

**Meeting of the  
Candia Municipal Budget Committee  
Nov. 11, 2015  
Town Offices, Candia, NH**

**Members Present:** Chair Alynn Chivers, Matthew Broadhead, Dana Buckley, Kevin Coughlin, Mark Laliberte, Paul Leblond, Robert Stout, School Board Rep. Rebecca Cronk, Selectman's Rep. Carleton Robie

*Chair Lynn Chivers opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.*

**Answer questions from previous meeting**

After an introduction of the Municipal Budget Committee (MBC) members and members of the audience, Lynn Chivers stated that there were 18 questions that the MBC had for the Board of Selectmen and various department heads:

**1. Why is the \$10,000 for the master plan a line item rather than a warrant article?**

Selectman Scott Komisarek stated the Board of Selectmen determined that keeping the Master Plan on track was important enough to put into the budget. Laliberte asked if the voters chose a default budget in March, would this process continue. Komisarek said if the budget were voted into default, he believed the board would still find money in the budget. He also noted that Southern NH Planning Commission has an \$18k grant to write the transportation chapter of the Master Plan. Chivers asked if the money could go into other parts of the Master Plan. Komisarek said we could not. However, he thinks the amount to do the entire transportation section is a bargain as compared to other towns.

**2. How did you arrive at a 3 percent COLA?**

Selectman Robie handed out a worksheet crafted by Selectman Boyd Chivers, which look as the past six years of cost of living adjustments (COLA). Boyd Chivers stated that the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which is a measure of inflation, went up 10.92 percent in the past six years, while the average salary of a Town of Candia employee went up 7.2 percent. Boyd Chivers stated that it was the will of the board to reverse that trend. Laliberte asked what percent of town employees had been with the town six years or more. Chivers said the majority of them were; Robie said there have been two part-time one full-time police officer here less than six years.

**3. What does the cemetery administration line item represent?**

Robie said this represents the secretary; this is a new expense, because they are meeting monthly. This is for minutes at those trustees meeting.

**4. What is the \$400 increase for equipment for the cemetery?**

Robie said maintenance has been deferred on equipment and for the purchase of a weed whacker.

**5. Why is the direct assistance budget so much larger than we have been spending?**

Robie stated this was a \$60,000 line item a few years ago. The number is a small amount for a town of this size, but still helps if someone has a particularly difficult time. If we have a family

that is in real need, we have the money available. Stout asked if the money could be used for other items? Robie said yes, but at the end of the year after all expenses are addressed.

**6. Will the auditor's adjustment change the legal expense line?**

Robie said the audit's adjustment has been completed and the line will not change. There was an adjustment of \$16,564.25, which paid 2014 bills paid in 2015.

**7. What is the square footage of the two roofs that you plan to replace at Moore Park?**

Lynn Chivers received an e-mail from Building Inspector Dave Murray, which states the roof is 2,700 ft<sup>2</sup> and will require 27 roofing squares. This comes to just under \$300 per square, which he states is a massive discount from the average of \$400 per square that many companies charge. In addition, the intention is to remove the old roof.

**8a. What are the hours of coverage for the police department? How many officers do we currently have?**

Police Chief McGillen stated that the town has 24/7 police coverage. There are five full-time officers, four part-time officers, the Chief, the administrative assistance, and a part-time animal control officer. Generally shifts run from Monday-Friday (Monday-Thursday for sergeants) 12 noon-10 p.m.; the overnight shift runs from 10 p.m.-8 a.m. (Tuesdays-Wednesday 2 p.m.-12 midnight); weekends and other opening we use part-time guys. He believes this staffing level taxes the department's manpower. Chivers asked if there is overlap. The Sergeant and Chief cover the day. Coughlin asked if calls for service increase or decrease on the weekend? McGillen states that weekends are busier, but especially during warm weather. Coughlin also asked if there were any alcohol enforcement details. McGillen said they apply for highway safety grants for that and for purchasing equipment. Buckley asked what happens if more coverage is needed? McGillen said they rely on mutual aid (help from other towns). There is no cost for mutual aid.

**8b. Why such a big increase in the special police officer wages?**

McGillen said Candia has \$41,000 in this line item in 2015. However, the heroin epidemic is making things worse. This increase is to make sure we have more visibility from part-timers to deal with increased activity. In addition, often a full-time officer is injured and part-timer needs to cover. As a comparison, Auburn's line item is up to \$125,000. Cronk stated that there is confusion in what a special police officer is; could future budgets call the line item "part-time officers." McGillen thinks he can do this.

**8c. Why is there not a larger decrease in the police officer wages since we lost a full time officer?**

McGillen said last year's 2.5 percent COLA increase ate into that number, as did the hiring of two part-time officers to make up for the loss.

