

The Alstead Board of Selectmen met in open session on Tuesday January 17, 2017 at the Town Hall for the Public Budget hearing. Members present were Chris Rietmann, Rock Wilson and Tim Noonan. Chairman Chris Rietmann called the meeting to order at 6:30. The payment manifest, payroll, and a purchase order for salt was reviewed and signed. The minutes were read and Chris moved to accept the minutes as read, Rock seconded.

Chris explained how the board went through its budget process and the unexpected expenses that came up throughout the year. At the end of the year the overall budget came under its projected amount.

Kelly Wright spoke on behalf of the changes with the 2017 executive budget. She reported it will be lower than last years because of health insurance premiums will be lower and Linda will be retiring at the end of March.

Chris Rietmann spoke on behalf of the Town Clerk/ Tax Collectors 2017 budget and reported there will be an increase in hours for the deputy to allow for the necessary training Trish Anderson will need to gain more experience.

The 2017 Election budget will be lower this year because there isn't as many elections in 2017. Moderator Susan Norlander asked if Kelly could change the name from SOC to Elections. Kelly will look into this.

There was a lot of discussion about the ongoing Fair point settlement and why the Town has increased the amount to \$10,000. Kelly explained this was the recommended about the Town attorney and the Town assessors have recommended for this coming year. John Mann explained why the lawsuit came about and how the variation from all the different Towns raised concern with Fair point. Matt Saxton asked why the legal line isn't increased to \$15,000.

Chris reported the 2017 General Government Budget will show an increase to the building and maintenance line and in 2016 the Warren Brook Restoration Project is completed. John Mann reported he has quotes to fix the duct work in the Town Hall, which will cut down on heating costs. Chris explained the board will review the list they have from contractor Bill Rodenburg and they will have David Crosby help prioritize the list.

Vilas Pool Committee member, Bobbie Wilson reported the board will be requesting \$3,500 in the Town operating budget for the Vilas Pool music festival at the deliberative session.

Bruce Bellows spoke on behalf of the cemetery department. He has done extensive research in how other Towns manage their cemeteries and how much is raised. He explained 2017 will be a transition year for the Town because he has been advised by the investment firm he is no longer able to manage the books the way he has in the past. For years, the Town has raised \$3,500 to care for all 7cemeteries. The Towns he compared vary from raising \$10,000 to \$70,000 for their cemeteries. Bruce has requested \$15,300 for the 2017 cemetery budget. He is also planning on meeting with Terry Knowles from the attorney general's office to review how to manage the interest. Bruce has requested more budget lines be added to his budget to breakdown the different work that is done every year.

There was a brief discussion about the Regional Association budget and if the board choose not to pay certain associations this year. Kelly explained she reviewed all the previous association payments and put them into the appropriate lines. She reported the selectmen didn't choose to not pay what they had been paying in the past but she will double check.

Chris Rietmann discussed the change in the police department and the board appointed Bob Bromley as Police Chief. He will work with the current staff and continue to work toward the steps to promote from within. He explained how the process works and he willing to continue where Marcello had left off. The police have proposed the same budget as last year. They will be requesting a new police cruiser as a warrant article. After having the current cruiser inspected by a local garage, they felt that Office Howard's cruiser is no longer a safe reliable vehicle.

Ambulance department head Jesse Moore reported the 2017 budget has a slight decrease because he had to replace the outdated supplies with current ones. There was some discussion about the ambulance billing and how much the ambulance makes a year. Chris answered it has been difficult to keep a running total of how much is billed out and how much is collected. Kelly followed up by stating depending upon how many calls were actually transported are the calls the Town can bill out. The selectmen's office does receive monthly bills from EMS with the total billed to the insurance company and payments are faxed to EMS when they come into the office. The last 4 years the ambulance made approximately \$8,000 to \$16,000 a year.

The Fire department head Kim Kercewich reported the 2017 budget will show an increase to allow for physicals to be done for the crew members. The Forest Fire budget has also increased to allow for a 50/50 grant for new equipment. In 2016 40 acres were burned and the Alstead fire department assisted many of the surrounding Towns' with forest fires. Kim requested the board consider putting a warrant article on the ballot to purchase a side by side ATV to assist with forest fires equipment and rescuers to the scene.

