

Budget Committee 11/9/21

Attendance: Budget Committee members Brendan Hubbard, Nate Holmy, Jason Spaulding, Ben Kilanski, James Rokes JR. Selectmen members James Rokes SR, Herb (Chaney) Stephens, Lindseigh Picard.

Health agency members also present were Susan Ashworth, Kathy Waters, Phoebe Bray, Keith Thibault, Phil Hueber, Penny Vaine, Marcia Sink, Mindy Cambiar, Robin Christopherson, Ellen Avery, Karey Miner.

Meeting started at 6:00 PM.

The October 19th meeting minutes were reviewed. Brendan makes a correction saying the vote should read 4-0-1 with one abstention not 5-0 in regard to approving the minutes for 9/28/21. Ben makes a motion to approve the minutes for 10/19/21, Nate seconds. Motion passes 5-0.

Ben makes a motion to approve Big Brothers/Big Sisters budget for \$400.00. JR seconds, motion passes 5-0.

Discussion ensues about whether the Selectmen should vote on these budgets first or Budget Committee. The Budget Committee will vote first this evening.

Susan Ashworth discusses the service report for Home Healthcare during fiscal year 2021. Ben asked if the \$979,828.00 cost was just from Winchester citizens? Susan answers yes and mentions 526 additional nursing visits were conducted during the fiscal year compared to the previous year. Jason makes a motion to approve the HHC budget for \$31,000, Ben seconds, motion carries 5-0.

Ben makes a motion to approve the Meals on Wheels budget for \$6,620.00. JR seconds, motion carries 5-0

Kathy Waters from Monadnock Family Services discusses their annual report. Jason asked if she had a list of other towns contributions? Kathy answered not currently. Ben makes a motion to approve this budget for \$5,283.00. Nate seconds, motion carries 5-0.

Phoebe Bray discusses The Community Kitchen budget and discusses the progress on the new building and solar panels. Nate asks about the concern of rising food costs? Phoebe advises at least in the short term funding looks to be strong and a lot of the food prices are already locked in. Nate makes a motion to approve this budget for \$16,000.00. Ben seconds, motion carries 5-0.

Keith Thibault discusses the Southwestern Community Services Budget. Jason asks if the state funding for the Fuel Assistance program looks to remain consistent in the coming years? Keith advises yes it looks to remain consistent. Keith points out over \$947,000.00 was brought into Winchester last year from the offered programs and the agency asks municipalities to cover 1% of the cost. Nate and Lindseigh question what is done with the leftover/unused money at the end of the year for the fuel assistance program? Keith responds it is given out to people that over the heating season didn't meet the financial requirements to qualify, or given to residents who were viewed as being a tough case and needed additional funds. Nate and Keith discuss the use of federal funds and the role utility companies play in addition to and in conjunction with this fuel assistance program including weatherization programs. Brendan asks how many Winchester residents applied and how many were approved for Fuel Assistance? Keith responds 298 applied and 283 received some level of funding. Lindseigh adds

she intends to use the live stream during Selectmens meetings to spread the word of Southwestern's programs. Ben makes a motion to approve this budget for \$9,472.00. JR seconds, motion carries 4-1.

Phil Hueber discusses the budget and services of the Child Advocacy Center. Phil indicates the reports of abuse increased during Covid. Ben motions to approve this budget for \$2,500.00. JR seconds, motion carries 5-0

Marcia Sink discusses how Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) came about and their services. Nate asks how do these services vary from other organizations. Marcia explains CASA only steps in after judge determines there is a case of abuse/mistreatment. Marcia points out they lack the amount of volunteers they would like to have. Ben asks if \$1,000.00 is enough to give? Nate makes a motion to increase the funding to \$2,500.00, Ben seconds. Discussion ensues and JR asks to amend the amount to \$1,750.00. Jason asks how many people would the additional funds train? Marcia advises at this time she doesn't know. The motion is reintroduced and carries 4-1 to fund \$2,500.00 to CASA.

Discussion ensues about the Red Cross budget including questions of where the town's funds go and what the regions are in the program. Nate makes a motion to table a vote at this time to investigate these questions. Jason seconds, motion carries 5-0.

Mindy Cambiar from Hundred Nights Shelter mentions Jason reached out about Winchester's numbers associated to the shelter. Jason mentions Winchester's budget numbers page was missing from the budget books. Lindseigh asked about how the shortage of permanent housing has affected the shelter and what options were being discussed to help solve this problem. Mindy discusses working with local municipalities to find permanent housing. Chaney asks if Roberta is still on the board, Mindy responds yes. Jason motions to approve this budget for \$3,500.00. Nate seconds, motion carries 5-0.

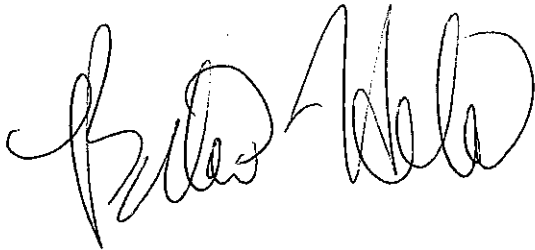
Ben asks if this organization (Monadnock Crisis and Prevention Center) partners with Coopers Crossroad? Robin says yes. Nate asks why a decrease in request for funds? Robin replies less administrative costs. Jason asks if you have a list of other towns contributions? Robin says the organization gets about \$5,000.00 from local municipalities including Winchester. Ben motions to approve this budget for \$1,475.00. Nate seconds, motion carries 4-1.

Ellen Avery discusses the Community Volunteer Transportation Companies(CVTC) services. Nate asks about what percentage of riders have a valid drivers license and what the volunteers rate per mile was? Ellen indicates they dont ask about licenses but notes volunteer drivers look for fraud while on their route. Ellen also notes the rate is .56/mile matching federal guidelines. Brendan asked about the amount of rides requested by Winchester residents historically. Ellen indicated she doesn't have those numbers at this time. Jason makes a motion to approve the CVTC budget for \$1,500.00. JR asks to lower the amount, Jason rescinds his motion for further discussion. James Rokes SR points out Winchester had 10 riders who requested 94 rides, questions validity of need. Lindseigh comments on Winchester residents need for this service. Ellen explains the average age of the riders is 73-74 years old. Nate motions to fund this budget for \$750.00. Ben discusses funding for \$1000.00. Nate amends his motion to \$1000.00. Ben seconds to fund the CVTC budget for \$1,000.00. Motion passes to fund the CVTC budget for \$1,000.00 5-0.

Karey mentions changing the budget committee/school board meeting from December 21st to December 16th instead. It was noted this meeting may not be needed if all work is completed the first two meetings scheduled for 12/7, 12/14.

Lindseigh asks the three members of the board who voted no to explain why on the respective budgets. Jason explains concern over salary and wages as to his no vote to fund MCVP center. Nate explains he voted against SWCS budget over concern of the amount of money left over at end of the year for the Fuel Assistance program. Nate also notes he feels SWCS is a middleman for Fuel Assistance citing utility companies also provide this service. JR explains he voted against the CASA budget because he felt the program would run out of volunteers before needing the additional funds passed.

JR motions to adjourn, Ben seconds. Motion carries 5-0 at 7:35 PM.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ben".

12/13/21