

Budget Committee

Meeting # 683

Meeting Date: Wednesday, December 20, 2017

Present: : Megan Bassett, Lindsey Blake, Kayla Hemlow, James MacDonell, Lewis Major, William Nebelski, Edwin Smith, Peter Zavorotny, Sean Leary (School Board Rep), and Wayne Gallagher (Selectman Rep).

Excused, Joseph Conroy

6:30 p.m. Chairman Zavorotny called the meeting to order.

Mr. Nebelski moved to accept the minutes for meeting 682 as presented. Leary seconded and passage was unanimous.

The public hearing date was discussed. The first Tuesday of February has been the usual plan. Mr. Leary moved to set February 6, 2018 at 6:30 in the Town Hall as the planned date with Wednesday, the 7th as a snow date. Second was by Mr. Smith and passage was unanimous. The School budget will be first with the Town immediately after.

Mr. Zavorotny distributed a worksheet representing an estimate of a tax rate for 1018 increasing \$2.00. This is still early in the process, but there is cause to be concerned as this would be directly following a \$3.00 increase. He elaborated commenting that at some point this may not be sustainable. This is even more concerning because the largest driver is "people costs" in both the town and school district.

Ms. Hemlow commented that several school district positions are required by state regulation. Several members made similar comments relative to both the school and town.

There was extensive discussion of possible increase in property assessment with the old Walmart building and solar. But these are not going to be realized in the short term. There is also expectation of some growth as the bridge to Brattleboro is built. This is also some years out.

Whether or not the town can afford future increases is a major concern and there is no simple solution.

It was also noted that even with all these increases, Hinsdale still has a tax rate which is comparable to other like towns.

Next Meeting: Will be Wednesday, January 3, 2018 at 6:30 in the PD. This will be a joint meeting with the Selectmen. Town departments not yet reviewed and possible warrant articles will be reviewed .

Mr. Zavorotny will contact Ms. Kennedy and Mr. Woolridge to ask for a joint meeting on January 10th with the school board to discuss their budget proposal.

7:15 p.m. Nebelski made a motion to adjourn, seconded by MacDonell. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter Zavorotny
Secretary Protem