

Budget Committee 1/13/22

Brenden Hubbard, Nate Holmy, Jason Spaulding, James Rokes JR, Ben Kilanski

Ben opens for Public Hearing at 6:04, JR seconds motion passes 5-0.

Biosolids Improvements & Upgrades #2 no questions.

Broadband expansion #3 no questions.

Towns operating budget #4 Kevan Bazan questions cuts to the police department. Brenden says the officer line removed was for an unused position and it was unlikely that position would be filled in the following year. Brenden also comments the committees belief was that capital purchases like the cruiser which was in the budget should be a warrant article for the entire town to vote on. Jason comments the committee did recommend \$13,000 for the cruiser capital reserve. Karey mentions there is currently \$26,888.86 currently in the capital reserve and by adding \$13,000 more it should be enough to buy a new cruiser. Kevan questions why the committee didnt fund the counselor that was voted on last year. Brenden replies it wasn't in our budget. Discussion ensues relating to that position being inserted by petition and that it would need to be voted on yearly to be sustained.

Water budget #5 no questions.

Sewer Budget #6 no questions.

Assessing Capital Reserve #7 no questions.

Town owned buildings Capital Reserve #8 no questions.

Kevan questions why the committee didn't recommend placing money in the Bridge Reconstruction Capital reserve #9. Brenden comments it was the boards opinion this was already sufficiently funded. Ben comments he wasn't aware of any projects scheduled that would use this capital reserve.

Highway equipment capital reserve #10 no questions.

Ambulance capital reserve #11 no questions.

Fire Equipment Capital reserve #12 no questions.

Police Cruiser capital reserve #13 no questions.

Town owned computer capital reserve #14 no questions.

Culvert repair/replace capital reserve #15. Brenden comments we need to rebuild a culvert on back ashuelot rd, Ben replies there should be enough in capital reserve if this passes to match grant funding.

Ashuelot Rail Trail Capital Reserve #16 no questions.

Town Beach Ramp Capital Reserve #17. Kevan asks if this is legally required. JR comments no. Adam Parker comments there are other handicapped accessible places to go. Sheena Bushee comments

on how many handicapped people are in town and believes we need to do this project.

Nate mentions on the Electronic Balloting Device Capital Reserve #18 can be used for purchase and or repairs.

Nate asks if there was any further clarification on the ownership status and neighbors concern on the Forest lake Dam Improvement Capital reserve #19. Karey comments no.

Lease purchase for a new ambulance petition article #23 is discussed.

ELMM warrant article #24 no questions.

Natalie Quevedo questions why two members of the budget committee didnt recommend funding for ACCESS #25. Jason comments about past state issues and his belief in spreading money around to different places. JR comments on ELMM ability to fundraise and believes ACCESS could improve. Natalie points out ACCESS and ELMM are seperate. Linseigh Picard wishes questions were asked by the committee and points out ACCESS provides child care services that ELMM doesn't provide. Haley Valentine comments she works far from home and ACCESS provides after scholl care and support while she is away. Mike Valentine comments children have no voice and says he believes Winchesters child programs are better now than they used to be and wants them to remain that way.

Historical Society #26 warrant no questions.

Kevan questions who on the committee didn't recommend the Pickle Festival warrant #27. Jason comments his belief is that the taxpayers shouldn't fund this and should be self supported by the festival. Kevan coments on what the \$800 provided by the town is used for.

Kevan questions the numerous lines in the school budget, article #2 cut by the committee and states his belief in what the role of the budget committee should be. Brenden comments on the review of class size and reccomendation to cut a teacher. Kevan questions supplies lines that were cut. Jason comments on historical data from last full year of in person learning in 18-19 and using those numbers on some of the lines. Linseigh comments how currently only one member of the Budget Committe was elected. Nate comments on his data driven perspective. Nate comments on looking for money not being used and use of excell. Lindseigh asks the committee if they reviewed the states guidelines on the budget process Brenden, Jason, Ben comment yes. Lindseigh comments that this years budget process was less contentious than previous years but asks to bring some legitamacy back to the committee and not have an agenda. JR comments if there was an agenda more than 1% would have been cut from the budget. Haley Valentine comments on programs for kids with disabilities and questions the budget committee members if they have children. Natalie and Brenden talk about the role of the committee and whether the committee was looking to make cuts. Brenden and Ben call point of order to discuss the article. Kevan questions the school board stipends getting cut from the budget. Jason and Brenden point to belief in civic duty and money shouldn't be tied to these positions.

Ben and Lindseigh comment on the collective bargaining agreement article #3.

Kevan asks why the committee didnt't recommend article #5 Health Insurance for school support professionals. The board comments on these being part time employees. Kevan other towns/schools offer insurance to PARAS. Adam Parker comments on our tax rates and how we shouldn't compare ourselves to ther towns.

Brenden comments on a typo on being why he voted against article #6 moving money from the unreserved fund to the Special Education Trust Fund. Teresa Taylor explains how the mistake happened. Ben advises it may be cleaner to address questions for deliberative, and comments he recommends this transfer but does have questions about using the unreserved fund to fund a capital reserve. Nate points out this is a trust not capital reserve.

Article #7 Building Improvements Capital Reserve no questions.


Lindsey Hildreth comments on public service being thankless at times and thanks committee members for volunteering their time.

Linseigh Picard comments about information available on the school website and the hope of no bond payment in the future.

Ben motions to end the Public Hearing at 7:24, JR seconds motion passes 5-0.

February 5th 9:00AM is deliberative session at the school. Jason questions when to approve minutes? Ben advises to meet before the meeting and approve then.

Ben motions to adjourn, JR seconds motion carries 5-0 at 7:27.


2/5/22