

**Unapproved  
Candia Budget Committee  
Public Hearing Minutes  
December 19, 2012**

**Members Present:** Matt Broadhead, Lynn Chivers, Paul LeBlond, Todd Allen, Carla Penfield, Judith Szot, Christine Watson, Emily Roster, School Board Representative, and Richard Snow, Board of Selectmen Representative.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 at the Smyth Public Library Conference Room. Matt led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Matt said the Budget Committee has already made recommendations on the town budget. They have not finalized them – they are just preliminary. They are now seeking input from the public. The Budget Committee is here to listen. If the Committee members have follow-up questions, they are free to ask them. He advised everyone on the Board that this is not the opportunity to argue with each other about certain expenses. At the end of this evening, the Committee will be recessing this meeting until January 9, 2013. At that point we will know all the warrant articles, and have all the input from the public. On the 9<sup>th</sup>, the Committee's recommendations will be finalized and that is when those arguments can occur. Matt feels that this has been a very productive budget season so far. Everything has been open and cordial. He commends the committee for that.

Matt opened the floor to the Committee for comments. Todd said that any increases that get made to this budget have to be discussed at this meeting. He wants to make sure that some items that were left unresolved from their previous meeting get discussed. Todd asked Cheryl if all the FICA and MEDI lines had been checked and verified. Cheryl said yes. Todd asked if the insurance rates are known yet. Cheryl explained that the town has received revised rates. She has not had time to go through and figure the cost impact of the new rates yet. Matt said that the only thing we need to disclose tonight is that the insurance rates need to be adjusted prior to finalizing the budget. Dick asked when the Committee is going to be finalizing the budget. Matt told him January 9, 2013, which has been on the Budget Committee calendar all season long. Matt feels that it makes the most sense to make the final recommendations on the budget after all the warrant articles are submitted. The deadline for warrant articles is January 8, 2013. There may be warrant articles submitted that may change the opinion of a Budget Committee member on the operating budget, or vice versa.

Matt opened the Public Hearing for comment.

Selectman Amanda Soares addressed the Committee regarding the Building Inspection budget. She said with the 1.7% COLA that was passed by the Board, the wage line for the Building Inspector should be increased. She added that the \$644 for retirement can be removed. That line does not need to be included. The wage lines should be increased to cover the 1.7% COLA. Matt clarified that the request is to increase the Building Inspector's wage line to \$31,375, which is up from \$30,850. Cheryl explained that the FICA/MEDI line was incorrectly stated on the budget submitted to the Budget Committee before. The amount Amanda is presenting tonight is correct if the 1.7% is added. Amanda also said the Software Support line should be increased to \$913.19. An invoice has been received for the 2013 costs and it contains an increase.

Fire Chief Dean Young said that he understands the Committee took \$1,300 out of the Fire Prevention line. He wishes the Committee wouldn't. He feels that line is one of the most important in his budget – the name says it all. Matt asked him to explain for the record what those funds are used for. Dean explained that the Fire Prevention line is used to educate. A large part of that is what they do at the school and local day-cares. Teaching the little children is where you want to start to get them interested in safety. They also do programs for older students as well. Every year they do a theme, like "Stop, Drop, and Roll", or "Two Ways Out". Todd said that line was reduced because the trend for that line has not been showing \$3,500 in expenditures. Dean said that he has a new person taking care of the Fire Prevention programs. He said that this year the line will be pretty much expended because he just turned in two more bills and has another one coming soon. Carla said again that it has never been spent completely – and that is what the Committee looks at. Chief Young said that Ryan Blevens is now running the program. He is a young, energetic guy and is going to be more pro-active with it and do a great job. He asked to do that job and Dean wants to give him everything he needs to do it. Christine asked if the Chief could provide some follow-up information regarding the expected expenses and explain more about it. Matt said that any additional information that is submitted to the Committee between tonight and the January 9, 2013 meeting will be addressed on the 9<sup>th</sup>. Chief Young said he would provide some more information. Christine said that the Committee wants to lower the budget in areas where funds are not used and if there is a line that is consistently overspent, to fund it appropriately.

Selectboard Chairman Joe Duarte addressed the Committee and said that he has a lot of faith in the Fire Department. That is an emergency area. He feels if he is requesting this amount, then we should lean towards the Department Heads since they have a pretty good idea of what they need. The other problem Joe has is that we can't seem to understand that if it is not spent, it will go back into the general fund. Joe would rather agree with the emergency department about what they think they need, and if it doesn't get spent, it will go back into the general fund. He would rather have it and not need it than need it and not have it.

