

TOWN OF WILTON BUDGET COMMITTEE

Location: Wilton Town Hall: Selectmen Office
7:00 P.M.

FINAL MEETING MINUTES January 8, 2015

Members Present: Cary Hughes Chair, Don Davidson Vice Chairman, Betsy Castro, Harry Dailey, Joyce Fisk, Caitlin Maki, Donna Pucciarello, Joe Torre, Bill Condra, Selectmen Rep., and Dawn Tuomala, Secretary

Audience: Chief Gary Zirpolo, Ambulance, Chief Brent Hautanen, Police; Ms. Pam Atwood, Pat Fickett, Molly Shaklin, Stan Young, Ron Brown, Bart Hunter,

- 1. Chairman Hughes called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.**
- 2. Review and Approval of December 16, 2014 Minutes**

Corrections to be made are on Page 2 line 46 to clarify the actual statement by inserting "dumpster hauling line item 4207" then to delete the word budget and also on page 2 line 13 remove leaving the Town Hall unprotected.

Motion was made by Mr. Daily to accept the minutes of December 16, 2014 as amended; seconded by Ms. Fisk; 6 in favor; 1 abstained (Mr. Davidson); motion passes.

- 3. Changes to the Budget**

The budget figures for each department were reviewed. The Planning Board would like to purchase a laptop computer for \$500 to be able to take minutes and work on correspondence. They will take the amount out of another line item and apply it to a new equipment line; leaving the bottom line unchanged. Now that the final invoice for December has been paid the street lighting will be reviewed and the 5 to 6% PSNH increase will be added.

The Library is over by \$2,100 which was due to the drainage problem. The State was notified and they have given approval since it is an emergency situation. The Wilton Water Works is over on their budget by \$5,000 and this has not been analyzed nor has anyone been asked for the reason at this point.

The ambulance expenses are over by \$3,400 due to a mechanical breakdown in the 2007 vehicle while they were on a call. This was an unexpected expense, otherwise they would have come in with a flat budget. The Sewer Department at first glance would appear to be over however the bond payments are coming out of the unexpended bond amount and not out of the operating budget. When the \$15,000 is taken off the bottom line the budget has come in \$5,000 under budget. There is \$37,575.62 remaining as of the end of the year in

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unexpended bond money so this will provide the Sewer Department 2.5 more years of principle payments before the payment has to start coming out of the operating budget.

Mr. Schultz questioned whether there was going to be a discussion on raises tonight. They did as instructed in the Department Head letter and only put a 1% in their labor lines but it's his understanding that other departments have put in a larger percentages. Chairman Hughes explained that discussion will take place on January 14, 2015 with the Selectmen.

4. Review and any Additional CIP Requests or Changes

The revaluation of the Town has been added for \$30,000; \$15,000 to be put into a capital reserve account this year and the balance next year. The amount designated for Town Hall repair has to be determined; the energy audit will be reviewed by the Selectmen and parts of it will be initiated this year.

Chief Zirpolo spoke about the fire and burglar alarm proposal and he has decided that it is best to do the project in two phases. The first part would be the installation of the fire and CO alarm system which is estimated at \$9,950. After that is complete then install a burglar alarm system for \$2,100. The burglar alarm system will then be able to be tied into the fire alarm system thus saving some money by not having 2 totally separated systems. As requested he looked into installing a sprinkler system but since they are not on Town water by the time they install the tank needed along with the water supply and piping they are well in excess of \$40,000. Wilton's portion of both of the alarm systems will be about \$7,000. After discussion it was determined the best way to handle this will be to put it in the operating budget.

Molly Shanklin, Library Trustee, explained that they had originally obtained one estimate for \$50,000 to perform the drainage work needed; they have done some more homework and were able to reduce the amount to \$31,000. They are still requesting the \$17,000 for blasting, if it is necessary. More research was done and it was found that land the Library is on was originally blasted and the building is essentially in a bath tub when it rains. The water fills up with nowhere to go. They plan to seal the foundation and to install new drainage around the building. The drainage around the building will then be tied into the drainage going down to the street eliminating the bath tub effect.

Ms. Shanklin continued explaining that when the library was started in 1912 Mr. Gregg put \$25,000 into a trust to keep up with the building repairs. This is more of an endowment fund than a trust fund. The value of the trust is now \$1.2 million and they take 4% out a year to keep the building in good repair and to purchase books. This amounts to about \$24,000 every year and this money is used so they don't have to ask the Town for this extra amount every year. Out of these monies they have to pay the Charter Trust Manager \$9,500 per year to manage the money so there is only \$14,500 remaining which doesn't go very far in today's dollars. There are specific laws and regulations that have to be applied to the investments made from this trust and how the money can be spent. The percentage amount that is allowed to come out is also regulated and it is a balancing act with how much they leave in and how much comes out.

