

TOWN OF ALLENSTOWN  
Budget Committee  
Allenstown, New Hampshire 03275

Minutes of Regular Meeting  
October 4, 2012

**Call to Order.**

The Allenstown Budget Committee Meeting for October 4, 2012 was called to order by the Chair at 6:13 p.m.

**Roll Call.**

Present on the Board: Larry Anderson, Dave Coolidge, Carol Merrill, Robin Richards, Mike Frascinella, Jerry McKenney, Dave Eaton, Carl Caporale, Roger LaFleur and Penny Touchette.

Others Present:

Other Public Officials: Jeff Gryval, Board of Selectman.

Allenstown Staff: Paul Apple; Town Administrator, Robert Martin; AFD, Shaun Mulholland; APD, Ron Pelissier; Road Agent, Lt. Parquette; APD.

Mr. Caporale asked that members of the Board state their name when making a motion to creative more accuracy. He stated that this meeting was scheduled for the Department Heads to present their budgets. He asked that if they have questions to please write them down and if there is time later they will ask them.

**Review Minutes**

The Chair asked that everyone review the minutes from last week's meeting and to let her know if there is anything that needs to be changed. She also stated that they will review and approve them at next week's meeting.

Motion. Mr. Anderson made a motion to table the minutes until the next meeting. Mr. LaFleur seconded the Motion. There was no additional discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Anderson-Yes; Mr. Coolidge-Yes; Mrs. Merrill-Yes; Mr. McKenney-Yes; Mr. Caporale-Yes; Mrs. Touchette-Yes, Mr. Eaton-Yes; Mr. LaFleur-Yes; Mr. Frascinella; Mr. Gryval- Yes; and Mr. Richards-Yes. Mrs. Touchette declared the Motion passed.

### **2013 Operating Budgets Presentations**

Mr. Gryval thanked the Budget Committee for all their time that they will be taking to work on the budget approvals over the next few months. He explained to the Budget Committee that the Select Board had instructed the Department Heads to come in under default but to also include a raise to all employees. Mr. Gryval discussed the issues they have had with losing employees using the example of having gone through three Building Inspectors over the year. He stated that it costs more money to lose them and that it is very important that the raises go through. He explained that even if the raises go through, they won't go into effect until mid-year so it actually would only affect the 2013 budget for half the year.

Mr. Gryval stated that all Department Heads were able to come in under default. He discussed the prices of services that are increasing and how that will affect the increase to the default budget. Mr. Gryval explained that they have had to cut a lot of items within the budgets to keep the services that they have now.

Mr. Apple explained the book that he put together for the Budget Committee contains a table of contents, budgets, the latest expenditure report, the revenue analysis, and then the report of salaries by position, cost of benefits, and the explanation of the 2013 default budget calculation.

Mr. Apple explained that the retirement numbers are an accurate rate and they reflect the latest rates which result in a significant increase of the town's portion of the retirement rates. He further explained other benefits that increased.

Mr. Apple stated that there have been some minor changes to the budget that they all received electronically. He stated that there were some typographical errors in the Police Department as well as an error in the formula for the overview. He stated that he has asked all of the major department heads to be here tonight and give a brief presentation. He stated that the department budget request is 0.88% above last year's operating budget and is approximately \$23,000 below default. Mr. Apple stated that the figures that they see as the total operating budget are the figures of what they believe it takes to operate the town.

### **Highway Department**

Mr. Pelissier stated that they were directed by the Select Board to remain at or below default and that they were able to do so. He stated that some of the cuts they had to make were from paving. He also stated that some of the vehicle repairs have gone over quite a bit. Mr. Pelissier stated that the Solid Waste has been brought down by \$23,000. He stated that they have gone anywhere from receiving a revenue of \$20 to paying a \$40 fee.

