

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
BUDGET WORKSHOP DELIBERATION MINUTES
March 25, 2025**

Present: Michael Pelton-First Selectman, John Dillon, Michael Hernandez, Robert Hetrick, Tim Lavoy, Rick Sharr Jim Tripp

Others Present: Members of the Staff, Public and Media

1. FIRST SELECTMAN CALL BUDGET WORKSHOP TO ORDER

First Selectman Michael Pelton called the Budget Workshop to order at 7:04 p.m. in the Buck-Foreman Community Room located at 265 Main Street, Portland, CT.

2. Budget Deliberations

No issues with: P. 21 - First Selectman; P. 23 -Ethics Commission, P. 25 - Probate Court, P. 27 - Elections, P.29 Finance, P. 31 Collector of Revenue, P. 32 - Assessor, P. 35 - Bd. of Assessment, P. 37 - Town Counsel, P. 39 - Town Clerk, P. 41 - Central Services, P. 43 - Tech Dept., P. 47 -Fire Marshal, P. 49 - Emergency Dispatch, P. 51 - Police Dept., P. 53 Emergency Management, P. 55 - Bldg. Dept, P. 56 Public Wks. Dir., P. 61, Vehicle Maint., P. 63 - Tn. Engr., P. 65 - Street Lighting, P. 67 - Grounds Maint., P. 69 - Town Bldgs. Maint., P. 71 -Snow Removal, P. 73 - Planning Dept., P. 75 - ZEO, P. 77 - P&Z, P. 79 - Zon. Bd. of Appeals, P. 81 - Inland Wetlands Comm., P. 83 - Conservation Comm, P. 85 - Econ. Devl. Comm., P. 87 - Cap. Expend Comm., P. 89 - Health Dept., P. 91- Envl. Health, P. 93 -Social Services, P. 95 - Senior Center, P. 99 - Portland Library, P. 100-101, P. 103 - Risk Management, P.105 - Debt Service, P. 109 - Town Contingency, P. 113 - Sewer, P. 119 - Animal Control, P. 122 - Town Aid Road Fund, P. 125 - Youth Services Dept.

Changes: P. 44 - Fire Dept 44, adjustment suggested for stipends; 52 members to 58.

Fire Chief Puida: Both positions funded. Didn't fund Training Position. \$22,400 increase.

P. 58 - Highway Dept.: Increase Tree Service by \$2,000.

P. 97 - Municipal Agent for Elderly - Van Drivers Stipend - Increase to \$38,000 (per R. Hetrick.)

P. 107 - Interfund Transfers Out - Increase open space for parking lot on Main St. to \$66,000 this year

P. 107 - Transfers Out 90004 drop by \$5,000. 90005 drop by \$5,000

Q. for M. Lastrina re container for bulky waste and cover. Container accumulates snow, ice, rain, covers would make sense. We are paying to get rid of water. Concern was expressed re the food waste program and whether it make sense to continue. \$4,000 to cover.

Questions: BOE: Tim Lavoy asked Dr. Britton about 7% reimbursement. A. We don't know because we don't know what will happen on the federal level. So this year it was 62, last year 67.

R. Hetrick asked Dr. Britton: How are you doing with your budget this year. A. We are in a better place this year than last year. What did you put in your budget for new hires? Nothing.

R. Sharr asked Bob Shea re boiler repairs. Bob Shea: We are making repairs every day. We do a lot of repairs ourselves. We need to put more money into our schools. Trying to become more efficient every day.

Q. for Andy Dionne, Parks & Rec. Concern re shortage of facilities if one school closes and the payroll increase. A. Payroll went up due to CT minimum wage increase. Andy told how the various schools are used every day.

p 35 Cap. Improvements. Hetrick: His issue was school bond coming off and not spending enough for school improvements for middle-HS. Minimum in cap improvements. With that money being freed up, we should see more for cap. improvements. Hernandez thought debt service was going to go toward cap. improvements. How did the 105,000 number come up? Dillon: Used examples of sitting on personal car so long that it has no trade-in value. The HS-Middle not going anywhere and we only funded \$105,000 for them. Bob Shea did an excellent job going through line-by-line trying to identify the things done by maintenance. Every item is tremendous. If they are trying to keep the cost of replacement down by doing maintenance, he needs more than \$100,000. Tim Lavoy said he always wished that when a bond was paid, they would be able to use some money for the school maintenance and repair. Michael Hernandez asked Bob Shea about the fund balance he uses for maintenance. He came up with possible improvements for air quality with the first \$450,000 if it were available. The rooftop units need to be replaced. Some things at schools hold him back from making repairs. Tom explained where the \$157,000 came from. Question for Dr. Britton: Is it possible to close one school this fall. A. Definitely not. It would be way too destructive.

P,114 - Sewer Department: R. Hetrick re Brainerd Place and the septic trucks. When Brainerd Place comes on line, we should look at it and consider to take it there vs. E. Hampton. Maybe early next year, they can start doing something.

P. 117 - Water Dept.: It was a wet year; people weren't watering as much, was down substantially. Now looking at 12% increase. Some is for additional cost for water. Jim Tripp said the issue is how do we do this without looking to do anything with rate. We have been running a surplus in water. Look at water costs. We run well more in the spring. We don't know how negotiations will go, the concern is with rates. We don't know what water costs will be in November. MDC is considering a new charge. We will have to watch the budget really close. Brainerd is monitoring it with their own eqpt.

P. 127 Resource Recovery re bags and stickers. They have enough for two years. M. Lastrina said they may need a small budget for large bags and stickers. Tom explained where \$15,000 came from, buy volume, depends on need of size.

3. Adjourn Budget Workshop

John Dillon made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Tim Lavoy, all were in favor; meeting adjourned at 10:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Hoy
Sharon Hoy, Board Clerk