

Present: Dorianne Almann (arrived 6:35pm), Bruce Bellville, Michael Carrier, TA Jill Collins, Morris Klein (arrived 6:35pm), Lewis Major, James MacDonell, Selectmen's Rep Bill Nebelski, and Peter Zavorotny. Excused: Joe Conroy. Absent: Paul Bornkessel.

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

He said the committee needed to approve minutes from meeting 649. When no one had edits to make, he asked for a motion to approve them. Mr. Major made the motion, was seconded by Mr. Nebelski, and the motion passed with Mr. Bellville abstaining.

TA Collins told the committee that budget packets are almost ready. Department heads need to let the selectmen know about anything they are adding to their budgets to better define the budget. Mr. Zavorotny reminded everyone that the budget committee and the selectmen will be going over the budgets together for the next fiscal year. TA Collins said she would email the budgets to committee members.

The discussion moved to specifics on the Actual & Budgeted Expenses & Encumbrances, July 2014-June 2015 handout with Mr. Zavorotny's comment on town expenditures, 2014 and 2015. Removing such items as tax liens and payments to other governments, the bottom line is \$3,105,640. \$277,033 (7.9%) stays in the General Fund; this amount was either over budgeted or the town spent less. Roughly \$900,000 is going to come back into the General Fund. "Towards the end of the term, [taking] a lot of time off" was the reason for overspending by \$6,439 for the Town Clerk Deputy Salary (Election, Registration & Vital Statistics (page 1)), according to TA Collins.

TA Collins remarked that "auditing got very expensive" (over budget by almost 91%; page 2, Financial Administration). The town hired new auditors who are on a schedule. The auditors are located in Keene. Mr. MacDonell said data are flowing to them now via tape. He said that tax liens amounted to 1.18% with \$1,212 overspent. There is \$48,000 in abatements (4.1% overspent). Tax Collector Salary saw a 43% overrun due to a new policy from March to June. Computer problems meant a new back-up system had to be purchased.

TA Collins told the committee that in terms of the street lighting poles (Page 11, Street Lighting) the town did well as "we didn't go with DRA [Department of Revenue] rates." She also said this past year the Town Hall's elevator needed repairing. Last year, the building's gutters and slate roof needed work and curtains had to be fireproofed.

Last year Cemeteries and Parks (page 5) had more people working in the department than in previous years when one person did all the work. Now, there's a working supervisor and two people. Frank Podlenski (Highway Department) has "umbrellaed" the department. Cemeteries and Parks now has a vehicle.

Building repairs needed to done to the summer camp aka the field house. Mr. Nebelski commented on the \$5,000 spent to pull out the building's ceiling, saying that the town shouldn't have to pay for the ceiling coming out. The Fire Chief said the ceiling had to come down. This despite the fact that the windows and doors are always open when the building is in use.

In terms of Insurance (page 5), \$4,495.59 was recovered after a police cruiser got slammed in the back. The town carries a \$1,000 deductible.

Mr. Zavorotny observed that the Police Department budget (page 6) “is all over the place” to the degree he’s “getting uncomfortable.”

The department is understaffed. There’s one person in the police academy. Uniforms had to be purchased. Mr. Zavorotny commented that the pay is low, officers go to the academy, then leave. TA Collins spoke up, saying that pay isn’t necessarily at the root of turnover in the department. Some officers are staying on. The police chief is sending people to training if they’re interested. She noted that the selectmen adopted a new pay schedule, moving away from a grade step approach to one reflecting the cost of living.

Mr. Carrier observed that once a police officer gets academy training, that officer is marketable. He said it’s a national problem—police departments across the country are understaffed. For instance, Vermont’s State Police is short 30 officers.

TA Collins didn’t know why Police Equipment was about \$4,000 over budget. The selectmen approved \$38,853 to change windows in the new police building. Radio equipment was approved, too.

Mr. Bellville remarked that he doesn’t see Mutual Aid noted in the newspaper. Mr. MacDonell said he does see the calls going through.

Everyone wants the building inspector “to stay forever.” His brother is the custodian for the Town Hall.

Last year Emergency Management underestimated the amount needed to be paid to the telephone company which is why the Emergency Radio Circuits (page 9) was over budget by 174%, according to TA Collins.

In terms of the Highway Department (page 9), several single people came on board to the department and this is reflected in the health insurance amount. Mr. MacDonell asked about the department’s beeper; TA Collins replied she uses it to contact personnel. The Town Garage has a generator. Looking at the line for the department’s Sweeper, Mr. Nebelski commented that “it may be time to get a new one,” since the cost to repair its rotted out bed caused its budget to overrun by 52%.

TA Collins remarked that Frank Podlenski has to encumber and set schedules for paving work in June, July, and August.

In terms of the Transfer Station (page 11) Post Closure Expenses, TA Collins noted money must be carried as per the state. Mr. Nebelski noted that Miscellaneous is over budget by \$432,

Health Agencies & Hospitals (page 12) bills the town on a quarterly basis. TA Collins told the committee that the Welfare Administrator’s director is “really good at which she does. She does a lot of outreach.” The committee discussed Summer Program and salaries (page 14). The Summer

Program Lunch got a full grant. The Community Center (page 15) needed repairs to the building in terms of fixing a leak in the roof due from ice dams last winter. The committee talked about the need to shovel the building's roof.

TA Collins told the committee that Dennis Nadeau (Water Department Superintendent) applied to the Department of Environmental Services for money to replace meters. Water sampling was under budgeted. Mr. Zavorotny remarked that fluctuations in cost caused Electricity's budget 6% over run.

The 35% over run in Salaries Overtime in Wastewater Treatment Plant (page 23) was due to an extra pay period, according to TA Collins. The department had an encumbrance that was brought forward to this year. Overall, the department is 6.34% "in the hole."

Mr. Zavorotny told committee members to email TA Collins and to cc him if people had questions on the budgets she will be sending.

The committee's next meeting is September 16. TA Collins said August's numbers will be available the week before the meeting. The school's numbers will also be ready for next month's meeting.

With nothing further to discuss, Mr. Zavorotny asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Major made the motion, was seconded by Mr. Nebelski, and the meeting ended at 7:28pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dorianne Almann
Secretary