

Alstead Advisory Budget Committee

Minutes for the December 7, 2016 meeting

Members in attendance:

Glenn Elsesser
Chris Hansen
Carol Reller
Juliana Stevens
Donna Sabin
Mary Ann Wolf
Sam Sutcliffe
Barbara Viegener
Marge Noonan

Also present:

Chris Rietmann

Minutes and action items from previous meeting

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as commented on per email.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector budget

The budget, if approved as is, will take up the 3% budget cap. As the tax collector/town clerk are elected positions, the SB has no control over the budget. Change can be made at the Deliberative Session Feb. 4. There was much discussion on how to handle this and it was felt the SB still had a chance to deal with the situation beforehand and Chris Rietmann was going to get an opinion from LGC concerning the SB making changes before the session. AABC will await his findings before advancing further ideas.

Police Dept:

Same total as last year. There has been a cut back in the proposed increase for the secretarial staff. There is a saving on health insurance, which had yet to be updated (waiting on numbers). Proposed warrant articles include a new vehicle, revolving fund and work on the emergency cable.

DPW:

There is an increase of \$10,000 for more part-time help. Much discussion on using the current part-time employees more efficiently and effectively. There should be a plan put forward from the DPW justifying the need for increase in hours. Crack sealing of roads and guard rails are possible warrant articles.

Sanitation:

Savings are not evident with the change of contractor. There has been an increase in compactor use and the tipping fees are stable because more trash is being hauled. The additional compactor is in place and should be usable soon. There will be a need for a roof on the compactor in the future. Some residents are not paying their fees and end up dumping on the side of the road. Some of the budget numbers presented are in error and in the wrong line or dept.

Ambulance:

Definitive budget the same.

Fire:

Need for a UTV for off road accidents and brush fires was discussed as a warrant article. Discussion also included volunteers providing machines or possibly a fund raising effort by the fire department/town. Physicals that are required by the State for training to be done as needed was then discussed. Should periodic physicals be required as safety precaution? Is there any liability to the town? Should an alarm system be a warrant article or part of the budget? Alarm systems for the fire stations and town garage that are less expensive than those originally proposed were presented. These could now be budgeted under building maintenance.

Cemeteries:

Much speculation on the spending of the perpetual care money on all the lots, spending the interest from the trust funds in the current year only or use of previous years' interest. There is a need for clarification and Bruce Bellows will be present at the next SB meeting to hopefully explain. A lot will depend on how the trust is written.

Library:

The trustees feel there should be an increase in salary for the employees and the town should provide more money for the library.

EMS:

Budget is flat. Main expense is mutual aid fee. Chris is taking no salary but would like a new tablet provided.

Other warrant articles

Carol gave Chris R. the RSA with the wording for accepting grant money, which will be a warrant article each year.

Glenn presented his warrant article list, which had been discussed at previous meetings. He feels the police should wait till later in the year and get a 2018 cruiser, which will give two years between cruisers. The PD has been asked to get a quote for this. The Planning Board approved his CIP. Need for a new metals container at transfer station, which will be partially paid for by a grant from NH Beautiful. Consider white lines only for road striping (necessary for fog). Paving for Pleasant St, Vilas Rd and parts of the village. 10 wheel dump truck for highway. Fix wiring to communication tower. Add to current Capital Reserve Accounts.

Fund Balance

The Fund Balance for this year less than last year. As the department budgets are tightened the fund balance will decrease.

Other items

We questioned if unemployment insurance is going up as the town is paying unemployment for part-time workers. We also discussed the ongoing need and effort for DPW to record on time card what jobs they are working on each day.

Action items:

- Request print-out of actual budget in Excel.

Next meeting

Our next meeting will be 12/21. Anyone available should try and attend the workshop with the SB and department heads, date and time to be determined.

Meeting adjourned 8:15.

Respectfully submitted, Marge Noonan