Mr. Apple stated that they negotiated with Mr. Gryval to get out of the Co-op. He explained that part of those terms is that they will be out of the Co-op next year. He stated that whatever gets delivered to the Co-op in 2013 becomes their gross minimum tonnage for the next year. He explained that based on the calculation so far, they will have 1,600 tonnages.

Mr. Apple stated that when they spoke to the Co-op, they were given a range of between \$75-90 for a tipping fee. He stated that they had elected to go with the higher fee of \$90 based on the financial information that they saw during the negotiation process. Mr. Apple explained that the Highway Department has been using their Capital Reserve to subsidize those tipping fees and believe that they will begin using less of the Capital Reserve because they have to keep a certain amount in their Capital Reserve.

Mr. Apple also stated that they did try to plan for the volatility for the recycling market. He stated that right now they are paying between \$20-38 a ton depending on who they go to. He stated that the good news with the recycling is that the \$20-38 a ton is less than the \$66.88 tipping fee. Mr. Anderson asked if they know what their percentage is for recycling compared to solid waste. Mr. Pelissier stated that they are shooting for about 500 ton so they are about one third to two thirds ratio. He stated that he believes it is running very well and hopes for the tonnage to increase.

Mr. Frascinella stated that Pembroke notifies people of how much money they are saving by doing the recycling program on the town website and asked if Allenstown is doing that. Mr. Grvyal stated that right now they are in the midst of updating their website and are relying on volunteers to help with that as they do not have the \$4,000 or so to pay for that. He also stated that once that is up and running, they can provide such information for people.

### **Administrative Budgets**

Mr. Apple stated that he was going to begin with the Executive Budgets. Mr. Apple stated that there are no substantial changes in the lines for this budget aside from the salaries of the employees. He also stated that they broke out the charge for the Minutes Clerk as they have entered into an agreement for her and they can now see how much that will cost. Mr. Apple stated that they reduced their postage line because they are using mostly electronic mail. He stated that they have had some increases in the licensing for software and the IT Maintenance. Mr. Apple stated that the budget is one dollar below default.

Mr. Apple stated that there are no significant increases to the Finance Budget aside from a modest increase of about 4.5% on the Payroll contract and the cost of wages for Finance. Mr. Apple explained that the cost of electricity has gone up and does not know the reason as to why. He stated that he is going to research what areas are increasing the electricity costs.

Mr. Apple stated that with the Legal Budget there is no change there at the moment. He stated that they have managed to stabilize the Legal Budget. He also stated that there are some other legal matters coming up and hope that they won't get caught short with that. Mr. Apple informed them that the most significant legal matter is the litigation with Fairpoint and that there are 120 other towns are involved in this.

Mr. Apple stated that in the Selectman adopted recommendation for the Personnel Budget includes the 4.2 and 1.2 increases. He stated that it also includes two additional family plans in case their circumstances change throughout the year. Mr. Apple stated that there is going to be such a change this year of people going from a single plan to a family plan this year. He stated that everything in this category has gone up. He also stated that the biggest change in this category is the retirement piece which is out of their control. He stated that they will not have firm numbers on insurances until October. Mr. Apple also stated that they have added an increase for merit raises that the Select Board adopted.

Mr. Apple stated that the last bond will be paid off in 2015 and that the increase has been reduced by a little less than \$3,000. He also stated that they include tax anticipation notes in case they need to use them but have not needed to do so thus far.

Mr. Caporale asked what the meaning was of a tax anticipation note. Mr. Apple stated that a tax anticipation note is when the town would borrow money and pledge as collateral the revenue from taxes which are used because of cash flow issues. He stated that the town has been fortunate to not have to use them.

Mr. Coolidge asked if any thought has been put into looking into other third party companies that sell electricity. Mr. Apple stated that they were using Glacial Energy up until recently and switched to ENH which guarantees a rate below what PSNH would charge.

### **Fire Department**

Chief Martin distributed copies of his Fire Department narrative. Chief Martin stated that there are some increases for the salary line which include some 3% increase. He stated that dispatch services have increased as well. Chief Martin stated that the cost of custodial supplies have also gone up. He stated that they decreased the public education line and had to eliminate some of the school projects they had started. He also stated that they have decreased the food line as they have been using the money for grants for exercises.