**9. Please provide the current spreadsheets that show each cruiser with date purchased, mileage and maintenance record.**

McGillen provided the MBC a spreadsheet with the requested information. The next vehicle to be purchased by the town would likely be an SUV, which would take Cruiser 5 off the road, estimated to happen in 2017.

**10. Why is the gasoline line so high?**

McGillen stated that the unpredictability of gas prices gives the police department flexibility if gas prices increase. Department wants to err on the side of caution.

**11. Why has the police equipment line gone from \$2,800 to \$8,000? What are the planned purchases?**

McGillen stated that the following were the anticipated purchases in 2016:

- Two Tasers,
- A cruiser radar,
- Police radio for cruiser,
- A breaching kit (for active shooter incidents), and
- Ballistic shield.

McGillen said many of these purchases are to address a Brentwood-type incident (referring to a shootout that happened in 2014 that led to the death of a Brentwood Police Department officer) Currently; the town would have to borrow such items if such an incident happened in Candia. In addition, the new Tasers would have cameras. Coughlin asked if there was a cloud-based storage system for the videos taken from the Tasers. Chief will look at that. In addition, training and the cartridges for them are in a separate line item. McGillen said the ideal situation would be for each full-time officer to have a Taser while on duty. Laliberte asked what would happen to the older Tasers. McGillen said if there were no good trade-in for them, he would keep them for use by the part-time officers. However, Coughlin stated that there might be concern if an out-of-warranty product is used.

**12. Property appraisal – What exactly will be done for the extra \$2,500? With limited buildings, why can't it be done in the time currently allotted?**

Robie read off a statement on what the assessor's office does, which was provided to the MBC members. Robie then stated that the detailed sales verification survey must be completed in order for the NH Department of Revenue Administration to complete the town's equalization ratio. For the last two years, it has been put off until January because of budget shortfalls.

**13. Solid waste – Facility O & M & electricity line – What is being planned and what process will be used to complete the work?**

According to Selectman Craig Sandler, this money will be to re-insulate part of the building to prevent frozen pipe – specifically the cinder-block office and the bathroom. Spray insulation will replace damaged fiberglass insulation, which was caused by rodents. Sandler estimates the cost around \$10,000. The original bid was \$15,000, which Selectman Sandler felt was exorbitant. There are two more bids outstanding.

**14. What are the tax collector's fees?**

Candice Stamatelos, the town's tax collector, sent to the MBC a schedule of fees. She stated fees are dictated by local condition as well as by NH RSA.

**15. Tax collector – Meetings, dues, fees, certs, mileage line – Why has this doubled?**

Stamatelos, in what she sent to the MBC, stated that the increase was due to the hiring and training of the new Deputy Tax Collector. The previous one did not attend annual conferences or go for certification classes, and issue she would like to change.

**16. Why the need for surveillance cameras? What are the future annual costs?**

Donna Hetzel had conversations were had with the Tax Collector, the Town Clerk, and Deputy Town Clerk about surveillance cameras outsider their offices. They felt it was a good idea, considering they are open two nights a week. There would be a camera facing each of the windows and one in the main entry. In addition, there would be two cameras that would oversee the parking lot. The cost addresses the purchase, installation, and linking them to the Candia Police Department’s existing surveillance equipment. Coughlin ask McGillen about how this system will tie into the Candia Police Department system.

At that point, Broadhead asked to go into non-public session.

**Motion:** As authorized by NH RSA 91-A:3, II (i) – Consideration of matters relating to the preparation for and the carrying out of emergency functions, including training to carry out such functions, developed by local or state safety officials that are directly intended to thwart a deliberate act that is intended to result in widespread or severe damage to property or widespread injury or loss of life. (1st – Broadhead, 2nd – Coughlin)

**Roll call – as required by NH RSA 91-A:3, I (b):**

Chair Chivers – Aye

Broadhead – Aye

Buckley – Aye

Coughlin – Aye

Laliberte – Aye

Leblond – Aye

Stout – Aye

Cronk – Aye

Robie – Aye

**Approved 9-0**

*The public meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.*

*The public meeting reconvened at 8:02 p.m.*

Lynn Chivers stated the vote was to seal minutes regarding part of the discussion of Question 16.

**17. What is planned for projects over the next year at the Smyth building?**

Carla Penfield, a member of the Smyth Memorial Building trustees, sent a letter to the MBC that addressed projects for the building for 2016:

- Continue the process of restoring windows
- Removing old carpet in basement
- Possible repair of chimney
- Possible new door in basement
- Paint trim

- General upkeep and maintenance

Robie stated most of funds going toward window restoration. Leblond said the window and roof repair numbers listed in the 2015 budget were not adding up to the expenditures. Robie noted the money was encumbered from 2014 budget to fix the remaining windows. After looking at that section, the numbers added up.

