

**Meeting of the  
Candia Municipal Budget Committee  
PUBLIC HEARING  
Dec. 16, 2015  
Smyth Public Library, Candia, NH**

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

**Members Absent:** Matthew Broadhead

*Chair Chivers opened the meeting at 7:12 p.m.*

**Public Hearing**

Chivers opened up the meeting, and through the budget section-by-section.

**Building Inspection** – Citizen Judith Szot asked the committee if the building inspector is full time. Chivers said yes.

**Direct Assistance** – Szot asked how much spent so far this year this year in direct assistance. Cronk answered that the town has spent \$6,733 as of Oct. 31, 2015. Chivers then stated how much was spent in previous years

- 2014 – \$5,415
- 2013 – \$22,569
- 2012 – \$26,251
- 2011 – \$36,192

Citizen Carla Penfield asked why we are spending \$25,000 this year when in 2014 and 2015 the expenditure was much lower. Robie said he wanted to make sure we are protected if there is a downturn or numerous emergencies. Coughlin asked what is done at the end of the year with excess cash? Robie said its part of the general budget, so the town can encumber it for other purposes. In addition, the remainder can be used to cover unreserved fund balance (the town has an 11.5 percent balance it maintains). If that is already covered, it goes toward lowering the tax rate

**Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)** – Citizen Ingrid Byrd as why the Board of Selectmen increased every line item. Robie said it reflect COLA increase of 3 percent. Szot asked if all employees (full- and part-time) were getting COLA increases Robie said yes.

**Health Officer** – Penfield asked what is the spray line item. Chivers said it's the permit for mosquito spraying the town is required to obtain, whether it sprays or not.

**Highway Department** – Penfield asked if the increase based on a worst-case scenario. Chivers said there was an increase for the payroll. What was the hourly rate? What is the current race?

The former rate was \$70/hour, with an increase up to \$90/hour. Road Agent Dennis Lewis said the department has \$91,000 left in its line item for 2015, which includes \$17,000 reimbursement from FEMA for winter storms and \$75,000 allocated from a 2015 warrant article. Lewis also said the raise in his department went from \$70 to \$80 in 2015. He said it was his understanding that one-half of the raise was in place for 2015 and the other half would be addressed later. He is paying his nine plow-drivers \$80/hour (Coughlin asked how many plow-drivers the town had).

Penfield asked if there was a discussion about fuel prices being at historic lows, but that the line item does not reflect the decrease. Robie said that gas prices have gone down about \$1.00 since last year and this was making up for the lower amount the plow-drivers received. When plow-drivers are paid, they are expected to cover all costs, including fuel and vehicle maintenance. Penfield said the Municipal Budget Committee (MBC) should be looking at fuel trends for the next year when it evaluates the budget. She also expects that this exercise should to be addressed by each department. Stout said the police budget reflected a lower fuel line item in '16 from '15.

**Insurance** – Chivers said we have insurance numbers. Robie said the premium went down 5 percent. The estimate was a 20 percent increase. Therefore, there is an approximately a \$4,000 decrease from the health insurance line item. Robie said the number always varies until employees elect which type of insurance they purchase. Penfield believes the buyout number for those that don't take health insurance is too high (\$3,500); Robie said upcoming changes in the ACA insurance law will address that.

**Legal Expenses** – Robie said Upton & Hatfield raised their rates. Szot asked how much legal costs have run. Cronk said the amount as of Oct. 31, 2015, was \$15,214. Chivers said the previous four years were the following:

- 2014 – \$17,192
- 2013 – \$22,948
- 2012 – \$23,270
- 2011 – \$23,889

**Parks and Recreation** – Szot asked if increase in budget is for replacement of roof at the Moore Park pavilion and restrooms? Robie said yes.

**Police** – Penfield asked what the equipment line item increase is for? Chivers read the minutes from the Nov. 11, 2015, MBC meeting, in which the committee asked the same question. The increase is for:

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

Laliberte explained that much of this equipment was if an active shooter incident happened in our town (or nearby municipality).

**Solid Waste** – Penfield asked about the increase in Facility O&M & Electricity line item and what that stood for. Chivers stated it stands for “Facility Operation and Maintenance and Electricity.” Chivers then read the minutes from the Nov. 11, 2015, MBC meeting, in which the committee asked the same question. The increase is for replacing insulation damaged from rodents. The insulation would be blown into the walls in the cinder-block office and bathrooms. This also involves removing the exterior wall to access the area.

**Town Officers** – Byrd asked what the increases were based on. Robie said it was to purchase a new copier, surveillance cameras, and new office software.

Other Questions – Penfield asked where the 3 percent COLA increase comes from? Chivers said the selectmen did a six-year historical analysis. Increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) from 2011 until today was 10.92 percent, while salary increases went up 7.2 percent. The selectmen also looked at Social Security increases, which were 10.2 percent. Penfield liked how we got the number, though expressed some concern that many in the private sector were not getting raises this year commensurate to this increase. Szot asked if there were any people receiving merit pay. Robie stated one officer gets a merit pay increase, and this is based on an agreement made between the department and the selectmen.

*Chivers closed the public hearing at 7:55 p.m.*

#### **Approval of Minutes**

**Motion:** Approve the minutes from Nov. 11, 2015, as amended to address grammatical changes. (1st – Stout, 2nd – Coughlin) **Passed 8-0**

At that point, Coughlin 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 – Stout, 2nd – Coughlin)

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

Chair Chivers – Aye

Buckley – Aye

Coughlin – Aye

Laliberte – Aye

Leblond – Aye

Stout – Aye

Cronk – Aye

Robie – Aye

**Approved 8-0**

*Chivers closed the budget committee meeting at 7:59 p.m.*

*Chivers reconvened the budget committee meeting at 8:01 p.m.*

Chivers stated the vote was to approve the seal minutes from the non-public session on Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2015.

**Motion:** Approve the minutes from Dec. 2, 2015, meeting. (1st – Leblond, 2nd – Cronk) **Passed 6-0** (*Coughlin and Laliberte abstain*)

**Discussion on budget**

The sense of the board was to keep Direct Assistance line item as is. In addition, Chivers stated that the Jan. 13, 2016, meeting of the MBC will have the final number for health insurance and the default budget number that will be on the town warrant.

**Motion:** To approve the selectmen’s budget of \$2,540,825 (1st – Leblond, 2nd – Robie) **Approved 8-0.**

**New Business**

Chivers reminded board members that sign ups for public office run from January 20-29, 2016. The following MBC positions will be on the ballot:

- Three-year term (two slots)
- One-year term (one slot)

**Recess**

**Motion:** Recess to a supplemental public meeting Jan. 13, 2016, at the town offices at 7:00 p.m. (1st – Cronk, 2nd – Laliberte) **Approved 8-0.**

*Meeting recessed at 8:12 p.m.*