

Regular Meeting of the
Candia Budget Committee
December 12, 2013
Town Hall, Candia, NH
Approved Minutes of the Public Session

Present: Chairman Matthew Broadhead, Vice-Chair Allyn Chivers, Secretary Paul Leblond, Carla Penfield, Todd Allen, Christine Watson, Selectmen's Rep. Carleton Robie, School Board Rep. Emily Roster

Excused: Judith Szot

Also Present: Kim Royer, Road Agent Dennis Lewis, Marlene Montminy

Call to Order

Chairman Broadhead called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm and led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Administrative Business

Minutes

Motion: To approve the minutes of December 4, 2013 as amended. Motion by Emily Roster, second by Allyn Chivers. All in favor, motion carried.

Old/New Business

Updated Town and School expenditure reports were provided to the Budget Committee for their review. There was no discussion regarding these reports.

Chairman Broadhead reminded the members of the audience that as noted on the agenda, public input will be limited at this meeting and pursuant to SB2, the Budget Committee will seek public input at the upcoming public hearings scheduled for December 18th for the town budget and December 19th for the school budget.

Chairman Broadhead stated that a revised budget proposal for the school had been received the night before at the joint meeting with the School Board and the new report (#11609) will be used for the purpose of this meeting.

2014-2015 Proposed School Budget

Emily Roster made a motion to approve the proposed school budget, second by Allyn Chivers for discussion.

Carla Penfield stated the Committee has yet to receive a default budget and that historically the voters vote for whichever budget is the lowest. Carla also stated that she believed the default budget will be lower than the proposed budget. Allyn Chivers stated that at this point in the process the proposed budget needs to be considered without regard to the default budget. There will be time later in the process to consider making changes if necessary. Emily Roster told the Committee that the information she had been provided indicated that there will not be much difference between the default and the proposed budgets. Emily went on to say that by trying to drive the proposed budget to the default budget the voters are not given the opportunity to vote on the higher budget.

Chairman Broadhead reviewed the meeting schedule with the Committee to emphasize his intention, should time permit, to finalize the budget recommendations after the public hearing scheduled on December 19th. If time does not permit, the Committee will recess after the public hearing and finalize the budget proposals on January 8th. Allyn Chivers asked if Karen Lessard could have the default budget for the public hearing December 19th. Emily Roster stated she would ask Karen Lessard if it was possible.

Allyn Chivers asked if the draft warrant articles will be available for January 8th. Emily Roster stated that the warrant articles for the school will be approved at the next School Board meeting scheduled for January 2nd.

Chairman Broadhead reminded the Committee that the operating budget needs to be approved before January 16th due to the 25-day rule.

Regular Education Programs:

No discussion

Regular Education High School Tuition:

Todd Allen asked why Public High School Tuition and Public Academy High School Tuition appear to be lumped together in the 2014-2015 budget when it was separated out previously. Emily Roster stated the total amount would be same but was unsure as to why it was not broken out between the two appropriations. She would need to inquire with Karen Lessard but believed it was simply an oversight. Todd stated he would like to see it budgeted separately.

Special Programs:

No discussion.

Extended School Year:

No discussion.

English Language Learner:

No discussion.

ALPS:

No discussion.

School Sponsored Co-curricular:

No discussion

School Sponsored Athletics:

No discussion

Guidance Services:

No discussion

Health Services:

No discussion

Medical Services:

No discussion.

Psychological Services:

No discussion.

Speech and Pathology Services:

Allyn Chivers asked if the Speech Assistant position was eligible for health insurance since it appears to be a part-time position. The question was asked previously, however an answer was not provided at the joint meeting with the School Board. Kim Royer clarified for the Committee that the position qualified for health insurance due to meeting the required number of hours worked per week.

PT & OT Services:

No discussion.

Other Support Services:

No discussion

Improvement of Instruction Services:

No discussion.

Educational Media Services:

No discussion.

School Board Services:

No discussion.

Executive Administrative Services:

No discussion.

Office of the Principal Services:

No discussion.

Operations & Maintenance of Plant Services:

No discussion.

