

Winchester, NH Budget Committee Meeting Minutes for Saturday November 21, 2020

Members Present: Chester Lapointe- Chair, Tiffany Melanson, Theresa Sepe, Ben Kilanski (Selectman Representative) Lindseigh Picard (School Board Representative)

Also: Karey Miner, Amy Bond

Members of the Public: Natalie Quevedo, Emily Holmes.

Chester called the meeting to order at 9:00AM at Winchester Town Hall.

Ben made a motion to accept the minutes from the meeting held on November 17th. Theresa seconded the motion. Lindseigh Picard noted a correction. Under MCVP, "Lindseigh asked Theresa if she would make a friendly amendment."

Motion passes with corrections 5-0.

Town Clerk Jim Tetreault addresses the committee about the budget for the Town Clerk Office.

Jim notes that he has created a new legal line and put \$500 in it. Ben commented that the Selectboard was happy with Jim's budget. Lindseigh questioned the lower amount for computer software. Jim explained that initial support for some programs were higher last year.

Ben made a motion to fund the Town Clerk line for \$108,836. Lindseigh seconded. Theresa wanted the committee to know that she works at the town elections and is paid for that work.

Motion passes 5-0.

Jim handed out revenue information from the town clerk office. The office brought in \$20,000 more than last year. Ben commended Jim's work in the office. Jim let the committee know that he appreciates that they meet on Saturday morning.

Margaret Shara addressed the committee for the Land Use office. Chester noted an increase in the training line. Margaret explained that anyone who holds the position of town building inspector needs certification. The town needs to fund that training. Theresa makes a motion to fund the Land Use line for \$81,256. Ben seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Margaret also addressed the committee for the Health office. Ben noted a minimal increase in supplies. Ben made a motion to fund the line for \$5975. Chester seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

Police Chief Mike Tollett was present to answer questions about the police department budget. Ben noted that there was a slight increase this year. Lindseigh asked Mike if there would be a warrant article to purchase a new police cruiser this year. He said yes. Mike answered questions to the increase in the repair line and how they maintain the fleet. Lindseigh asked how many cruisers are currently in the fleet.

Mike responded six. Lindseigh asked if all the officer positions were filled. Mike responded yes but he anticipates some may be leaving within the next year. Mike anticipates increases in training expenses. COVID has had an affect on the police academy. Lindseigh asks if \$11K is enough, Mike thinks yes. Mike explained how difficult it is to keep the department full. Lindseigh is concerned that we are using the officer vacancy to balance the budget. Mike notes that some other costs could be rising in the future. The state has mandates in emergency training and there is no explanation on how these mandates will be funded. Also, the police department contracts its services for cleaning. Normally, the cleaning service comes twice a month, but this has increased to every week since the pandemic began. There is an increase of \$1320. Ben made a motion to fund the police department budget for \$651,366. Lindseigh seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Ben introduced level funding for the Town Beach. The amount was \$33,851. Lindseigh asks about handicap access at the beach. Currently there is none. Karey said there is not enough money in the capital reserve to fund construction of handicap access as estimates came in over \$100,000. Expect a warrant article. Lindseigh asked if they were still doing swimming lessons at the beach. No, because of COVID. Lindseigh made a motion to fund the town beach department at \$33,851. Tiffany seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

No one was present to answer questions about the Landfill budget. It has a labor line of \$1. Ben made a motion to fund the Landfill budget for \$316,116. Lindseigh seconded. Theresa asked about the contract. Ben said that it is a three-year contract with MDS and it has a two year extension. We will be going into the third year. Each year the contract goes up 3%. Lindseigh asks what is included in the cost. Ben answered. Employees, dumpsters, recycling, cleaning and maintaining the grounds. This does not include the cost to get rid of glass. MDS will not take glass recycling anymore. The town owns the building on the landfill property. Motion passed 5-0.

Sherry Willard was present to answer questions about the Welfare Budget. She passed out information on where the expenditures go. Lindseigh asked if the community knows that the service is available? Sherry said yes. They get many referrals from organizations. Theresa asked about rent payments. Sherry replied that the landlord gets the money. If the landlord owes money for property taxes or water/sewer, that bill is paid first. Lindseigh asked for clarification. Sherry said that welfare will not pay the full rent amount but will cover a portion. Theresa asked how many families are using the service. Sherry said 13. Sherry anticipates an increase in people looking for help to pay for food and fuel. Theresa asked if there was any additional money coming from COVID funds. Sherry said no. The money is distributed to county agencies first. Sherry was asked about qualifications to use the welfare service. They simply subtract a family's income from their expenses and try to make up that difference. Lindseigh stated that she had a problem with paying the landlord's back taxes with taxpayer money. Amy explained that this is the way the town auditor suggested that they do it. Lindseigh said the town should not be raising and appropriating money to pay a landlord's overdue bills. Lindseigh asked Amy for the RSAs concerning payments from the Welfare Department. Ben made a motion to fund the Welfare Department for \$63,059. Lindseigh seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Sherry Willard stayed to answer questions about the Cemetery budget. Theresa made a motion to fund the Cemetery line for \$64,759. Ben seconded the motion. Theresa asked about security cameras on the cemetery property. Sherry said the cost is in the phone and internet line. The cemetery has a new internet provider. Theresa asked about seasonal help. Sherry mentioned that the employment line increased because one of the employees got a 4% raise. Motion passed 5-0.