Police Chief Mike McGillen spoke about the \$5,000 removed from the Overtime line. He asked for that to be restored because the department is going to be having a lot of additional training coming up, especially with some of the current events going on. There will be more drills at the school and he is going to be sending some personnel to active shooter training. There is going to be a need for overtime to cover those training absences. There is also still the court time and grand jury time that needs coverage on overtime as well. In years past the expenses have been up to \$35,000 to \$40,000. Also, there is a lot of vacation time on the books. We have several officers that have been here ten plus years and they are accruing vacation time at higher rates than a newer officer. He tries to fill those shifts with part time officers whenever possible, but they don't have that many active part time officers at the moment. If he has to fill those shifts with full time employees, that is running into the overtime line.

Supervisor of the Checklist Candy Stamatelos said that under Election and Voter Registration, she is not opposed to a reduction, but wondered what the Committee thought they could do with \$2,000 with three people for 12 months. She asked if they were calculating so many hours per month, especially since the Selectmen had reduced it already. Matt said that the Committee looked at the trend over the last five years. It has been routinely over-budgeted. This line exceeded \$2,000 only in 2008, which was a Presidential election year. They would expect that line to be higher in an election year, but in a non-election year, such as 2013, it should be lower. Candy said that the last person they have had in the position of Supervisor has not been available to do the work. So, it has been up to two people. Those two people are not going to make up the difference. There does have to be three people available. It is

not a position that people are knocking down the door to do. It is not something that you get paid a lot, but the demands are there during certain times. Matt asked what she would propose as an adequate amount. Candy said that she has not had time to put the effort into researching this. She would like the Committee to consider not reducing it as much as they have. Emily asked if she could put together how many hours they would work on a non-election year. Candy asked if what they wanted was for her to have a four year plan so she could fight for a certain amount of money each year? Carla asked if they had three people last year. Candy said they always have three people, but the third one is not always available. Carla said the budget for the past two years has been under \$1,500 each year. Candy agreed, because the third person is not available. Carla asked if she anticipates the third person being available. Candy said that they need to train her. Candy has already talked to her about stepping down, and she is not willing to step down to put somebody else in who can be trained and be available. Candy said the budget had been high because at one point they were looking at computers. The line stayed high even though the computers were purchased back in 2000 and 2006. Recently they were allowed to get two more computers. Dick asked if the amount of work they do depend on the number of elections each year? Candy said not always. Judith asked what they would be doing during a non-election year. Candy said maintenance to the system to reduce duplicate entries in the system. That doesn't always get done because it is a low priority item. There are things they can do to clean up the files. They did a purge of the system in 2011, but not necessarily their files. Dick asked if they are being paid at elections under the Supervisors of the Checklist lines. Candy said yes. Emily questioned the other Election Admin wage line. Candy said that is what Town Clerk Christine Dupere uses to hire additional people to do things for her. Candy had thought that if they hired extra people, the time would come out of the Supervisors wage lines as well. But it didn't. Anybody that Chris hired as extra, they would work for her and the Supervisors throughout the day, but the wages were covered under the Election Admin wage line.

Joe Duarte said that he had spoken with Bob Panit, Emergency Management. Joe's problem is that dealing with anything that is an emergency department we don't know what the emergencies will be. It is very difficult to tell what is coming. There are some things with the Emergency Management Department that the Committee may not be aware of. He said Bob is going to need to purchase Photo ID supplies this coming year. He used them all doing ID's for the Fire Department this year. If Bob feels that training sessions are available and he wants to take them, we should go along with his numbers on that. Joe went on to say that Bob has the whole emergency management under control and he doesn't take wages for his work. Cutting the training is not really looking out for Bob too much. Joe asked for a compromise, or a closer look at some of the things Bob is asking for. We need to be a little extra cautious with emergency services.

Todd said that a budget is a living, breathing document. It is never going to be 100% accurate. As things come up, you will have to prioritize the needs. As much as Todd would like to buy off on everything that is requested, that is not realistic. Some things may get cut, but it doesn't mean it can't be refunded by prioritizing other expenditures.

Joe asked the Committee to look at a hand-out showing the history of budgets in Candia over the last five years. All of the budgets are 2.3 million. The reason they stay so close is because the Board tells them what they want to see from the departments and to work their numbers around them. If they work hard to maintain the numbers, he doesn't want to send a signal that because they did a good job, the Committee is going to take some money away from you. Budgets from other towns were also listed on the sheet and Joe feels if he was a Selectman in another town, he would be over here in Candia asking what the department heads are doing here. If the Budget Committee, Selectmen, and Department Heads work a little bit closer, we can keep the budgets where they need to be. Joe wants

the Department Heads to know that if they do a good job, and hold off expenses until the end of the year, then that money will not be taken away the following year. Joe doesn't disagree with the Budget Committee on all their recommendations, but if the Department Heads work hard and keep expenses down, that keeps the tax rate down. Joe said when our people do a good job and maintain their budget, we should reward them for it.

**At 7:34, Matt made a motion to recess until January 9, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall. Seconded by Todd. All voted in favor. Motion carried.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by,  
Cheryl Eastman