

Meeting of the Candia Municipal Budget Committee
Approved Minutes
December 14, 2016

Town Office Building

Members Present:

Chair Allyn Chivers, Selectman's Rep. Susan Young, School Board Rep. Rebecca Cronk, Paul Leblond, Jodi Hedstrom, Bob Stout, Susan Gill, Kevin Coughlin, Dana Buckley.

Chairman Chivers opened the meeting at 7:00pm.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Chivers started the meeting explaining how the process would go with regards to reviewing the budget. The committee would go over the towns budget section by section and the public would be given an opportunity to ask questions and state comments after each section. Extra copies of the budget were made available.

Chairman Chivers pointed out that the committee reduced the Direct Assistance line by \$5,000.00. That \$5,000.00 was moved to Parks and Rec. Repairs.

Selectman Young clarified that if someone should move to town that needs this assistance then it would need to come from somewhere else.

Chairman Chivers pointed out the final insurance amounts were updated today so the amounts on the budget sheet that people were looking at were the final amounts.

Selectman Young questioned the total percentage change was -18.51%.

Chairman Chivers clarified that the Budget Committee did not reduce the Selectman's request for insurances; they just didn't have the exact amounts before tonight.

Selectman Young stated the Selectman changed the plan.

Donna Becker let the budget committee know that the property and liability insurance looks like its down to \$18,000.00 but that's because in 2017 the town is going to be changing to a calendar year. The town is paid through June, 2017. In 2018 it will be going back up.

Chairman Chivers explained that the Parks and Rec line, park supplies and repairs, the Selectman Requested \$1,600.00 and the Budget Committee increased that to \$6,600.00. The increase was due to the \$5,000.00 taken from direct assistance.

Chairman Chivers explained that line item, Planning Board Master Plan, the Planning Board & Selectman put in \$10,000.00 for the Budget, the Budget Committee reduced to 0.

Carleton Robie, alternate to the Planning Board, Carlton stated that the selectman did put in the 10,000 dollars in the budget for 2017, it was in the previous budget 2016, it was used for the master plan. In 2015, there was a \$5,000.00 warrant article that was supported by the planning board & select board and passed overwhelmingly. Selectman felt it was necessary to move forward with some planning for the community. He explained that the town was obviously going to need revenue, upwards of \$750,000.00 to a \$ 1,000,000.00 in the next 10 years, its coming. He explained that there's a warrant article for \$15,000.00 for a master plan for the Candia village for the four corners in the village. He felt \$10,000.00 is a small amount to ask for with the amount of effort that goes into it, with all the volunteers, the selectman as well as the planning board. He felt that the community would get three times the amount of work then if you had to hire a planner. There are serious needs at exit 3 that need to be met if the town ever wants to offer it to someone. Carlton feels it's a wise investment for the community. Also some planning to reap the natural resources from some of the property that the town owns.

Paul Leblond thought that this money was tied into the Exit 3 warrant article to change the use of that property, which is how it was explained.

Carleton Robie stated that it wasn't part of the master plan. He thought with out planning there would be no new revenue and that the town needs it. He stated that the town is behind in a lot of areas. That level funding puts the town further behind each and every year. As far as developer coming, his thoughts are the town needs to have a plan to reap the most revenue on that property and others.

Every community spends money on planning. He felt that if we stop planning, its hard to get people to start up again.

Chairman Chivers stated to Carlton that, that was what they were told by the Selectman.

Selectman Young asked Carlton if he has an update on the Master Plan. Also she wanted to know where the money was going.

Carleton Robie explained that they were very close but hadn't seen the final copy yet but thought it was being prepared.

Selectman Scott Komisarek said the Master Plan should be complete and ready in March or April for the \$10,000.00 that we spent. He said that it can't be rushed it, that it is a very important document. You don't want to cut corners.

Selectman Young asked if we pay SNHU another \$10,000.00 again.

Selectman Scott Komisarek said no they are all paid.

Kevin Coughlin, asked what the request for \$10,000.00 being used for from this budget, also what does it pay for.

Chairman Chivers said, that the selectman need to tell the budget committee what the money is for, because the selectman told the budget committee something different?

Selectman Young stated that the Planning Board requested the funds.

Carleton Robie said the \$10,000 is in the Planning Boards budget. He also answered Kevin Coughlin, and said that the money was for planning for a few areas that could be looked at. Possibly engineering for Exit 3, which could help bring the most money for the lot.