Amanda Lunt and Alyssa Pastor were present to answer questions about the Thayer Library budget. Theresa noticed a difference in the utility line. Ben noted that the rental was a part of the electric line. Budgeted was \$1000. Actual was \$2442.59. Lindseigh clarified that the library was asking for a budget of \$34,900. Lindseigh asked if the library has other sources of income. Amanda said it has the rental, support from the public and investment income. Ben asked about the increase to the computer line. Amanda explained the need for new computers. Amy asked about the library insurance. Amy said the library workman's comp insurance can go through the town. The building and contents can be covered by the town. Amy wants it noted that the town insurance does not cover anything that involved the rental. Whomever rents should have their own insurance. Theresa asks about what is included in the librarian's job. Is the librarian working while the building is closed due to COVID? Amanda said yes. Lindseigh made a motion to fund the Thayer Library amount for \$33,900. Theresa seconded. Motion passed 4-1. Theresa voted no because she did not see the reasoning for an hour increase for the librarian.

The budget committee recessed for 10 minutes.

The Fire Chief, Barry Kellom was present to answer questions about the Fire Department budget. Lindseigh asked how many firefighters are on staff right now and on payroll. Barry answered about 20. Theresa made a motion to fund the Fire Department budget for \$161,490. Lindseigh seconded. Motion passed, 5-0.

Barry Kellom also stayed to answer questions about the Ambulance budget. Ben made a motion to fund the line for \$118,921. Tiffany seconded the motion. Lindseigh asked how many people are employed by the department. Barry answered between 15-16. Lindseigh asked if this includes part-time, nights and weekends? Barry said yes. Lindseigh asks about the Captain position. Ben says Barry has assumed the role of Captain. There are also two lieutenants. Motion passed 5-0.

Dennis Murphy was present to answer questions about the Conant Library budget. He noted that the library trustees had not seen the requested budget that the budget committee is considering. The current request is for \$86,857. Selectmen approved a budget of \$88,575. Lindseigh asked about the next time the trustees are meeting. Dennis said the second Tuesday in December. There was discussion on whether to hold the vote until the trustees see the updated budget. Ben made a motion to table the

budget for the Conant Library until later in the budget season. Lindseigh seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

Theresa made a motion to fund the Personal Administration line for \$513,003. Ben seconded the motion. Lindseigh asked about the decrease in the health insurance line. Amy mentioned that they are going with a lower-tier plan. Motion passed 5-0.

Dale Gray was present to answer questions about the Highway budget. Lindseigh asked about the loader. This is expected to be a warrant article question, what is the plan if it fails? Ben mentioned that the amount in the capital reserve can help. The plan is to add \$15,000 to that. Dale mentioned that the loader currently needs a \$10,000 brake job. The town grader also needs \$20,000 in repair. Lindseigh asks what the long-term plan is for replacing equipment. Dale mentioned that years ago there was a plan, but nothing has been in place for a while. Theresa asks about personnel. Is there going to be a raise? Dale said yes, 3%. Also, the Foreman position is budgeted this year for \$47,000. The request for next year is \$40,976. Amy noted that the amount is incorrect. It should be \$46,176. Theresa asks about the gravel, sand and liquid chloride line. Why the increase? Ben noted that the cost for liquid chloride is up. Ben made a motion to fund the Highway budget for \$582,508. Theresa seconded. Motion passed 5-0. Lindseigh had a request for Dale to show a capital plan at the Deliberative session. Please show the increase in costs to the loader and grader.

Rick Meleski was present to answer questions about the water and sewer budgets. Theresa asked about raises. She sees a 2% increase where there is a 3% increase for Highway workers. Amy explains that the raise is actually a possible 2% merit. All employees are budgeted for it but it is up to their review on whether or not they will actually get it. Ben made a motion to fund the Water line for \$309,900. Lindseigh seconded. Motion passes 5-0.

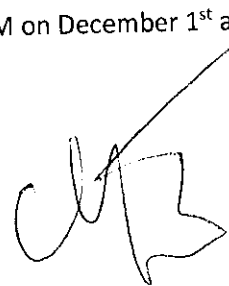
Ben made a motion to fund the Sewer line for \$375,544. Tiffany seconded. Motion passes 5-0. Lindseigh mentioned the good work that the Water and Sewer Department were doing on Richmond Road.

Ben made a motion to approve the Insurance budget for \$70,222. Theresa seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Chester reminded everyone that the next meeting was scheduled for 6PM on December 1st at Town Hall. They will be going over the School Budget for next year.

Ben made a motion to adjourn. Lindseigh seconded.

Meeting adjourned at 11:35AM.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ben Lindseigh', is located in the bottom right corner of the page. The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned over the text of the meeting adjournment.