The Fire Department updated the amount for the Breathing Air Compressor from \$25,000 to \$36,000. This will drop the amount requested for the vehicle Capital Reserve amount to

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\$14,000. Chief Dick had asked that the Fire Department receive \$50,000 to be split between the two different items.

The Highway Department has requested a F-550 one ton truck for \$73,354. The other request was to have \$50,000 put into their vehicle Capital Reserve Fund since they will need to be purchasing a loader and a backhoe in the future.

The Police Department is due for a new cruiser this year for \$43,605. There will be \$13,500 coming out of the Capital Reserve Fund reducing the amount to be raised by taxation to \$30,105.

Bart Hunter presented a requested from the Conservation Commission; they would like to use 50% of the change in current use tax to be put into the Land Acquisition Fund each year. This is a non specific budget amount as the amount can vary every year. Some years the amount is zero and this year there was \$38,000. If this Article were already in place \$19,000 would be added to the Acquisition Fund. The Conservation Commission controls the Acquisition Fund; before the monies are spent they must ask the Selectmen and then have a public hearing but they don't have to go before the taxpayers at Town Meeting. There used to be \$100,000 in the account, presently there is a little over \$40,000.

They would use that fund to purchase land such as the Frye land but they didn't have enough money in there to make the purchase and LCIP wasn't informed that the Conservation Commission was interested so that is why at the eleventh hour they were asking for the Town's help. There are different types of properties that they try to preserve and they are listed in the Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) Plan.

There are different ways to be able to conserve land; some tracts are purchased outright while others easements are purchased for the development rights. The Frye project last year developed interest in the Town and the taxpayers were the ones who made the final decision at Town Meeting. There was discussion about what percentage of the Town is under some form of conservation. Mr. Young stated that purchasing land and granting an easement are different items.

Mr. Hunter stated that they did purchase the land in the southeast corner of Wilton that abuts to Milford and Mason. There over 7,000 acres of connected land in the three towns. If they didn't purchase that land there wouldn't have been a deal. The owner required that it all stay together otherwise it would have been sold to a developer. They need the money in the acquisition fund so that they can make important purchases that might come up. They are also interested if land comes up for sale that surrounds the Town wellhead areas, for the protection of the drinking water.

5. Energy Audit Review of the Town Hall

The Selectmen have had an energy audit done on the Town Hall. They went through the entire building roof to crawl space, doors to windows to ceilings etc. and the committee has presented a report to the Selectmen describing a list of recommendations that can be done to promote energy savings. The Selectmen are going to choose certain items on the list to be done this year. Some of these improvements should result in a quick energy savings for the Town Hall. Mr. Condra stated that there is a lot of merit in dealing with a portion of the report this year. This discussion will be continued next week at the joint meeting.

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6. Review of the 5+ year Budget Trend

Ms. Pucciarello prepared a review of the actual costs over the past 5 years. There are groups that have been flat, high or low and she has provided averages for each. There could also be graphs produced on any of the information, such as wages, at this time.

7. Preliminary Review of the entire 2015 Budget

The overall summary sheet has been prepared and is in agreement with the budget as it was presented tonight. The third page now contains the CIP information. The fourth page dealing with revenues has not been completed at this point. Revenues will be estimated and brought before the Selectmen for their approval.

Mr. Davidson asked Chief Hautanen why his budget is up 7.3%. Chief Hautanen explained that this was due to the raises that were discussed last year and broken into 2 parts. The first half was last year and the second half has been put into the budget for this year. This was discussed when the budget was presented in December.

Chief Hautanen stated that he has been granted half of his grant to purchase new computers for the station and laptops. So he will be dropping the new equipment line from \$16,000 to \$12,626. The grant will purchase 4 laptops and he will purchase 3 new workstations and 1 new laptop. The other \$7,000 in the new equipment line is for the purchase of forensic software and hardware. There have been changes in the way that they are to handle evidence. They will be able to image the computer and then send the evidence to the State lab for further evaluation but they will have immediate evidence to use instead of waiting for the State Lab to do their full analyses.

8. Other Business

Chairman Hughes wanted to remind everyone that there are State laws on attendance which pertain to any member at large; If a member misses four consecutive meetings without being excused by the chair that member is automatically terminated. He would like to remind everyone to let him and the secretary know in advance so that we don't lose any of the members.

9. Adjournment

The next meeting will be on January 14, 2014 at 7:00 in the Wilton Town Hall; this will be a joint meeting with the Selectmen. There will also be a meeting on January 15, 2015 for a meeting with all of the participating Towns regarding the Ambulance and the Recycling Center budgets.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Davidson and seconded by Mr. Dailey; all in favor. The Budget Committee was adjourned at 8:14 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Tuomala, Secretary