Al Hall didn't understand why the budget committee just cut the money after knowing that the planning board and select board recommend it.

Selectman Boyd Chivers wanted everyone to know that the vote for this money was not unanimous. He supported the \$10,000 as a stand alone warrant article so the people of the town could decide if they wanted to allocate the money towards a master plan that no one has even seen yet. He felt that the town should see if what is written in the plan to see if its something they wanted to get behind. One part that Selectman Chivers saw, had 2 acre zoning and didn't feel the people would want that. He felt that putting it in the budget that way was basically forcing the people to do it.

Carleton Robie explained that the master plan has nothing to do with the \$10,000 it has to do with planning. He said the people of this town know that they need to plan. He explained without a plan you're going to fail.

Selectman Scott Komisarek didn't feel that the average voter of the community would understand what the warrant article meant. That the Selectman did vote unanimously for the \$10,000 to be in the budget and asked that Boyd Chivers check his facts. He said the people of this town elect town officials to do the job they were elected to do. He felt the town of Candia is stagnant, look at the roads, the town needs to create revenue. The Fire Department is in need of a \$250,000 addition and an ambulance. This \$10,000 is an investment. Also he stated that it he didn't feel it was the budget committees right after the Selectman and the Planning boards voted unanimously to put the money in.

Bob Stout explained that this discussion was very helpful that there was some confusion about exit 3 being the focus.

Selectman Scott Komisarek said he might have confused people when he used exit 3 as an example as to what the money could or would go for.

Kevin Coughlin agreed that we must plan, year or two ago a piece of property was made available, I agreed on getting it, but there was no plan so I voted against it. It isn't good stewardship of the town's money to allocate money with out a plan. He didn't like the idea of not having a plan for the money to be spent. If the selectman are in charge of the money, then he could get behind it.

Selectman Young didn't feel that the selectman would be in charge of how the money was spent, that the planning board would be using the money the way they saw fit. She felt putting the money back into the budget wouldn't get the results that Kevin Coughlin was looking for.

Jodi Hedstrom explained that if the planning board gets the master plan in April and they feel they want to look at something again they'd have to wait a whole year do it.

She felt now with the new information, she felt comfortable giving them \$10,000.

Carlton Robie the Master Plan may come in and everything is perfect but still need to continue to plan. Most towns have a planner that works for them full time. We have a bunch of volunteers that are doing the same thing.

Dean Young doesn't think there's a question whether we need the planning. He felt it should be in the budget so the money is definitely there so the planning can continue.

Kevin Coughlin said he was inclined to put the money back into the budget but also felt that it would pass as warrant article too based on the fact that it was passed overwhelmingly.

Selectman Scott Komisarek said that in addition they are actively searching out grants. When you look at the Master Plan from 2003, in 13 years no one worked on it. Right now he has the people that want to work on it, we need to continue the momentum.

Smyth Building Maintenance; the selectman supported \$18,610.00. Budget committee reduced it to \$ 8,500.00.

Selectman Young wanted everyone to know that the vote was not unanimous.

Smyth building trustee Carla Penfield, gave a history of the building and maintenance that has gone on over the last 15 years.

Jodi Hedstrom asked if the money was strictly being used for maintaining the building; Jodi said that a couple of years ago there was a warrant article to redo the Smyth Building, the project was voted down by the town, so it looked as though the project was still underway in a different way. And asked if this was the case.

Carla Penfield What was voted down was to put in an elevator, a kitchen, repair all of the windows. This is only to maintain it and fix the things that need to be fixed. Nearly all the windows needed to be repaired, they all leaked. Everything is being done exactly they way they were when they were built. There's been talk about the town offices using the building, others thought a community center.

Selectman Young stated that the Smith building needs a well, plumbing and a septic system, and that the amount can be raised on the budget right now.

Carla Penfield felt that just getting the money to maintain the building is hard enough. She feels that there's no rush to get the well, plumbing and septic done right now.

Becky Cronk wanted to know how many windows in the building and how many were done as of now.

Carla Penfield responded saying that the building has 24 windows and 12 are done. The 3,600 will restore two more windows.

Paul Leblond asked if the building would be ADA compliant.

Carla Penfield the law doesn't require it because its historical building. But if the town wanted to use it for the public it would need a ramp.

Sharon DeWitt explained if the town ever wants to use it, it does have to be ADA compliant.