Chief Martin stated that they don't have a third rotation in some of their turnout gear, therefore the costs of replacing them has gone up. He also stated that the cost of uniforms, equipment testing, and computer and software have increased. Chief Martin stated that they decreased the overtime lines as the call fire fighter is only on his first year and will not use as many hours. He further explained other equipment increases to the budget including breathing apparatuses and radios.

Chief Martin stated that they are not been doing physicals as they should therefore, they have decreased that line as well. He stated that they took some money out of lawn care because the

Highway Department has been doing some of that for them. Chief Martin stated that there are no changes in the Forestry Budget this year and remains at the \$4,000.

Mr. Coolidge asked Chief Martin about the full-time salaries and how many people that would include. Chief Martin stated that it would only include two employees. Mr. Coolidge also stated what causes the need for overtime. Chief Martin stated that those overtime hours cover any call back hours, training or if he takes vacation that way there are always two people at the Fire Station.

Mr. Coolidge asked Chief Martin about the defibrillator and the costs associated with it. Chief Martin stated that they have a maintenance person come in and check the defibrillator every year and that costs \$1,200 per year. Mr. Coolidge asked what the meaning of CER of ground ladder. Chief Martin stated that all ground ladders have to be certified and that is what the CER is for.

Mr. Richards asked Chief Martin what the requirements are for the physicals and shots. Chief Martin stated that the FDA has recommendations that every fire fighter over the age of 40 has a physical every year and under 40, every other year but it is not a requirement. Mr. Richards asked if there is anyone who has not had a physical. Chief Martin stated that everyone has had a physical at this time. Mr. Anderson asked what the cost of each physical was. Chief Martin stated that it a cost anywhere from \$350 to \$450 depending on if an individual has to go for a stress test.

### **Police Department**

Mr. Apple stated that the Civil Defense (Emergency Management) is reproduced into their materials. Chief Mulholland stated that a number of cuts have been made to get under the defaults number and have done so across all three budgets. He stated that the department heads made significant strides in their capability to deal with disasters. Chief Mulholland stated that it wasn't until the last six years that they have had to deal with state disasters. He stated that they have done a lot of training and exercises using state funds in order to prepare for that.

Chief Mulholland discussed the cuts that were made to the Civil Defense budget including building maintenance being eliminated completely. He stated that there was a significant over expenditure in the generator line this year due to lightning strikes and repairs needing to be done. He explained that the Civil Defense budget will be in the red because of these lightning strikes and repairs needed. He also stated that office supplies and food lines were cut completely.

Chief Mulholland stated that for grants there is a significant increase for that. He discussed the development of the Recovery Plan. He stated that upon development, they discovered that it needs to be completely rewritten and fix all the problems from the exercises in which he is applying for grant funds.

Mr. Anderson asked what the food line was to cover. Chief Mulholland stated that is for when the UFS is opened up and includes the shelter group. He stated that if there is a disaster, 75% of the food is paid for but if not they have to pay for that.

Mr. Coolidge asked if the grant includes something to cover writing up a Disaster Recovery Plan. Chief Mulholland stated that there is \$35,000 in there for the exercise grant and then the rest of it is to rewrite the Recovery Plan in the new government format and to rewrite the Zoning Board ordinances. He explained that there has to be ordinances done to cover the fact that if there is a disaster, they have to rebuild homes meeting newer regulations.

Mr. LaFleur asked Chief Mulholland if the ordinance that he was discussing, why wouldn't Central NH Regional Planning won't or someone along those lines, work with the Planning Board if those ordinances have to be corrected. Chief Mulholland stated that they would be but someone has to pay them to do that because those ordinances don't exist right now.

