

**SELECTMEN'S BUDGET WORKSHOP**  
**Minutes of 01-07-09**  
**4:10 p.m.**

***Selectmen:***

***Peter F. Brothers, Chairman***  
***Miller C. Lovett, Vice Chairman***  
***Robert C. Flanders***  
***Charles G. Palm***  
***Colette Worsman***

***Co-Interim Town Managers:***

***John C. Edgar***  
***Brenda L. Vittner***

***Recording Clerk:***

***Karin Landry***

Call to Order: Chairman Peter Brothers called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m.

The Board reviewed a Revenue Shortfall/Offset Budget Worksheet for 2009. The Worksheet is not meant to be definitive, but will set the tone for the department interviews. It includes Departmental reductions, additions, and revenues as follows:

- No adjustment to Selectmen's stipends
- Municipal Administration - milfoil line increased by \$10,000
- Tax Collector – on-line banking line reduced by \$1,000
- Police Department – five account lines reduced for an aggregate of \$7,200
- Police Department – cruiser line increased by \$15,500
- Boat Launch – fees increased by \$3,500
- Fire Department –equipment line reduced by \$3,700
- Solid Waste Facility – stickers fees increased by \$30,000
- Solid Waste Facility – revenue from sale of two demo trailers \$20,000
- Buildings & Grounds – reclassification of position for reduction of \$10,183.12
- Parks & Recreation – programming line reduced by \$9,086
- Water Department – various reductions totaling \$8,850
- Water Department - groundwater study line reduced by \$39,000
- Sewer Department – various reductions totaling \$7,337
- Sewer Department - revenue from '09 monitoring \$12,500
- Facilities Improvement Plan ETF – reduction of \$25,000
- Capital Projects – Batchelder Hill Rd., reduction of \$100,000
- Downtown Parking ETF – transfer of \$100,000 to offset appropriations

The proposed changes account for additional revenues of \$153,500.00, appropriation reductions of \$211,356.12, and appropriation additions of \$38,000.00, for a bottom line of \$326,856.12.

The Board expressed their appreciation to the Co-Interim Town Managers and departments for working together to identify economies in the budget. Dialogue ensued regarding the difficulties the Board will face in making additional reductions if revenues are not generated as anticipated. The budget must be

closely monitored throughout the year. Selectman Worsman asked the department heads to let the Board know the sacrifices that were made in their department so they can be considered when planning for 2010. Selectman Lovett thinks it would be beneficial to have efficiencies set forth in writing by the Co-Interim Town Managers and department heads.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Cruiser: Chief Morrow's model for the 2009 budget includes the leasing of a cruiser. The Chief can not meet the charge of staying within a 2% increase if a cruiser is purchased. The Department has four cruisers with over 100,000 hard miles on them, and must replace three of them in 2010. The Board posed questions about the number of cruisers in service, how they are utilized, and their residual value. The Board agreed that it is more cost-effective to purchase a new cruiser, and discussed the timing of the purchase. Dialogue ensued regarding establishing an expendable capital reserve fund for the future purchase of cruisers.

Communications: Radios allow for communicating with fire, dispatch, or any other state department. pagers allow for emergency communications despite power outages or lack of cell phone service. They are the best way to contact the entire department in the event of an emergency situation. Cell phones allow for communicating with the public and other departments while away from the station. The Chief told the Board there is no duplication in communication equipment, and that the three forms of communication are necessary in order to retain a degree of professionalism.

Overtime: Overtime is broken down as follows: Eleven paid holidays - 70%; shift coverage, accidents and investigations - 10-15%; Town events - 10-15%. The Chief believes it is important to maintain a certain level of service on holidays. Dialogue ensued regarding traffic control on construction projects and the impact of overtime on the retirement system.

Vehicle Maintenance: The \$12,000 line item for maintenance can be reduced to \$8,000 - \$9,000 if a new cruiser is purchased. Although an average maintenance cost can be identified, you can't project major repairs. The Board agreed that \$10,000 is a good compromise for vehicle maintenance.