Student Transportation Services:

Carla Penfield asked Emily Roster if anyone has looked at the current bus routes to evaluate if any of the routes could be combined since there are fewer students than there were two years ago. It appears that buses are transporting very few students. The current budget proposal for Regular Ed. Transportation is over \$200,000 there has to be a way to save some money in that line. Emily Roster stated that it had not been discussed yet but advised the Committee that contractually a seat on the bus needs to be provided to every student. Carla questioned whether or not that was accurate and what the state requirements were. She then asked if the School Board would consider looking at this line. Emily Roster stated that it could be looked into.

For clarification, Todd Allen stated that the bus company was paid per bus not by the number of routes. Emily confirmed that was accurate. Paul Leblond stated he believed that more students may take the bus home than to school due to their parents dropping them off in the morning. Christine Watson added that there would need to be a significant drop in the number of students

before buses could be eliminated. Todd Allen followed by saying he had asked the state what the requirements were for bus routes and was told that the school could remove a bus stop from a route if a student is not availing themselves to riding the bus but could reinstate the stop if the parent requests it. Emily said the topic could be put on the agenda for the next School Board meeting.

Evaluation Services:

No discussion.

Health Services:

No discussion.

Information Management Services:

No discussion.

Miscellaneous:

Regarding the Site Acquisition budget line, Todd Allen asked why there was no longer a dollar in the line. Emily Roster stated there was no intent to purchase any more land.

Motion: To approve the School Board proposed budget in the amount of \$7,992,019.87 which includes \$7,659,674.01 for the General Fund, \$185,000 for the Special Revenue Fund, and \$147,345.86 for the Food Service Fund. Motion by Emily Roster, second by Allyn Chivers. All in favor, motion carried with Selectman Robie abstaining.

2014 Proposed Town Budget

Chairman Broadhead reminded the Committee that an updated budget proposal had been provided and the new report, with an effective date of December 9, 2013, would be used for the purpose of this meeting.

Selectman Robie provided information regarding the changes to the budget proposal which included increases to Southern NH Planning and Health Insurance and the addition of a new appropriation, "Winter Storm Repair", to be funded at \$1. Those increases are reflected in the budget proposal. Selectman Robie also informed the Committee that Selectman Snow had requested a warrant article at the last Selectmen's meeting for \$1,000 for the playground. The Selectmen were in consensus to include the funds in the operating budget instead under Park Supplies/Repair. The \$1,000 increase was not reflected in the budget proposal and would need to be added by the Budget Committee.

Todd Allen made a motion to approve the proposed town budget, second by Christine Watson for discussion.

Advertising and Regional Associations:

Chairman Broadhead asked why the new proposed budget for Southern NH Planning was increased from \$2,468 to \$2,500. Selectman Robie stated that Southern NH Planning had asked for a slight increase to their fee at the last Selectmen's meeting.

Ambulance:

No discussion

Animal Control:

No discussion

Auditing Services:

No discussion

Budget Committee:

Chairman Broadhead proposed an increase to the postage and printing supplies of \$50 each to fund each budget line at \$300. The requested increase was based on actual expenditures for the current budget year and Chairman Broadhead felt a modest increase was needed.

Motion: To increase the Printing budget line by \$50 to \$300 and the Supplies/Postage line by \$50 to \$300. Motion by Chairman Broadhead, second by Todd Allen. All in favor, motion carried.

Building Inspection:

No discussion.

Cemetery:

No discussion.

Conservation Commission:

No discussion.

Direct Assistance:

No discussion.

Election/Voter Registration:

No discussion.

Election Administration:

No discussion.

Emergency Management:

Todd Allen stated he would like to cut three line items to \$1 but was not going to propose it. Chairman Broadhead said one of the questions that had not been answered yet was how much generator fuel had been used this year. Selectman Robie said he was also interested in that information and that he would try and get the answer for the Budget Committee.

Fire/Forestry:

No discussion.

Health Officer:

No discussion.

Heritage Commission:

No discussion.

Highway Department:

Todd Allen asked if there was a plan to eventually put the road reconstruction in the operating budget or continue with warrant articles for funding every year. Selectman Robie stated that the warrant article approach is a logical way for our town to do road construction at this point. Todd Allen countered by saying that it would make sense if it was a one-time thing, but this is required to operate the town and should be included in the operating budget.

