

Present: Dorianne Almann, Bruce Bellville, Michael Carrier, Joseph Conroy, John Hartnet, James MacDonell, Tina McCosker, Lewis Major, Bernie Rideout, Peter Zavorotny; Excused: Morris Klein

Mr. Zavorotny called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm in the Town Hall and stated that the committee had minutes from meetings 614, 615, and 616 to approve. He asked if anyone had questions about these minutes. Mr. Bellville answered in the affirmative; he asked about the start-up, one time cost of the music program (616). Mr. Bellville made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Conroy. The motion passed.

Mr. Zavorotny noted the committee had the Building Inspection, Health Agencies and Hospitals, Debit Service, and Welfare budgets to discuss.

Mr. Zavorotny told the committee that he's been "puttering around with the numbers." He observed that towns are "getting kicked by the state" in that the state is giving municipalities less money. This means the tax rate could go up. 2011 was high, due to Hinsdale's 18 month budget. The raw numbers for just the school and town are \$20.92/\$1,000. Thus, a \$150,000 house in town saw taxes of \$3,138 in 2011. For 2012, that same \$150,000 house saw a tax of about \$2,500 and the 2013 taxes could be \$2,800. There will be about one-quarter million less in school aid from the state and the state is contributing less to the pension fund.

Mr. Zavorotny brought up discussion of Building Inspection (4240). There was no discussion of the \$34,689 budget. Mr. Bellville made a motion to tentatively approve the Building Inspection budget, seconded by Mr. Carrier. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Zavorotny moved to Health Agencies & Hospitals (4415). TA Collins who was in the audience noted that Health Line didn't respond to two requests for information. Mr. MacDonell made a motion to tentatively approve the budget of \$47,656 for Health Agencies & Hospitals. Mr. Bellville seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion next moved to the Debt Service - Interest (4723) budget of \$165,558. TA Collins noted she did not include money for the WELL project. The new total for 4723 is \$165,458. Mr. Carrier made a motion to tentatively approve 4723's budget, seconded by Mr. Rideout. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Zavorotny brought up Welfare's (4441) budget. The town is looking to set up an operational trust. Mr. MacDonell made a motion to tentatively approve Welfare's budget of \$75,166. Mr. Bellville seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

That brought the budget discussions to an end and the committee moved to discussing the articles of which Mr. Zavorotny observed there is "quite an array!"

Chief Matuszewski was in the audience and briefed the budget committee on Article 6. He began by reminding the committee that the fire department had several times in the past requested the town buy a brush truck. He noted that lately the nature of the calls to which the fire department has been responding has changed and there is no longer need for a "big vehicle" to handle the calls. He noted that ice rescue equipment is stored in various places in the fire department which makes for time lost and inefficiency when responding to calls requiring ice rescue equipment.

Ms. Almann asked if the ice rescue equipment will be removed from the truck at winter's end and what equipment will be moved onto the truck. The Chief responded that the equipment will stay on the truck as the equipment can be used year 'round. In addition to ice rescue equipment, the utility vehicle will also carry miscellaneous equipment.

Mr. Major asked what type of truck the fire department is looking to buy. The Chief described it as a "box truck with side cabinets." The Chief said personnel in the department will add brackets and supports for lights and the radio.

Mr. Major made a motion that the budget committee recommend the article. He was seconded by Mr. MacDonell and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bellville asked if the town had looked at buying instead of leasing a truck for the Highway Department (Article 7). TA Collins noted the plan is to begin to put money aside for purchase of a truck; voters approved putting away \$25,000 last year; this money, however, will not be applied to the lease.

Mr. Major made a motion that the budget committee recommend Article 7, seconded by Mr. Hartnet. The motion passed with Mr. Bellville and Ms. Almann voting no.

Mr. Zavorotny noted that Article 8 will have no effect on the tax rate. Mr. MacDonell made a motion that the budget committee recommend Article 8, seconded by Mr. Carrier. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion moved to Article 9.

The figure noted in handout given to the Budget Committee was incorrect; the correct figure is \$36,936. The original request was for two cruisers. The request has been scaled back to one.

The cruiser being replaced is from 2007. TA Collins noted that the 2007 and 2008 cruisers are "starting to require lots of maintenance." Mr. Hartnet made a motion that the budget committee recommend Article 9, seconded by Mr. Rideout. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion on Article 10 began with Mr. Bellville asking the purpose of the perimeter fence which would encompass six acres. TA Collins responded that the Department of

Environmental Services recommends the fence. Mr. Bellville asked if security is so important, why is the current fence left unlocked? He observed that the Water Department has taken on "a lot of debt." He noted he thinks the fence "is overkill."

Chief Matuszewski noted that the DES is "really pushing for security around well sites." Six or seven years ago money was readily available for fencing and such; however, this is no longer the case. Without a fence, a sanitary survey done by DES would garner a "deficiency" in the Water Department.

The Chief noted that fencing a 440' radius around the well means about 11 acres would need to be fenced. If well head protection was required, an area "up to 500 acres" would need to be fenced.

Mr. MacDonell made a motion that the budget committee recommend Article 10, seconded by Mr. Rideout. The motion passed with Mr. Bellville and Ms. Almann voting no.