Fees – Hesky Park: The Town broke even on boat launch fees at Hesky Park last season. The revenue that was generated on some days of the week was less than the cost of having someone on site to collect the fees. The Chief proposed collecting fees from Thursday through Sunday during the upcoming season, and increasing the fee from \$10 to \$20, to bring it in line with private launches. Dialogue ensued regarding the benefits of having personnel on site to educate boaters on milfoil. There was consensus that the fee should be increased to \$20. Chief Morrow will collect another year's worth of data before making any changes to the days and hours of collection. Dialogue ensued regarding the installation of parking meters at the Town Docks. The Board generally agreed that parking meters are expensive to install, difficult to monitor, and counterproductive to encouraging tourism.

Traffic Control: The Board agreed that traffic control is critically important and should remain in the budget.

Miscellaneous: The Board briefly discussed the line items for the School Resource Officer and Humane Society.

The Board took a short break at 6:36 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 6:46 p.m.

### **EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT**

A mid-range salary was used to budget for the new Town Manager's position. The Town Manager's position and Executive Assistant position were budgeted for 12 months. There is a potential for surplus appropriations in the Department.

### **PERSONNEL/ADMINISTRATION**

Dialogue ensued regarding the cost benefits of attending professional meetings and trainings, joining associations, and subscriptions. Training costs have been reduced over the last two years. The Co-Interim Town Managers will be screening requests for training and performing cost benefit analyses once training is completed. The Town Managers believe professional and individual development and networking are important objectives. The Departments will provide the Board with additional information.

### **MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION**

The Board agreed to add \$10,000 for the treatment of milfoil. Dialogue ensued regarding the prioritization of sites to be treated. The Department of Environmental Services is completing a milfoil management plan for Lake Winnepesaukee that will include Meredith Bay. There was a consensus that \$10,000 should be added to the milfoil line item regardless of what is being treated.

### **AMBULANCE SERVICE**

There was a 22% increase for ambulance service this year. The Board will review ways to reduce costs for the service.

### **TOWN CLERK**

The Town Clerk's budget has been decreased. The Chair complimented the Town Clerk and numerous volunteers whose work made the November election a success. Pre-planning for Town Meeting is in progress.

### **ASSESSING**

The department has identified a number of efficiencies, including preparing the tax maps in house. Dialogue ensued regarding the importance of keeping information accurate in the current market.

### **TAX COLLECTOR**

The lock box line will be decreased by \$1,000.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

A full set of tax maps will be generated in house this year, resulting in a \$1,200 savings for the Department. Community Development will take advantage of the slow down in the housing market to work on Ordinances and staff committees. The Master Plan must be updated in 2012. Once data from the next census is available, the department will know where updating needs to occur.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT**

The line under Safety Supplies for a ladder package can be reduced by \$3,700. Funds were encumbered this year to purchase the package. The Department has identified energy efficiencies and procedures that will extend the life of pagers.

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

The Page Pond closing is scheduled for Monday. Documents pertaining to the closing will be signed and notarized before tomorrow's Budget Workshop. The Board will acknowledge the closing and all those who worked on the project at a public meeting in the near future.

**REGIONAL AGENCIES**

There was a general consensus among the Board that any new Agencies should be approved by Town Warrant. The Board agreed to move The Greater Meredith Program to Outside Agencies. Dialogue ensued regarding improving the vetting process, and the Board agreed that it would be beneficial to get updates from the Agencies on a rotating basis.

**DEBT SERVICE**

The Page Pond and the Fire Station bonds have been added to the debt service.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

Ms. Vittner explained how insurance benefits are accounted for within department budgets. The Personnel Policy must be updated. Longevity bonuses will not be extended to new hires under the revised Policy. Ms. Vittner will investigate potential savings in workers compensation for Solid Waste employees.

*Selectman Flanders motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. Seconded by Selectman Lovett. 5-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

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John C. Edgar, Co-Interim Town Mgr.

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Peter F. Brothers, Chairman

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Brenda L. Vittner, Co-Interim Town Mgr.

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