Chairman Broadhead prefers the warrant article approach for this type of project because if it is not approved by the voters it prevents the Selectmen from redirecting funds. Carla Penfield agreed with Chairman Broadhead stating that the warrant article gives the voter a voice in how their money is spent.

Emily Roster stated that she agreed with Todd Allen because it is the obligation of the town to maintain the roads and it should be part of the operating budget.

Emily also stated that she would be interested in knowing how many warrant articles other towns have compared to Candia. When there are five pages of warrant articles, the voter stops reading and that is a disservice to a lot of the services in the town.

Paul Leblond added that he worked on the re-count last year and he was amazed to see how many people only had two items checked off. There were two warrant articles for roads last year with one passing and one failing. Dennis Lewis explained that the failing warrant article was due to the fact that it involved a major change.

Christine Watson stated that the voters have the opportunity to participate in the budget process and could get the information they need. By putting the road reconstruction in the operating budget does not limit their visibility or flexibility.

Selectman Robie stated if road reconstruction is put in the operating budget it will be spent at the Selectmen's discretion.

Chairman Broadhead reminded the Committee that an election could change how the money is spent as well. A new Selectman could have a different view than who held the position previously.

Insurance:

No discussion

Legal Expenses:

No discussion.

Other Culture and Recreation:

No discussion.

Parks and Recreation:

Selectman Robie made a motion to increase the Parks Supplies/Repairs budget line to \$2,000, second by Paul Leblond for discussion.

Carla Penfield asked for clarification on what the funds are for. Selectman Robie said it was for resurfacing (bark mulch) the playground as well as repairs. Funding had previously been provided through a warrant article.

Motion: To increase the Parks Supplies/Repairs budget line by \$1,000 to \$2,000. Motion by Selectman Robie, second by Paul Leblond. All in favor, motion carried.

Planning Board:

No discussion.

Police:

Allyn Chivers stated that after being told that a police cruiser was not going to be needed she did not believe that \$12,000 should be allocated in the budget for something that may or not be needed. Selectman Robie stated that by putting a partial amount in the budget and encumbering it at the end of the year was a good way to budget for the community.

Emily Roster asked for clarification regarding budgeting for a cruiser over two years. Carla Penfield then stated that the \$12,000 in the 2014 budget could result in not being spent at the end of the year, be encumbered, and used to purchase a cruiser in 2015 along with any funds that will be allocated in that budget. There will not be a cruiser purchased in 2014 unless there is an emergency.

Chairman Broadhead spoke in favor of keeping the funds in the budget, stating that if an emergency did arise these funds, if needed, would offset the cost of the purchase of a new cruiser.

Allyn Chivers stated she did not like the town asking her to pay for something in advance and would prefer to pay for something when it is needed.

Carla Penfield suggested that perhaps a warrant article would be the better route to take when it came to purchasing a new cruiser. This would ensure that the funds allocated could only be spent on a cruiser.

Motion: To reduce the New Cruiser budget line to \$1. Motion by Allyn Chivers, second by Carla Penfield. With a show of hands, motion failed with a vote of 1 in favor, 6 against and Todd Allen abstaining.

Principal – Long Term Bonds and Notes:

No discussion.

Property Appraisal:

No discussion.

Solid Waste:

Carla Penfield reminded the Committee that the amounts spent over the years for Household Hazardous Waste Day has not exceeded \$9,600. The requested amount for 2014 is \$15,000. Carla suggested the \$15,000 be put to a warrant article to ensure the funds are only used for that purpose.

Chairman Broadhead felt that it should remain in the budget but at a reduced amount of \$12,000. Christine Watson believes it is a safety issue and should be in the budget. Emily Roster also agreed that it should be in the operating budget.

Motion: To reduce the Household Hazardous Waste Day budget line to \$0. Motion by Carla Penfield, second by Allyn Chivers. With a show of hands, motion failed with a vote of 1 in favor, 7 against.

