

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, January 16, 2018

7:00 PM

Town Hall – Selectmen’s Meeting Room

Members present: Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson and Brian Boyle

Members absent: None

Call to order: Chairman Cote called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. The entire meeting can be viewed by going to:

http://new.townhallstreams.com/stream.php?location_id=75&id=15159

Agenda Item #1: Veterans Agent budget (543)

- Veterans Agent James Cabral presented his budget:
 - The mission of the Veterans Agent is to take care of needy veterans residing in Bolton. Under Chapter 115 of M.G.L., the Commonwealth provides a program of financial and medical assistance for indigent veterans and their dependents. Qualifying veterans and their dependents receive necessary financial assistance for food, shelter, clothing, housing supplies, and medical care based on a formula that takes into account the number of dependents and income sources.
 - The Advertising line item (\$100) is used to publicize the Veterans Day breakfast. The Meetings line item (\$500) is used to pay for the Veterans Day breakfast.
 - The Veterans Benefits line item (\$16,800) is often used to help cover out-of-pocket medical expenses like office visits or prescription drug co-pays. Mr. Cabral said that it is also used to reimburse for the cost of Medicare premiums. Whatever amount the town spends from this line item, it gets reimbursed 75% by the state. Currently, Bolton has two veterans and one surviving spouse who receive these services.
 - **MOTION:** Brian Boyle moved to approve the Veterans Agent budget as submitted, for a total of \$22,598; seconded by Joe Myerson. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**

Agenda Item #2: Board of Health budgets (439, 510, 522)

- Christopher Slade presented the Board of Health budgets:
- Landfill – Well Monitoring (439)
 - This budget is being level-funded at \$6,100. Chairman Cote asked whether this cost will recur for the foreseeable future. Mr. Slade said, yes, we are basically saddled with this obligation because we need to continue to show due diligence in monitoring these wells.

- **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to approve the Landfill budget as submitted, for a total of \$6,100; seconded by Ann Hurd. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**
- Board of Health (510)
 - The main purpose of the Board of Health is to enforce Title 5 of the state's environmental code. Our town has also issued supplemental regulations which the Board of Health oversees and enforces. The Wages line item pays for the services of the Animal Inspector and the Health & Permitting Assistant.
 - The Nashoba Associated Boards of Health line item is increasing from \$11,996 to \$12,596. Part of what the NABH does is to provide home nursing and hospice services, but the federal government is not paying as much for those services as it used to. The NABH therefore needs to increase its overall membership costs to make up the difference in lost revenue.
 - **MOTION:** Ann Hurd moved to approve the Board of Health budget as submitted, for a total of \$46,421; seconded by Connie Benjamin. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**
- Nursing (522)
 - This budget contains one line item: Purchase of Services for \$5,749. This pays for our Town Nurse, Tamara Bedard. According to Mr. Slade, Ms. Bedard spends about two-thirds of her time doing conventional nursing, and about one-third of her time advocating on behalf of residents who are trying to obtain various state or federal benefits. Her services are available to everyone in town, but usually her clients are senior citizens. She works closely with the Council on Aging and appears once per month at the Senior Center.
 - **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to approve the Nursing budget as submitted, for a total of \$5,749; seconded by Ted Kirchner. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**

Agenda Item #3: Building Inspector budget (241)

- Mike Sauvageau presented the Building Inspector budget:
 - The Building Inspector provides services related to construction code compliance and inspection services for buildings.
 - The Training line item (\$250) is to pay for an annual three-day training.
 - The Supplies line item (\$450) is to pay for new state code books.
 - Like last year, Mr. Sauvageau says that he continues to be busy.
 - **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to approve the Building Inspector budget as submitted, for a total of \$32,800; seconded by Joe Myerson. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**

Agenda Item #4: Town Administrator budgets (122, 123, 151, 155, 192, 194, 195, 243, 244, 440, 912, 945)