Selectman Boyd Chivers said the Selectman appointed a group of trustees to look after this building. We have confidence in the trustees; we were disappointed with the budget committee's decision.

Becky Cronk stated that she wants to preserve the exterior of the building but is not in favor of the work proposed for the inside.

Dana Buckley stated that regardless of whether there is a public use for the building, if they don't continue to fund it at some level, it will slowly deteriorate. Thought possibly there may be some other public benefit.

Bob Stout commented that the explanation was much better than the previous meeting but still feels the budget committee needs a plan, that its a beautiful building. It does have value. But when he read the minutes for the Selectman and they're talking about the regular budget with push backs about giving a 1% raise for our employees, which would have been about \$8,500.00, were giving more to a building we don't have a use for. He would rather invest the money in people. People are asking that the committee watch their tax dollars.

Paul Leblond the warrant article, failed three years ago. He feels like the committee is doing something that the town already said they didn't want to do. I want to keep the building but doesn't feel that putting in wells and a septic is something the budget committee wants to do.

Carlton Robie explained that if the town doesn't at least keep the windows and a roof on it you might as well keep driving by it and watching it fall in the ground. We didn't have a plan for the old dump site but that finally got cleaned up.

We may never get a use for the building, except as a monument.

Chairman Chivers asked that before she closes the public session if anyone had any further comments or questions.

Public Session Ended

Kevin Coughlin made a motion to add the \$10,000 back in to the planning board budget.

Jodi Hedstrom seconded.

Chairman Chivers was uncomfortable with the decision to put the money back in until the town could see the master plan and agree with it. That there is a warrant article for \$15,000, not just for planning but that it was just in the general vicinity. Lynn said she didn't see the wording. Looked to Selectman Young to clarify the wording.

Selectman Young explained that Andrea wasn't in this day so she didn't have a copy of it.

Chairman Chivers Explained it's a separate issue but wanted everyone to know that the other existed.

Dana Buckley it was his understanding that the \$10,000 wouldn't have to be used for the master plan that it could be used for other things.

Chairman Chivers agreed that that was correct.

Selectman Young stated that she hoped someday that all the boards could get together and work on these things.

Selectman Scott Komisarek explained that the warrant article was for engineering for the two dangerous intersections in town. After the engineering there will be no cost to the town due to grants.

Chairman Chivers stated that the warrant articles will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

Motion to put the \$10,000 back into the budget passed 8 – 1

Opposed; Chairman Chivers

Town Building expenses.

Selectman Young made motion to put the \$10,110.00 money back into the operating expense.

Seconded **Dana Buckley**

Susan Gill explained that she wasn't comfortable doing this without a plan. No issue with maintaining it but without a plan she felt it was maintaining in an unusable state.

Kevin Coughlin felt the same way, death by a thousand cuts, felt it was a perpetual ornament. No valid use for it.

Jodi Hedstrom said the \$10,000 touches nothing. Just the windows are \$22,000, that by time they finished the last window the walls would be falling down. She felt we're either all in or all out. Not to mention the town didn't want it, but were still doing it. The taxpayers didn't want it.

Selectman Young Explained she was all about changing the line item by \$ 30 or \$40,000. She disagreed with instant gratification; she's from a different generation. She believes the town can save the money and fix it slowly. She's not apposed to saving the money to make the repairs.

Jodi Hedstrom explained that the taxpayers didn't want it.

Discussion Ensued the motion failed.

In favor (2)

Sue Young
Dana Buckley

Opposed(7)

Bob Stout
Kevin Coughlin

Paul Leblond
Lynn Chivers

Susan Gill
Jodi Hedstrom
Becky Cronk

Susan Gill made a motion to fund the Smyth Building at the same level as last year, \$16,060.00

Seconded by **Bob Stout**

Motion passed at \$16,060.00 **All in favor** (9-0)

Salaries

Selectman Young motioned to propose a new line change to increase salaries to 2% as apposed to the 1% Cola for the employees for compensation due to rise in insurance increase. The employees, by going down to a much cheaper insurance saved the town upwards of \$20,000.00. All employees will get the 1% increase if the budget goes through. For full disclosure, she tried this on Monday at the selectman's

meeting, it was voted down 2-3 with Susan Young and Russ Dann supporting the raise. She said other selectman thought it was too late to make changes. She believes it raises it \$8,000.00 or so. Everyone received a sheet listing all employees with the years with the town and the salaries to date. She stated that she would like to label the line, wages/insurance compensation, whatever would make it legal. She continued, that the employees are asked to do all kinds of things, these people work hard for this town. She feels they deserve more than a 1% raise. Their benefits do not compete with other people doing the same job. She holds herself responsible for the insurance part, because of the cost, we went after that and went after that hard. That was a mistake on her part. The Selectman looked at other towns to compare pricing.

