

Lebanon Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes

1 - 13 - 16

Members Present - Jeri Basko, Laura Bragg, Corinna Cole, Chris Gilpatrick, Chip Harlow, Nancy Neubert, Skip Wood

Selectmen Present - Chairperson Thompson, Royce Heath

Department Head - Marcy Polletta

Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Harlow at 6:35. Minutes from last week were read. Laura Bragg motioned to accept and Skip Wood seconded the motion. Minutes were approved unanimously by a 7 - 0 vote.

Old Business

Chris Gilpatrick questioned the selectmen about the Budget Committee's function and purpose. Specifically he wanted to know about comments made last week concerning whether the committee was a real committee or not since there has not been a warrant article on the ballot for several years. Gilpatrick also commented that the committee should be questioning all department heads about specific items in their budget in order to make recommendations to the selectmen.

Selectmen Thompson distributed a letter from the town's attorneys Bernstein, Shur, Sawyer & Nelson in reply to Chip Harlow's letter from last week. The first issue addressed was whether the Budget Committee has the authority to discuss personnel matters as they relate to the budget. The attorneys stated that "the code enforcement officer's qualifications, performance or compensation is within the purview of the Board of Selectmen and not the Budget Committee." The letter did not address whether the issue of an employee's licensing or their knowledge of the licensing process was also included as a personnel issue.

The letter also addressed the role of the Budget Committee. The attorneys stated that the Budget Committee answers to the voters but that the selectmen have oversight over this committee. They provided the MMA model for budget committees to be used if the town does not have a specific charter "which spells out the powers and duties of a Budget Committee." It was also stated that the Budget Committee is an advisory committee only and the selectmen are not required to act on any recommendations made by the committee.

Chip Harlow proposed that departments who have small budgets be included in the General Government budget. He proposed a budget amount of \$1,000. or lower. Selectmen Thompson said he would look into the matter.

MMA was asked to bid on the town insurance package but they declined citing the town's high Workman's Compensation rate. Harlow approached Cross Insurance about this matter and they will be setting up a meeting with the Selectman.

Elections

Mandy Grenier, Town Clerk, was not present at the meeting and submitted a written explanation of this budget. Wages are down due to combining the school and town elections this year. Travel expenses are the same. Payroll taxes are down due the combining of elections. Supplies are also down because the town bought new voting booths this past year. Maintenance agreements are the same and postage is up, due to an anticipated increase in absentee ballots for the upcoming presidential election. The total budget for this department is down \$3,439.

Total Budget: \$15,591.

General Government

Wages are up because the town has hired an extra office worker. Overtime and selectmen wages remain the same as last year. Travel expenses, staff development and association dues are all up. Payroll taxes are also up due to the extra office worker. Supplies remain the same and there is a new line for books - \$50. The committee noticed a few late fees under supplies - Thompson will look into this.

All utilities are up with the exception of phones which remains the same as last year. Building maintenance and radio maintenance are also the same as last year. In Outside Services, the photocopier line remains the same but building security, software annual license, and technology maintenance are up. It was noted that the software line is already over for this year. This line is for the Trio software used in the town office. Thompson will look into this overage. Fees are up due to moving janitorial and audit training into this line. Technology is up \$1,100. due to the new technology company the town is using.

In the Other line, Postage, Printing, Advertising and Registry of Deeds are up. Bank Fees, Lien Prep Fees and Lien Notices remain the same. The Town Government budget is up \$18,569.

Total Budget: \$356,579.

Library

Marcy Polletta presented the Library budget. The school district pays for heat, maintenance, cleaning (when school is in session), computer, software and electricity. The town pays for the librarian and substitutes, supplies, books, equipment, events, summer reading and postage. Wages and payroll taxes will remain the same as will supplies and books. Equipment is up \$235. for new shelving. Library events and the summer reading program remain the same. Events in the library include Lebanon Festival, author visits, Trick or Treat, story time, adult coloring, Center for Grieving Children presentation, Minion Saturday and Night with Hope on Haven Hill (opioid treatment center for women and newborns). This budget is up \$235.

Total Budget: \$17,550.

Next Week - Hydrants, Fire/EMS

Chris Gilpatrick motioned for the meeting to adjourn and Laura Bragg seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:32 with a unanimous 7 - 0 vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Neubert, Secretary

Approved - 1-20-16