- Town Administrator Don Lowe presented the following budgets:
- Selectmen (122)
 - This budget is being level-funded at \$19,620.
 - The Purchase of Services line (\$10,000) is primarily for Virtual Town Hall.
 - The WHEAT line (\$7,000) is an assessment for food bank services for our town and four surrounding towns. The assessment is proportional based on the town's population. We can request an annual report from WHEAT that would provide detailed information about the services being provided.
 - **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to approve the Selectmen budget as submitted, for a total of \$19,620; seconded by Joe Myerson. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**
- Town Administrator (123)
 - The non-Wage portion of this budget is being level-funded at \$4,100.
 - Don Lowe explained that the Hearing Officer expense is to pay for him to serve as the town's required hearing officer.
 - **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to approve the Town Administrator budget as submitted, for a total of \$214,411; seconded by Ted Kirchner. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**
- Legal Services (151)
 - Don Lowe provided information about our actual legal expenses over the past eight years: \$26.5K (2010), \$38K (2011), \$50K (2012), \$59K (2013), \$58K (2014), \$60K (2015), \$43K (2016), \$98K (2017). For FY19, Mr. Lowe recommends that the Legal Services budget be increased to \$50,000.
 - For FY17, the breakdown of the legal budget was as follows: 11.5% for Litigation, 44% for Labor Negotiations, and 44.5% for General Town Counsel work (e.g., bylaw review and Planning Board/zoning support).
 - We asked Mr. Lowe about the role of the Law Committee. He said that the Law Committee has two basic responsibilities: (a) to hire and fire town counsel, and (b) to formulate strategy for litigation. He said that the Law Committee does not have budget authority. The committee is made up of the three Selectmen and two appointed members, and it is chaired by the Chair of the Board of Selectmen.
 - **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to approve the Legal Services budget as modified during the meeting, for a total of \$50,000; seconded by Joe Myerson. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**
- Town Hall (192)
 - This budget is being level-funded at \$29,620. However, we agreed to make some changes during the meeting to better reflect the actual expenditures over the course of the year:

- The Heating line item will decrease from \$5,600 to \$5,000.
 - The Electric line item will increase from \$6,800 to \$7,100.
 - The Postage line item will increase from \$3,700 to \$4,000.
- Chairman Cote asked Mr. Lowe to think about a 5-year capital plan for the Town Hall. Mr. Lowe said that there are currently major space constraints in the building.
- **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to approve the Town Hall budget as modified during the meeting, for a total of \$29,620; seconded by Ted Kirchner. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**
- Building Insurance (194)
 - We have received actual quotes from our insurance agent for \$48,181 (Commercial Package) and \$5,499 (Commercial Umbrella). Don Lowe goes out to bid every 5-6 years, so he intends to go out to bid again next year.
 - **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to approve the Building Insurance budget as submitted, for a total of \$53,680; seconded by Ted Kirchner. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**
- Town Reports (195)
 - This budget pays for the printing and mailing of town meeting warrants and the town's Annual Report.
 - **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to approve the Town Reports budget as submitted, for a total of \$3,700; seconded by Ted Kirchner. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**
- Inspection Services (243, 244)
 - The budgets for the Plumbing & Gas Inspector (\$17,750) and the Wiring Inspector (\$20,577) were essentially level-funded, apart from a COLA increase.
 - **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to approve the Plumbing & Gas Inspector (243) and Wiring Inspector (244) budgets as submitted; seconded by Ted Kirchner. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**
- Sewer (440)
 - This budget is being increased from \$8,000 to \$8,700. This pays for services to the waste water treatment facility at the school. The town covers 15% of such expenses, and the school district covers the remaining 85%.
 - **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to approve the Sewer budget as modified during the meeting, for a total of \$8,700; seconded by Ted Kirchner. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**
- Workers Compensation (912)

- We have received an actual quote from our insurance company in the amount of \$24,859. Our overall rate is based on experience. We have relatively few workers compensation cases.
- **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to approve the Workers Compensation budget as submitted, for a total of \$24,859; seconded by Brian Boyle.
VOTING IN FAVOR: Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**
- Other Insurance (945)
 - We received actual quotes from our insurance company in the following amounts: \$6,249 for Police Professional Liability; \$720 for employee Bonding; \$39,798 for Police & Fire Accident; \$20,656 for Motor Vehicle; \$2,000 for the Deductible; and \$6,034 for Public Official Liability.
 - **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to approve the Other Insurance budget as submitted, for a total of \$75,457; seconded by Ted Kirchner. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**
- MIS (155)
 - Our new IT manager, Paul McKenzie from CM Geeks, presented the MIS budget.
 - The Repairs line item will increase from \$300 to \$600 because we have several aging PCs that need various repairs.
 - We asked whether there is a possibility of reducing the number of PCs. Don Lowe said that Chief Nelson is looking into lowering the number of PCs at the Public Safety Building.
 - We also asked about town websites. Bolton is now using Virtual Town Hall, and all town boards and committees are on that platform. Training was offered so that departments/committees would know how to use the website.
 - **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to approve the MIS budget as submitted, for a total of \$65,098; seconded by Ted Kirchner. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**

Agenda Item #5: Nashoba Regional School District's overview of capital requests

- Pat Marone (Business and Operations Manager) and Rob Frieswick (Director of Facilities) presented an overview of NRSD's anticipated FY19 capital project requests.
- Capital requests for the Florence Sawyer School and Emerson Building are listed below in order of the district's priority:
 - 1. Mechanicals for Florence Sawyer School heating / replacement of failing Alerton legacy system. (\$43,175 in FY19. Total of \$191,587 across five fiscal years.)
 - According to Mr. Frieswick, there is a new boiler being installed in the Florence Sawyer School, and the system that we currently have can't efficiently communicate between the boiler and the classrooms. Ted

Kirchner asked whether there would be a measurable return on this investment. Ms. Marone responded that we would see improved efficiency with respect to heating costs.