The telemetry equipment is required to be up-to-date and as the Water Department's equipment is old, Mr. Bellville made a motion that the budget committee recommend Article 11, seconded by Mr. Carrier. The motion passed unanimously.

The generator proposed in Article 12 is portable and the price is inclusive. Mr. Conroy made a motion that the budget committee recommend Article 12, seconded by Mr. MacDonell. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Zavorotny noted that Article 13 will be passed over if Article 6 is passed by the town. Mr. Conroy made a motion that the budget committee recommend Article 13, seconded by Mr. MacDonell. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion on Article 14 began with TAQ Collins noting that the town has "only put a bit away" for the project. The engineers will be selected at Monday night's meeting (January 28). Mr. Hartnet asked how close the town is to actually doing the project? TA Collins replied that Monument Road "will be done like Old Chesterfield Road" bit by bit over a period of time. She noted the culvert and the water line are already done. Perhaps some TIF money can be used to help. Mr. Bellville asked how much money there is in the account? TA Collins replied, "\$109,000.)

Mr. Major made a motion that the budget committee recommend Article 14, seconded by Mr. Carrier. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hartnet made a motion that the budget committee recommend Article 15, seconded by Mr. Rideout. The motion passed unanimously.

The selectmen tabled Articles 16 and 17 until Monday night (January 28).

In terms of Article 16, Chief Matuszewski explained that to provide one firefighter with personal protective equipment—helmet, hood, boots, and pants—the cost is about \$2,500. Equipment, regardless of whether it is used heavily or not at all—must be retired and replaced after 10 years. Each piece of equipment has a date of manufacture. The Chief’s goal is to get back on a system of equipment replacement to spread out the cost of replacement.

Mr. Zavorotny brought up Article 17 because the two articles focus on the same thing—personal protective equipment. The Chief noted that the new breathing apparatus does not work with the old helmets. Mr. Conroy made a motion that the budget committee recommend Articles 16 and 17, seconded by Mr. Carrier. The motion passed unanimously.

Relative to Article 18, Mr. Zavorotny noted “there appears to be a high level of confusion” as to the route the bus takes. Mr. Conroy said he saw an article in the paper that the bus service “is not making it with the route.” TA Collins noted that people can flag the bus, but that this fact does not seem to have been communicated. In fact, the marketing efforts for the service are weak. She said that people at Thicket Hill are using the service. Mr. Conroy asked if the bus stops at Wal-Mart on its way back? Mr. Rideout noted that while he supports public transportation in theory, he is not enthusiastic about the bus service since its ridership is so low and the marketing efforts behind the service are so poor.

Mr. Major made a motion that the budget committee recommend Article 18, seconded by Mr. Bellville. The motion passed with Mr. Rideout voting no.

Mr. Hartnet made a motion that the budget committee recommend Article 19, seconded by Mr. Rideout. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Zavorotny noted that Article 20 does affect the tax rate. Mr. Hartnet asked if the article “could blow the budget in the future” and asked what is the average? TA Collins noted that a lot of requests have been for fuel assistance; fortunately, the town pre-buys. In addition to request for fuel, the town has also gotten many requests for rent, utilities, and help with preventing evictions. The budget has been \$60,000 for many years, but this year the town will go over that amount.

Mr. MacDonell made a motion that the budget committee recommend Article 20, seconded by Mr. Conroy. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bellville asked if money requested in Article 21 would be going into an expendable trust and what is the current amount? TA Collins noted that the fund currently has \$15,000 in it. Mr. Rideout made a motion that the budget committee recommend Article 21, seconded by Mr. Conroy. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Zavorotny noted that the Big Brother Big Sisters request is a new one and since the request is new, voters are being asked for their input. Mr. Rideout told the committee that the selectmen passed over the article. Mr. Bellville asked if there was any money in the school budget for the group; Ms. McCosker replied she was not sure but would check.

TA Collins noted that there were 536 occurrences of Hinsdale children using the service. Mr. Hartnet made a motion that the budget committee recommend Article 22, seconded by Mr. MacDonell. The motion passed with Mr. Rideout abstaining.

Mr. Zavorotny noted that “covers the action for the town with the exception of the police budget.” He said that budget would be discussed just before the hearing at the 6:30p.m. Monday night selectmen’s meeting.

He noted that school Business Manager Tom O’Connor has sent out information. There are still question about the teachers’ contract with the union needing to ratify it. Ms. McCosker noted that the school budget was reduced by \$106,000. The school worked to keep actual expenditures low. Preparations for the accreditation process are starting in this budget with money for travel. This year, each student needs an electronic portfolio.

Mr. Zavorotny noted that the school wants to get approval to set up a trust—all school districts want ability to hold money. RSA 198.4.B Section 2 was referenced.

Mr. Hartnet asked when the auditor’s report for the school will be available? Ms. McCosker replied she would check on the date.

The school committee and the budget committee are slated to meet at 6:30p.m. in the Town Hall on January 30.

In terms of the tax rate, Mr. Bellville noted that word has it that MS 5 would be done on Friday (January 25). TA Collins agreed, saying she would be working on MS 5 on Thursday (January 24) and would be done the next day. This means that Tuesday (January 29) or Wednesday (January 30) at the latest, the tax rate for the town would be set.

Mr. Bellville's motion to adjourn was seconded by Mr. Conroy. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting ended at 8:10p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Dorianne Almann
Recording Secretary