

BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
BUDGET WORKSHOP  
MARCH 24, 2009

Present: John Anderson, Susan Bransfield, Carl Chudzik, Mark Finkelstein,  
Brian Flood, Sharon Peters and Kathleen Richards

The budget workshop was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield.

PUBLIC WORKS

Public Works Director Richard Kelsey discussed the Public Works budget.

Highway

The budget reflects the layoff of a highway employee. Mr. Kelsey stated that the department has lost approximately 20% of its work force over the past 12 years. He voiced concern about another loss which would lead to a reduction in the level of service. Emergency services such as snow removal will be affected. Funding for tree removal and replacement has been increased. Road Materials has decreased by 25% and this will impact the road maintenance program. In last year's budget there was a combination of budget funding and town aid road for a total of \$275,000. There is \$209,000 in this year's budget.

Vehicle Maintenance

Equipment Repair was increased due to the number and age of the vehicles. The cost for parts has also increased. Sharon Peters questioned the \$950 figure for Gas & Diesel Fuel in this year's budget. Mr. Robinson estimated that approximately \$1,800 would be spent for this line by the end of the fiscal year. The figure for the 2009-2010 budget was based on the expenditures for the previous two years. Mrs. Bransfield asked if the \$110,000 for Equipment Repair would stay within budget. Mr. Kelsey stated that he will try to stay within the budget. If anything major occurs, he will bring the issue to the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Finkelstein commented on purchasing Chevrolets versus Fords since they are cheaper. Mr. Kelsey stated that there are pros and cons for each model. He will speak with the garage mechanic about this. Mrs. Bransfield commented on purchasing used vehicles versus new vehicles. Mr. Kelsey felt that front-line vehicles such as police cruisers and dump trucks should be purchased new.

Town Engineer

Budget was reduced slightly. Mr. Kelsey believed that there will be fewer subdivision applications in the coming year.

### Street Lighting

Mr. Kelsey anticipates having to add money back into the budget because last year's recommendation to shut off some street lights did not occur.

### Town Buildings Maintenance

A part-time custodial position will not be filled and service contracts have increased.

### Snow Removal

Road materials have increased significantly. The cost for salt is over budget. Mrs. Bransfield commented that she has had requests for using the treated salt on the roads instead of sand. Mr. Kelsey stated that the town uses its own sand and the cost would be significantly higher if an alternative treatment was used.

### Grounds Maintenance

Carl Johnson stated that this budget has been reduced by 28.97% overall. Overtime has been reduced and Mr. Johnson anticipates having to use the Overtime money for snow rather than prepping fields for games on the weekends. General Contract work has increased due to hiring firms to do tree work and top dressing on the fields. Equipment Repair/Rental increased due to the cost of renting equipment. A screening plant will be rented to screen compost which will be used on the fields. The material is located at the town's transfer station facility. Mr. Johnson stated that it would be helpful to have the part-time position reinstated. Mr. Finkelstein noted the drop in Regular Payroll in 2007-2008 and the large increase in 2008-2009. Mr. Johnson explained that an employee had taken a leave of absence for approximately 6 to 8 months and his position was filled with a temporary employee. Mr. Johnson explained that the summer help was given up last year in order to have a part-time person working 33 weeks from April to October.

Mr. Johnson stated that he has used the treated salt at the town buildings and it has worked very well.

### PARKS & RECREATION

Sean Dwyer, Director of Parks & Recreation, reviewed the budget. The Clerical Payroll increased because the current clerk's hours increased for Parks & Recreation and decreased for the Senior Center. The figure for revenues was based on what was raised last year. Tax funds from last year amounted to \$129,204. Estimated revenue for next year is \$75,000 leaving a decrease of \$54,000 to be generated by revenues. Mr. Dwyer stated that some fees have increased and he will be looking at vendor's fees and getting sponsors for special events. Ms. Peters asked for an example of how the fees will change. Mr. Dwyer stated that Kiddie Camps will increase from \$35 to \$50 per week and the Playground Plus program at Noyes Camp will increase from \$117 to \$130

per week. Ms. Peters asked if consideration has been given to raising the Noyes Camp fee. Mr. Dwyer stated that over \$10,000 in scholarships was taken in last year and he was uncomfortable with raising the fees too high.

Mr. Finkelstein questioned why the health benefits are included in the Parks & Recreation fund and not in other funds. Mr. Robinson stated that the intent is to put the burden on the participants rather than the taxpayers.

Mr. Finkelstein questioned the amount for overtime. Mrs. Bransfield stated that this is for the custodians to open and close the buildings for P & R activities

### LONG RANGE CAPITAL

An updated Capital Improvement Plan was provided to the BOS.

Bob Shea reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan. The Police Department requested four cruisers and the commission felt that a minimum of two would be needed at a cost of \$60,000. Mr. Shea commented that the commission would like to see the compactor program initiated at the Transfer Station. The town could see substantial savings by replacing the open containers. He stated that the Board of Selectmen needs to prioritize the commission's recommendations and come up with a five-year plan to fund capital items.

Mr. Robinson reviewed the listing of projects that are eligible for funding by the Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP). The projects total \$158,000.

The Board of Selectmen discussed the subject of leasing capital assets. Mr. Shea stated that the value and life expectancy of the item needs to be looked at.

Mrs. Bransfield commented on a recent letter in the newspaper about the brush pickup. She stated that the minutes of March, 2008 reflected that there would be no brush pickup in the spring of 2008. There will be a brush pickup in the spring of 2009.

Motion was made by Sharon Peters and seconded by Brian Flood to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Darna  
Recording Clerk