Mr. LaFleur asked why the grant monies for the ordinances don't come out of the Planning Board budget instead of the EOC budget because all of the changes have to come out of Planning Board anyways. Chief Mulholland stated that this cannot be on the Planning Board's budget because they cannot apply for grants.

### **Animal Control Budget**

Chief Mulholland stated that the Animal Control budget has also had cuts made to it. He stated that they have reduced the Animal Control Officer's hours by one hour per week which eliminates a salaries increase for the year. The Chair asked how many hours he is currently working. Chief Mulholland stated that he currently works 15 hours per week and he will be working about 14 hours per week. Mrs. Merrill asked if they get a lot of donations for supplies. Chief Mulholland stated that they have been able to get a lot of the food from the Animal Hospital.

### **Police Department**

Chief Mulholland stated that the Secretary line has an increase for the salary increase. He stated that cuts that were made to the budget made it so that it meets default. He explained that they cut the police coverage for Trick or Treat but have not cut the coverage for Old Home Day. Chief Mulholland also discussed the overtime line and that it was over expended in order to meet the overtime requirements. He stated that they were able to reduce witness fees because they have had less court cases.

Chief Mulholland stated that they have an increase in computer expense because of a new contract. He stated that the training line has an increase because of changes at the Legislature. He stated that the Police Academy is paid for by penalties assessed and that it also pays for the Fire Academy. He explained that because of this, there have been cuts in training where they used to

get it for free. He explained that now the amount of money for training has increased however, the actual amount of training being done has decreased.

Chief Mulholland stated that if they look at the supplies line over the years, it has been way over expended and so that needs to be increased. He explained that the office repair is to cover the photocopier and that they have teamed up with the town for that. Chief Mulholland stated that they have reduced the cost of Postage significantly because they can send most things electronically. He also explained that he kept the gasoline line the same. He stated that there is no projection of the increased fuel costs for the year included in the budget so there is a little concern there.

A member of the Budget Committee asked if there was a copy of last year's figures for the Police Department. The Chair stated that everything was sent out electronically. Mr. Apple stated that he passed out expenditures going back to 2006 last time he was there but that he could send him a copy of it.

Chief Mulholland stated that they cut the uniforms budget last year and now they have over expended that for this year. He stated that they have made a significant cut in dispatch and are taking a risk in that as their usage has increased by 5%. He also stated that Boscawen likes to talk on the radios which mean that they eat a larger piece of the pie for that. He explained the various situations in which the costs could increase for dispatch fees and that it is divided out by call volume for the town.

Chief Mulholland stated that the cruiser line went up because they have a new vehicle and have had to make some modifications and done some minor repairs to it. He stated that they have had to increase the maintenance line a little bit because of repairs they had for the year. He stated that the maintenance line will be in the red for this year. He explained that Sobriety Check Points have been increased and includes DUI patrol. He stated that they have already over expended that line but that is covered 100% by grant funds. Chief Mulholland stated that the overall proposed budget is \$854,381.

A member of the Budget Committee asked Chief Mulholland to explain why they need ten police officers with half his budget covering the costs of salary. Chief Mulholland stated that the evenings are generally covered by supervisors. He stated that lately they have not had the evenings covered by supervisors and will have four new people in all the time who don't have any supervisors and don't know what they are doing. Mr. LaFleur asked what happened to the Master Patrol Position and that his understanding is that they eliminated that position. Chief Mulholland stated that they have two Master Patrolman right now.

A member (Mr. Coolidge) of the Budget Committee asked Chief Mulholland how many citizens they have lost as according to the 2010 Census there has been a decrease in the amount. Mr.

Apple stated that they have gone from 5,000 citizens to 4,300 citizens. The member then asked if they really need that many patrol officers if they have lost 700 citizens. Chief Mulholland stated that the amount of crime has increased even with the loss of citizens. He explained that there was a call tonight of someone selling drugs and yet he had no one to send. He also stated that other towns have asked if he could help cover their towns and the state troopers have decreased to about 40 officers.