Becky Cronk felt the 2% increase for the staff was more than reasonable. That they used the Consumer Price Index for the teachers contract and that was 2.3% .

Selectman Young said that she didn't want to mislead anyone that there is someone making \$10 or so after seven or eight years with the town, that person will get more as compared to maybe the police chief. She said that it wouldn't be a 1% across the board.

Sharon Dewitt asked if the Budget Committee could add to the budget after closing the public hearing.

Chairman Chivers said this has never happened before.

Chairman Chivers reopened the meeting to the public for the purposes of discussing raising the budget for employee salaries.

Donna Becker was asked to explain the insurance options.

Dana Buckley said he believed there also was a \$750.00 deductible reimbursement for out of pocket.

Selectman Young made a motion to add a line named wage/insurance/misc. compensation adjustments and set the number at \$20,000 this would still leave the budget level funded.

Kevin Coughlin asked if this in our purview to say who gets what amount, felt that it wasn't the job of the select board.

Selectman Young Explained it was.

Jodi Hedstrom asked if the board of selectman would be deciding who gets the raises and who doesn't.

Selectman Young explained that the selectman make that decision now, that it was nothing different there.

Kevin Coughlin said he wasn't against it he wanted to make sure they could do it, that it wasn't well planned.

Selectman Young said she's trying another way to get this done.

Bob Stout said he was little nervous with this merit pool. He would be comfortable with the percentage increase for now and then get some feed back with how to

institute a merit pool system. Would like someone's expertise on how to handle this.

Becky Cronk agreed with Bob and thought revisit it in six months when someone who comes in that knows the market, knows what everyone should be making.

Selectman Young said that she is asking that the employees don't wait six months till someone comes in.

Becky Cronk said they are getting the 1% till the HR person comes in.

Selectman Young just doesn't want them to wait the six months.

Selectman Russ Dann Felt the simplest way would be to give them the 2% right away and look at the merit program after that.

Selectman Young the insurance doesn't affect every employee it only effects 13 out of 27 but, a wage increase would.

Selectman Mark Laliberte explained that the select board tried to get information from the NH Municipal Association wage and hourly guide, but the trouble was that the information came from the towns voluntarily and not all job descriptions matched. Determined they weren't going to be able to do it. Select Board came to a decision to put aside \$2,500.00 and bring in an HR person to work on salary adjustments.

Selectman Chairman Chivers wondered if Selectman Young could advocate a position that went against the board of selectmen's position. He felt that Selectman Young shouldn't have tried to circumvent the board of selectmen. He felt this was a violation of her duties as a rep to the board.

Selectman Young said, she would withdraw her motion. Selectman Young stated that she feels she did nothing wrong, but was not an attorney, but would check on it with one. She felt that she was upfront with everything that had transpired. With regards to the vote at the Selectmen's meeting Monday night, she stated that she wasn't the one that called all her fellow board members to suggest that they not support what Selectman Young was going to present, prior to the board meeting that evening.

Nicole James wanted to support Boyd Chivers comments, she felt uncomfortable with this.

Sharon DeWitt said she also supported Boyd Chivers. That all night they talked about the trustees do a good job and we should listen to them. The planning board did a good job and we should listen to them. The select board did not support this. Selectman Young was supposed to represent the select board that's why she was there.

Selectman Young asked to withdraw the motion and let it go.

Jody Hedstrom with regards to healthcare. The town is currently paying \$7694, it went down to \$6909 for their insurance to stay the same they have to pay \$8164. She felt that was a huge cut to their income.

Selectman Scott Komisarek gave a brief overview of how insurance and employee raises transpired.

Selectman Boyd Chivers recognized that they went to far with the health care, which is why they reversed it Monday night. He said that they are taking the employees health care cost into consideration. The board is trying to find a balance between heath care and keeping the budget down.

Becky Cronk moved to suspend the meeting till January 11th 2017 at 7:00pm.
Seconded by **Jodi Hedstrom**

All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Doreen Schibbelhute
Administrative Assistant