**18. Town officer’s expense – The support software/license fees also includes hardware. Shouldn’t hardware be a separate line? What exactly are all the different amounts shown?**

Administrative Assistant Andria Hansen sent to the MBC an e-mail addressing the different increases. The line items are as follows:

**Vision Governmental Solutions**

Property appraisal:	\$5,350
Appraisal info online:	\$1,550
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Vision Total:	\$6,900

**BMSI (Business Management Systems Inc.)**

Appraisal interface:	\$557
Fund accounting:	\$2,442
Payroll:	\$1,300
Tax collector:	\$2,176
Database server:	\$208
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BMSI Total:	\$6,683

**First Choice Networks (town’s IT company)**

Support and maintenance:	\$16,314
Firewall server:	\$390
Three new computers:	\$2,250
Miscellaneous (software not in current maintenance agreement):	\$1,000
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First Choice Total:	\$19,954

**Grand Total** **\$33,537 (Rounded to \$33,600)**

**Vote on preliminary town budget**

Lynn Chivers asked if the MBC wanted to vote on the budget tonight or tomorrow night; consensus was to vote on budget tonight. She would read off each department (as opposed to each line item) and if any member of the board wanted to discuss it, she would open discussion up regarding the entire department.

**Advertising and Regional Association (Master Plan):**

Coughlin said he was in favor of making it a warrant article:

**Motion:** That \$10,000 from the Advertising and Regional Association line item be stricken from the budget and recommend it be placed as a warrant article (1st – Coughlin, 2nd – Chivers)

**Discussion on the motion:** Coughlin expresses concern with the gap between the default budget and the proposed budget, and thinks voters will vote for a Master Plan warrant again, just as they did in March 2015. Lynn Chivers concurred. Robie stated that three previous attempts to get it passed (2012, 2013, 2014), the warrant article failed. Broadhead stated that if the warrant article fails, no money cannot be spent on the issue; Robie said that anyone can alter the budget at the deliberative session (i.e. ask to raise the budget \$25,000 to have the entire Master Plan completed). Lynn Chivers and Broadhead reaffirmed that if the voters reject a warrant article, no money from the town budget can go toward that purpose, even if it's placed in there at deliberative session. Robie explained the rationale for having a master plan update.

Leblond says he sees both sides of the issue. He thinks the likelihood of the warrant article failing is slim, especially if the Selectmen and MBC put their weight behind it. Laliberte said the 2015 Master Plan warrant was recommended by Selectmen 3-1 and MBC 8-1 last year, and passed with 70 percent of the vote. He believes the mood in the town is to continue to move forward with this. Broadhead thinks it's bad budgeting. He thinks the boards should actively push for the article. Cronk agrees, thinking that if it's that important, then it should be in the budget. She also believes our town is "warrant happy," and thinks people get weary toward the end of the warrant. Robie then expressed his concern with the budget process. Stout agreed with Robie and thinks that the budget is reasonable.

Robie then stated he thinks the MBC doesn't have to live with the decisions of the budget, the Selectmen do. He said the Selectmen have a good idea of what the residents want. Leblond took issue with that, stating that the Selectmen cut \$80,000 at Deliberative Session.

**Motion failed 3-6** (*Chivers, Coughlin, and Laliberte voted aye*)

**Direct assistance:**

Lynn Chivers thinks the number is too high; that \$15,000 is too high. However, there is no motion to address the line item.

**Police:**

Laliberte stated that the heroin epidemic is hitting NH towns. He is comfortable with the police department increasing their budget. Cronk said she knew someone who had their home broken into and the amount of time spent with the investigation. She is also comfortable with the number.

**Smyth Memorial Building:**

Leblond asked why the Fitts Museum does not have a similar line item. Robie agreed and said it's something we should look at in the future. Chivers said we should look to see if the Museum is a private entity and whether there are restrictions to doing it this way.

**Motion:** To approve the selectmen's budget of \$2,540,825 (1st – Robie, 2nd – Broadhead)  
**Approved 9-0.**

**New Business**

Lynn Chivers mentioned to the board members that since the MBA voted for the town's preliminary budget, the Thursday, Nov. 12, 2015 meeting of the board is cancelled. The next

meeting will be Wednesday, Dec. 2, 2015, at the Smyth Library. The purpose of the meeting is review the preliminary budget of the Candia School Board and prepare questions for the meeting with the board and SAU 15 leadership on Wednesday, Dec. 9, at the Moore School.

**Adjournment**

**Motion:** To adjourn (1st – Laliberte, 2nd – Cronk) **Approved 9-0.**

*Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.*