Motion: To reduce the Household Hazardous Waste Day budget line by \$3,000 from \$15,000 to \$12,000. Motion by Chairman Broadhead, second by Todd Allen. With a show of hands, motion carried with a vote of 6 in favor, 2 against.

Street Lighting:

No discussion.

Tax Collector:

No discussion.

Town Building Expenses:

Allyn Chivers stated that she would prefer to see how the voters vote on the warrant article for the Smyth Building Trustees before seeing \$10,000 put in the budget for the maintenance of the Old Library building. Allyn made a motion to reduce the budget line by \$10,000 to \$4,020, second by Carla Penfield for discussion.

Selectman Robie stated whether or not there are trustees for the building, it is the Selectmen's responsibility to maintain it. Currently the windows are in bad shape and water is starting to get in. The proposed funds are to get some of the maintenance done and to preserve the building.

Todd Allen stated that he was not in favor of rehabbing the building to a usable state, however, if by not repairing the windows results in more repairs that will need to be done and even more expense, is fine with the expense this year. If \$10,000 shows up again in next year's budget proposal, he will not be alright with that. In response to Todd Allen, Selectman Robie stated that his research indicated that to repair all the windows would cost \$26,000.

Carla Penfield reminded the Committee that the Fitts Museum had nine windows repaired last year and asked Selectman Robie what the cost was to replace the nine windows. Selectman Robie believed it cost approximately \$9,000 not including the storm windows that were added. Selectman Robie stated that he also believed the \$26,000 for the Old Library included the storm windows. Carla followed by saying that last year the voters indicated that they did not want the Old Library to be a meeting room or used but they did not indicate that they did not want it maintained and would be in favor of keeping the \$10,000 in the budget if she was assured it would be for window restoration.

Paul Leblond asked if the funds are left in the budget and if the trustee warrant article fails, would that be taken as a mandate from the voters that they do not want anything to do with the building

Chairman Broadhead stated that he was not in favor of the warrant article last year because it involved a bond with a multi-year commitment and interest had to be paid in addition to expense. He did not want the Committee to overstate what the voters decided last year adding that the warrant article was not appropriate at the time. Having the \$10,000 in the budget strikes an appropriate balance for maintaining the building even if the voters decide against having trustees for the building.

Allyn Chivers raised the concern that the building needs to be ADA compliant if it is going to be used and it will never be compliant until a sizeable amount of money is spent to renovate. Allyn added that it may be cheaper to replace the windows rather than repair although the windows wouldn't have their original character. Selectman Robie stated the building has historical significance and should be preserved for future generations.

Carla Penfield stated that restoration would be cheaper than renovation and felt that \$10,000 was reasonable for a building that is on the Historical Register. Emily Roster asked if there were any grants that the Heritage Commission could research as an option. Selectman Robie stated that if the trustee's were approved, they could do research to that effect and added that most grants need matching funds.

After further discussion, the Committee moved to end discussion and proceed to a vote.

Motion: To reduce the Old Library Maintenance budget line by \$10,000 from \$14,020 to \$4,020. Motion by Allyn Chivers, second by Carla Penfield. With a show of hands, motion failed with a vote of 1 in favor, 7 against.

Town Clerk:

No discussion.

Town Officer's Expense:

Carla Penfield asked for the status of possibly eliminating the Fire Department website and combining it with the town website. Selectman Robie stated that it will be looked into in 2014. Christine Watson added that she believed the Fire Chief would be happy to see it happen.

Treasurer:

No discussion.

Welfare:

No discussion.

Zoning Board:

No discussion.

Chairman Broadhead reviewed the budget changes made and provided a new bottom line of \$2,377,975 for the proposed town budget.

Motion: To approve the proposed town budget as amended. Motion by Chairman Broadhead, second by Allyn Chivers. With a show of hands, all in favor, motion carried.

Chairman Broadhead reviewed the expectations for the next meeting and dates for the next meetings.

Todd Allen stated a preference to have the amounts of the warrant articles prior to voting on a final budget recommendation.

Adjourn

Lacking further business, Chairman Broadhead entertained a motion to adjourn.

Motion: To adjourn. Motion by Todd Allen. Second by Christine Watson. All in favor, motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Recorded by Marlene Montminy