Ms. McNally nominates Kevin Ash for vice chair. Second by Ms. Pingree. With no additional nominations, motion passes unanimously; 10/0.

Vacancies

Mr. McNally states that there are two open positions at this time. He explains that there is no real protocol of the committee as the members on the committee at that time may have a difference of opinions so it is always an item of discussion at the first quarterly meeting. He states that the committee has several options of how to address the vacancies. He states that the committee can advertise the vacancies or can contact the people that were on the ballot. Mr. Dill suggests advertising the vacancies, which is what other boards in town have done. Mr. Rick supports Mr. Holden's suggestion to contact the people who ran and consider them first. Mr. Vaillancourt agrees as does Mr. Ash. Mr. Dill adds that the candidates who ran can always submit their name again.

Mr. McNally calls for a vote to contact the people who ran:

7 in favor to contact the people on the ballot; 3 are in favor of advertising the vacant positions. Positions will be advertised if the candidates are not interested.

Minutes

Ms. McNally suggests that only substantive changes of the minutes be addressed and the committee members can each provide grammatical corrections to the secretary.

Colleen Pingree makes a motion, second by Alden Dill, to approve the following minutes, 1/5/09; 1/15/09; 1/12/09; 1/20/09; 1/24/09; and 2/7/09.

January 5, 2009

Ms. Weaver explains that this set of minutes was approved and then the vote was rescinded due to a request to review the tape regarding a motion and a vote. She states that a revision has been completed and provided for review. No additional discussion is held and there are no additional amendments provided.

January 12, 2009

Page 9: Change: …to be reviewed and adopted to …review and adopt.

January 15, 2009

No amendments are made.

January 20, 2009

Page 1: Add: …for the six contractual employees.

Page 2: Change: …selectmen… to …school board…

Page 2: Add: Mr. McNally further explains that the committee should be voting on the way it was presented to the public.

Page 7: Add: …previously under… GGB line

Page 12: Add: …previously covered under the GGB line.

Page 13: Add: …patrols…

Page: 13: Remove: …equipment…

Page 15: Add: …ambulance…

January 24, 2009

Page: 10: Change: …\$77,944… to …\$37,944…

February 7, 2009

No amendments are made.

Mr. McNally calls for a vote on the minutes to be approved as amended. Motion passes unanimously.

Town

Alden Dill explains that the selectmen have made the budgetary adjustments; however, the actual numbers have not been finalized due to the fact that there has not been a selectmen’s meeting for three weeks.

Mr. Dill explains that he appreciates the time the committee worked on the budget. He states that the major changes in the budget would be to the step increases for employees. Mr. Dill explains that the selectmen gave employees a 2% raise that will begin April 1. He explains that usually raises are retroactive to January; however, this year there will be no retro pay given. He notes that some other changes were made to legal lines, and trimming various lines throughout the budget.

Ms. Pingree states that the school board has a policy regarding supporting decisions made in public and asks if the selectmen have a policy supporting votes in public. She explains that there was much frustration regarding the process of cutting the budget at town meeting. Mr. Dill states that had the original amendment passed at town meeting, there would have been serious issues as it would have been very difficult to come up with that big of a budget cut.

Mr. Rick asks about the FEMA funds. Mr. Dill explains that the town administrator and Steve Bailey are working with FEMA. Mr. Dill states that two events have been paid out and three others are still being worked on. He explains that FEMA representatives and the road agent reviewed areas of town to assess the damages from the ice storm. The trees will be chipped and removed. He adds that after the spring thaw the emergency access will be completed for Bennett’s Bridge causeway.

Discussion ensues regarding the process of town meeting and supporting decisions. Ms. McNally expresses concern regarding the standard practices and decision making. Mr. Vaillancourt expresses frustration with the amount of work required by the budget committee and then to see the budget reduced by the first person stepping up to the microphone. Mr. Dill replies that he feels that the rules were followed. Mr. Ash states that a similar dynamic occurred at the school district meeting with a dramatic cut introduced; however, it was handled with a much more united front.

School

Colleen Pingree, school board representative, is present to provide an overview of the school’s budget. Ms. McNally asks why the dates are inconsistent on the summary page. Colleen Pingree replies that this has been an ongoing process of the finance administrator as she feels that some figures are not accurate and adds that these figures are an estimate at this point.

Ms. Pingree reviews key points of the school’s budget and explains that with Title 1, there will be a reimbursement from the SAU. With regular education for CBNA, Ms. Pingree explains that the school budgeted for 288 students and there is 256 total students so there appears to be an error with the encumbrance line. She adds that the finance

administrator is reviewing this and feels that there should be at least \$150,000 in this line.

Ms. Pingree states that there was a billing error as they were double billed for the reading curriculum and are waiting for these funds to be refunded.

Ms. Pingree explains that with the special education department the key issue is generally the CBNA spec. ed. tuition line includes aides for students and in the figure provided these aides are not included and at this time they are not sure as to where the salaries for the aides are located in the budget. Ms. Pingree states that the finance administrator is continuing to investigate these items. She states that the work sheet shows the budget appears to be over by \$202,000., which is not correct.

Ms. Pingree states that as far as food service, the school board is beginning to think about how to address this department. She explains that they are looking at possibly having outside vendors address the food service department. She explains that currently the budget is subsidizing food service.

Ms. McNally asks about the dates noted on the worksheet as shown to be a summary as of January 31, 2009; however, the calculated surplus/deficit was determined February 28, 2009, and yet the document has initials and a date of March 25, 2009. Ms. Pingree explains that this document has been provided before and the finance administrator continues to update it.

Ms. McNally notes that the mathematics warrant article #6 still appears on the budget. Ms. Pingree explains that they are working on trying to get this out of the budget again and explains that once warrant articles are approved they become a part of the budget and cannot be removed. She adds that they are working on options from the software company to maybe have another section allocated. Ms. McNally states that this makes the statements not accurate. Ms. Pingree agrees and notes that it is a function of the software. Ms. McNally suggests an explanation be provided noting that items cannot be taken out.

Additional discussion is held regarding the titles of the columns. Ms. Pingree states that the school board has had discussions regarding other formats and setting up options for next year so as to avoid confusion.

Ms. McNally asks about the SAU deficit. She states that the amount for Northwood is shown as a deficit of \$54,000. Ms. Pingree states that this is for legal fees and salaries. Ms. McNally requests a more specific breakdown and asks how this will be addressed as the SAU cannot run on a deficit. Ms. McNally states that Northwood's portion of this bill has not been paid and asks if this amount will come out of the budget. She asks if the budget has been frozen and Ms. Pingree replies no. Ms. McNally asks that all requested information be mailed out.

The budget committee's next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 29, 2009 at 6:00 p.m.

Ken Rick makes a motion, second by Alden Dill, to adjourn at 8:40 p.m. Motion passes unanimously; 10/0.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Fellows-Weaver
Board Secretary