Chris Rietmann spoke about the 2017 Emergency Management budget and the increase in the grants line item. This will allow the Town to update our grants through Southwestern Regional Planning and Homeland Security. The Hazardous Mitigation Plan and the EOP plan needs to be updated this year.

Highway department head David Crosby spoke about his 2017 budget and the changes in it will include additional lines to allow for guard rails, road striping and crack sealing for this year. He discussed the Paving warrant article and the change in the amount from \$221,000 to \$155,000. He shared while the prices are low, now is the time to pave and feels it should be increased. The roads he is planning on paving are Prospect Rd, Vilas Rd, Main St, Library Ave, the parking lots at the town offices both the front and rear, and Breakneck Rd. David reported he is requesting the purchase of a 10-wheeler which will replace the current 6-wheeler. The 6-wheeler is no longer able to be repaired and the 10-wheeler will cut down on number of trips while sanding or doing projects.

The Library 2017 budget was discussed and Matt Gillette shared he will be requesting some wage adjustments at the deliberative session.

Matt Saxton spoke on behalf of the planning board and shared they would like to see Bragg Lane cleaned up and the top soil put back in place and grass planted. David said the berm there is holding back the brook. He will look at it.

The warrant articles were reviewed and discussed.

Article # 2 the operating budget is the same as last year and the default budget reflects the increase to the NH retirement.

Article #3 -10-Wheeler to replace the 6-wheeler to be paid for out of capital reserve funds. The concern is if we deplete these funds without putting money back into them how will the Town afford the next truck. Chris is opposed how the truck is funded.

Article #4 Paved Roads- the initial request was for \$221,00 but the selectmen reduced the amount to \$155,000. They feel the Town can't afford it this year. David Crosby and Glenn Elsesser said while the oil prices are low the Town should take advantage of it or else they will get behind with its paving.

Article #5 Police Cruiser \$14,000 to put down as a down payment and to outfit the cruiser. The total cost would be approximately \$40,000. There is some discussion what is the best way to fund this. Chris feels we should ask DRA how to proceed.

There was some discussion about how the 3% tax cap limits the Town to request how much funds can be proposed. Matt Saxton said it's not enough money to what we have coming up to replace, repair or purchase much in the future.

Article #6 Bridge Capital Reserve Fund. To add \$15,000 to it.

Article #7 Shedd Porter Library Capital Reserve Fund. To add \$15,000 to it.

Article #8 Ambulance Capital Reserve Fund. To add \$25,000 to it.

Article #9 Repair Tower Lines. The communication line has been damaged and needs to be replaced. The current quote has the line on the ground and David will ask if there is another option and have this information by the deliberative session.

Article #10 Appropriations for funds made available during the year. This would give the Town flexibility to apply for grants if it isn't in the budget.

Article #11 Discontinue the New Town Hall fund and establish a new fund or put those funds into fund balance.

Article #12 to discontinue the cemetery CRF and rename it to cemetery maintenance CRF

Article #13 to define the format for the Board of Selectmen's recommendations.

Chris also mentioned the Police Department have requested starting a revolving fund.

The board of selectmen received a petitioned warrant from the Alstead Advisory Budget Committee, this article would allow the AABC's opinion on the ballot.

There was a lot discussion about depleting the capital reserve funds and the neglect from previous boards to repair and maintain the Town's buildings. This board is trying to working on these issues but trying to live within the Town's means.

Glenn Elsesser has requested the board add the following warrant articles to the ballot.

1. Add money to the Highway capital reserve fund.
2. Add money to the Fire department capital reserve fund. Kim shared the older fire truck is no longer able to be refurbished per the State.

Glenn Elsesser asked if a warrant article can be started with \$1.00 as a placeholder. He has requested the Town start saving money for the Bell Hill Rd.

Rock Wilson moved to adjourn, Chris seconded. Meeting adjourned at 10:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Kelly N Wright