Mrs. Merrill asked if the Sobriety Checkpoints are worth having as they haven't gotten a lot of violators. Chief Mulholland stated that it is working as the amount of DUIs and fatalities related to drinking have decreased significantly. He stated that when they first started the checkpoints, they got 12 people by 1:30am and now they only get about one to two people which is great progress.

Mr. Caporale stated that in the Chief's memo there would be a \$2,000 reduction and that next year the staff on Halloween and the Old Home Day Parade would be cut and would the coverage be cut this year or next year. Chief Mulholland stated that the coverage for Halloween would stay the same for this year but would be cut for next year. He stated that they have not had criminal mischief on Halloween in several years. A member asked Chief Martin if the Fire Fighters get paid when they go out on Halloween. Chief Martin stated that that was all volunteer hours.

Mr. Anderson asked how they figure their fuel expenses. Chief Mulholland stated that it is based on 9,600 gallons per year. He stated that they are paying \$3.29 per gallon currently but that it will go up the next time the truck comes. He explained that whenever the truck comes up, it is whatever the wholesale price at the time. Chief Mulholland stated that the State has not charged them for the first half of the year therefore the expenditures are low for that at the moment.

Mr. Richards asked about the K-9 unit and what happened to it. Chief Mulholland stated that that was eliminated as the K-9 officer went to New Boston for higher pay and the dog went back to the K-9 foundation because that was covered by a grant.

Mr. Anderson asked Chief Mulholland if he saw the new cruiser that was in the newspaper today. Chief Mulholland stated that they didn't want to purchase one of those this year because there are a lot of problems with outfitting the new models and he wanted to let other towns figure the issues first.

The Chair asked if there were any more budgets that they needed to go over for tonight. Mr. Apple stated that these are the main ones for tonight. He stated that there are some smaller ones that haven't changed a lot. The Chair asked when the Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Building, and Welfare are able to come in. Mr. Apple stated that the Town Clerk/Tax Collector is on the agenda for October 15<sup>th</sup>. He explained that Mrs. Demers is leaving with her last day on October



18<sup>th</sup> and that Mrs. Demers is the one who worked on the budget so that he thinks she would be better for her to come in and present it.

Mr. Caporale asked if anyone had any other questions ask the department heads have been answering them little by little. Mr. Anderson stated that he wanted to discuss the Building Inspector position while the Select Board is here. He stated that he would like them to consider hiring him full-time at 32 hours with no benefits which would increase their budget about \$8,400. The Chair stated that that is a decision for the Board of Selectman not the Budget Committee. Mr. Grvyal stated that it is a budgetary item because of the something they have previously spoken about at meetings. He further explained that the position has a high turnover and a number of people have come in wanting it to go to full-time. Mr. Gryval stated that the problem is that they just can't afford it and that every single department is shorthanded. He also explained the situation with the last Building Inspector who left overall because of the pay amount not the amount of hours.

Mr. Caporale stated that it was his understanding that the department heads would present tonight and then they would take questions later. He asked the board if anyone wanted to vote on any of the information given tonight or not. The Budget Committee determined not to vote tonight. Mr. Apple stated that he is not presenting on the Building budget because that is not changing and that the Tax Collector and Town Clerk are decreasing so he is not sure how much presentation they want on some of these budgets. The Chair stated that as the Select Board approve them; she would like him to update the Budget Committee on them. Mr. Apple stated that they will be voted on October 15<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. LaFleur asked about the anticipated revenue or funds for the Police Department or EOC budgets. Chief Mulholland stated that they are included in the reports. Mr. Caporale stated that he just emailed them that memo.

The Chair informed the Select Board and Department Heads that they are all set with them for the evening. She also stated that if they have any further questions they will go through Mr. Apple and schedule them back in to answer questions if needed. The Chair stated that she is hoping that by next week they will be able to ask questions if there are any at the time.