- 2. Column repair for the Emerson building. (\$15,700 in FY19. Single year project.)
 - A restoration company assessed the columns and they were not in as poor condition as originally thought. The proposed repair involves rehabilitating vents in the columns and fixing the soffit.
- 3. Flooring/carpet replacement in Florence Sawyer School. (\$18,500 in FY19. Total of \$57,290 across four fiscal years.)
 - The carpet in the library is worn and needs to be replaced.
- 4. Interior painting in Florence Sawyer School. (\$11,500 in FY19. Total of \$35,500 across four fiscal years.)
 - This is a continuation of a multi-year painting project to touch up various areas around the school.
- Capital requests for the High School are listed below:
 - Ms. Marone described a large anticipated capital project at the high school. The leach field needs to be relocated at an estimated cost of \$300,000. The DEP changed its regulations and the leach field will be out of compliance unless it is relocated. The cost of this project will likely be embedded in the town's overall education assessment.
 - Flooring repairs: \$15,000 in FY19, with another \$15,000 anticipated for FY20.
 - Hot water tank replacement: \$89,000 in FY19.
- District-wide capital requests are listed below:
 - New pick-up truck with a plow: \$42,000 in FY19. Mr. Frieswick said that this would be used to do work that can't be done in short time-frame by our contracted snow plow company.
 - Used vehicle for the Facilities Director for going from building to building: \$12,000 in FY19.
 - Replacement of school transportation vans: \$40,000 in FY20 and \$40,000 in FY21.
 - Replacement of handicapped van: \$60,000 in FY22.
 - Replacement of 2013 heavy duty landscaping truck: \$50,000 in FY21.

Agenda Item #6: Library budget (610)

- The Library budget was presented by Library Trustees Bob Zak and Pam Czekanski and Library Director Kelly Collins.
 - Mr. Zak presented a brief overview of some FY18 data. He noted that 70% of the town's residents have a library card. He also said that the copy machine at the library is a minor profit center for the town.
 - Mr. Zak then presented the FY19 budget proposal. There are no changes to open hours or staffing. The "Books and materials" line item is being calculated at 17.5% of the total budget.

- Mr. Zak also presented some information regarding the value that the library brings to the community. The library circulates approximately 80,000 items per year. Attendance at children's programs increased by 19% from FY16 to FY17. The retail value of the uses of the library is approximately \$1.83 million, as calculated by the Library Value Calculator website.
- **MOTION:** Brian Boyle moved to approve the Library budget as submitted, for a total of \$431,802; seconded by Joe Myerson. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**

Agenda Item #7: Advisory Committee business

- Snow & Ice budget discussion
 - The Advisory Committee continued to discuss the possibility of increasing the Snow & Sand (423) budget from \$180,000 to \$200,000. Bob Czekanski noted that this discussion will likely need to happen every year, because the amount of free cash that we have in a given year will change. Brad Cote asked Ninotchka Rogers whether she could provide data regarding turn-backs in prior years. One concern is that diminishing turn-backs could lead to lower free cash amounts. The committee did not vote on the Snow & Sand budget.
- Capital Planning Policy discussion
 - Over the course of the past year, we drafted a formal Capital Planning Policy and received input from the Town Administrator, Town Accountant, Town Treasurer, Board of Selectmen, and Capital Planning Committee.
 - We agreed that we would require capital projects to be initiated within one year of approval at town meeting and completed within three years of approval (unless there are extenuating circumstances). We also agreed that the Capital Planning Committee would be responsible for checking on the status of approved capital projects to know how they are progressing.
 - **MOTION:** Joe Myerson moved to approve the Capital Planning Policy proposal; seconded by Connie Benjamin. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**
- Revenue discussion
 - We discussed the possibility of putting a "meals tax" question before the voters at Annual Town Meeting. Some committee members were concerned that the meals tax would be yet another tax on Bolton residents. One suggestion was to raise this issue with the Economic Development Committee to get their input.
 - Ted Kirchner noted that he would like to know which groups within the town government are charged with increasing the town's non-residential tax base. Brad Cote said that he believes that the Planning Board and the Economic Development Committee are focused on this issue.

Adjourn: **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to adjourn at 9:44 PM; seconded by Ted Kirchner. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (6-0).**

Documents Referenced

Departments' FY19 budget submissions

Handouts from Pat Marone and Rob Frieswick regarding NRSD's capital project requests

Handouts from Bob Zak regarding Library budget proposal with supporting data

Draft of Capital Planning Policy

Approved by the Advisory Committee