

Present: Dorianne Almann, Bruce Bellville, Michael Carrier, Joseph Conroy, Mike Darcy (selectmen's rep), John Hartnet, Morris Klein, James MacDonell, Lewis Major, Peter Zavorotny. Absent: Tina McCosker.

Mr. Zavorotny called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm in the Town Hall.

He said the first thing the committee had to do was address the minutes for Meeting 623. When he heard no one wanted to make edits, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Carrier made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Conroy. The motion to approve minutes for Meeting 623 passed with Mr. Klein abstaining.

Mr. Zavorotny said he had not heard anything lately re: the fire escape for the school and asked Mr. Darcy what the selectmen had heard. Mr. Darcy replied that this year there are four first grade classes. The classes behind them look to be regular in terms of size.

Mr. Zavorotny said he had received a tentative date for the town meeting from TA Collins. Mr. Darcy said the raises were 2%. Mr. Bellville noted that the cost of living is going up 1%. Mr. Darcy said that the budget committee can start working on some of the department's budgets on November 18; while all the departments will not have their budgets ready for the committee, some will.

The budget committee expects to meet with department heads the week of December 2-9. February 14 is the last day to hold at least one public hearing. TA Collins wants to have the town report to the printer on February 10.

The budget committee discussed dates related to holding public hearings. February 5 would be a suitable date to schedule a public hearing--if issues arose, there would be time to schedule a follow-up meeting. Mr. Bellville noted that last year a warrant article came up 30 minutes before the public hearing. Mr. Hartnet observed that the budget committee spends three-quarters of its time looking at one-quarter's worth of expenses and one quarter of its time looking at three-quarter's worth of expenses. Mr. Zavorotny observed that isn't entirely accurate since a significant portion of the expenses brought before the budget committee are salaries that are fixed through negotiations.

Mr. Hartnet voiced his concern that the town is coming into some hard times. Mr. Klein observed that over 40 homes are for sale in town; Mr. MacDonell said the number is 42. Forty two people in Hinsdale get a salary from Vermont Yankee. Mr. Bellville said the town saw a loss of \$20 million in property value and asked what the town has for revenues? What about the dam--it's the biggest thing the town has. The old Wal-Mart is set. The track may come in.

Mr. Zavorotny suggested setting February 2 for the public meeting, prodding the school to keep it on track, budget-wise, and setting February 12 as the secondary date. Mr. Zavorotny will draft a letter to the selectmen and the school board with the dates discussed.

Mr. MacDonell observed that the school budget comes in too late; he is formally requesting that the school turn in its budget by December 18. Mr. Major said that even if revenues are not available, he wants the school budget to be delivered to the committee by that date and asked that his request be put into the letter Mr. Zavorotny is drafting. On December 2 and 9 the budget committee will have workshops with the department heads.

Mr. Darcy said he wants to see flat budgets and the selectmen made a request to the department heads for such budgets. Mr. Hartnet suggested scheduling a meeting with the school board on January 8. Such a date would give the committee time to look at the budget beforehand and be able to ask questions at the meeting.

The budget committee's next meeting is November 20.

Mr. Zavorotny asked if there were other issues anyone wanted to discuss. When none were raised, he asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. MacDonell made such a motion, was seconded by Mr. Bellville, and the meeting concluded at 6:55 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Dorianne Almann
Recording Secretary