Motion. Mr. Caporale made a motion to take a five minute recess. ? seconded the Motion. There was no additional discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Anderson-Yes; Mr. Coolidge-Yes; Mrs. Merrill-Yes; Mr. McKenney-Yes; Mr. Caporale-Yes; Mrs. Touchette-Yes, Mr. Jon Richardson-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Robin Richards-Yes; and Ms. Lisa Komm-Yes; Mrs. Touchette declared the Motion passed.

Mrs. Touchette asked the Board if they wanted to discuss the budgets right now. Mrs. Merrill stated that she would like to go over it at home and then let her know if they have any questions. Mr. Caporale asked if they want to schedule a meeting for next week and recess until next week. Mr. LaFleur stated that they can adjourn this meeting, open up the next meeting, and officially open up the budget for discussion at the next meeting. Mrs. Touchette stated that if they have any questions upon reviewing the budgets, to email them to her. Mr. Caporale stated that the other budgets that were not presented tonight are in their materials and they can review those on their own as well.

### **Review of Revenues**

Mrs. Touchette asked if they wanted to review this here or go over it individually at home. Mr. Caporale asked Mr. Apple if they received a Franchise Fee from Comcast. Mr. Apple stated that they do but that they may not have received it yet. He stated that it is under other income right above Franchise Fees. Mr. LaFleur explained that is a franchise fee which is taxes that Comcast collects and is paid to the town. Mr. Apple stated that it is a fee that they pay for the privilege for using the public facilities of the air and the signals.

Mrs. Touchette asked Mr. Apple about the details for the Police Department and if what they get paid out of comes out of the salary line. Chief Mulholland stated that what they see is the excess of that and it all comes out of the Public Safety Revolving Fund that the voters passed years ago. He explained that the officer and retirement gets paid out of that and what's left is the cruiser fee. He stated that they don't make revenue positive unless there is a cruiser is involved. He stated that the typical detail charge with a cruiser is \$51.00.

Mr. Caporale asked if when a company is doing work in the town, is it because they don't have the manpower and they have to staff it outside of the town. Chief Mulholland stated that is because they don't have enough people. He also stated that some towns require a police officer to be out there whenever there is work but they do not require people to have detail officers.

Mr. Gryval asked that when they have a list of who they need to have come back and answer questions to let them know so people can be present when needed. Mrs. Touchette stated that she will get them a list when she has it. It was determined that they would have a workshop next Thursday, October 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:15pm.

Mr. McKenney asked Mr. Apple if they have heard anything about the School Board. Mr. Apple stated that he has not heard anything from them at this time. Mrs. Touchette stated that School Board has just starting the budget. Mr. Apple stated that it will probably be more than they anticipate but he does not have any detail information. A member asked if the Select Board has discussed how much money will be left to use toward offsetting the tax rates this year. Mr.

Gryval stated that there is not going to be much left this year. Mr. Apple stated that because they are budgeting closer to the default level, they are looking at a lot less for that.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Anderson-Yes; Mr. Coolidge-Yes; Mrs. Merrill-Yes; Mr. McKenney-Yes; Mr. Caporale-Yes; Mrs. Touchette-Yes, Mr. Jon Richardson-Yes; Mr. Gryval-Yes; Robin Richards-Yes; and Ms. Lisa Komm-Yes; Mrs. Touchette declared the Motion passed.

Motion. Mr. Anderson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. ? seconded the Motion. There was no additional discussion.

A Roll Call Vote was taken: Mr. Anderson-Yes; Mr. Coolidge-Yes; Mrs. Merrill-Yes; Mr. McKenney-Yes; Mr. Caporale-Yes; Mrs. Touchette-Yes, Mr. Eaton-Yes; Mr. LaFleur-Yes; Mr. Frascinella; Mr. Gryval- Yes; and Mr. Richards-Yes. Mrs. Touchette declared the Motion passed.

Mrs. Touchette adjourned the meeting at 8:07pm.



ERROR: undefined  
OFFENDING COMMAND:

STACK: