



BUDGET COMMITTEE
Town of Hollis
Seven Monument Square
Hollis, New Hampshire 03049
Tel. 465-2209 FAX 465-3701

Minutes of July 28, 2009

Meeting was held in the Community Room, Hollis Town Hall, and the Budget Committee was called to order by Chairman Chris Hyde at 7:05 PM.

Members present: Chris Hyde, Chairman; Mike Harris, Vice Chairman; Peter Band, Selectmen Representative; Bill Beauregard, School Board Representative, Frank Whittemore, Tom Jambard, Bob Labednick, Ray Valle
Also present: Paul Calabria, Finance Director.

Review of Minutes

June 23, 2009: Approved as amended (Tom Jambard was not present and his name is deleted).
Moved and seconded. 2 abstentions: Mike and Tom

Two Department Reviews: Hollis Social Library and Police Department

Hollis Social Library Department Review:

Bob Bartis, Chairman of Library Trustees, and Gaye Kulvete, Library Director, presented. Bob stated that they had received a request from the Board of Selectmen Budget to do a budget cut of 10%. Budget last year was 286,000 (3% of town's budget – increase of 4% in 2008 (2% for employees and 2% for materials) approved at Town Meeting in March).

- o Bob stated that to do a budget cut, they would need to cut either materials or hours. Options considered were closing on Wednesday evenings, cutting hours on Saturday, and keeping closed on Sunday year-round. The library is open 57.5 hours per week. Closing Wednesday nights and 2.5 hours on Saturday would reduce it to 52.5 hours. There was dissension on the Library Board for doing this.
- o Gaye detailed the increased usage of the library due to the economy. Statistics include:
 - o Internet use has increased 43% over this time last year.
 - o DVD circulation is up 37% since October.
 - o Summer reading programs are up 300% over last year.
- o Statistics – look at high volumes and not reduce hours during that timeframe.
- o People have cut home subscriptions and come to the library.
- o Ray asked if there are critical needs for patrons not being addressed. Gaye identified a staffing issue to keep up increased attendance, a new server (suggestion was made to collaborate with schools for hardware).
- o Other libraries provide kindles, job counseling workshops and other programs, and a reference librarian for computer and job search assistance.
- o 1500-1900 people use the library per week. There are only 3 computers (could use 5 more), and could use 10-12 laptops for workshops.
- o We do not have reciprocity with Nashua and Milford. We do not belong to the cooperative since it would cost \$25,000 per year.
- o Ray Valle explained that electronic books can be downloaded for free. Ray asked about the strategy for electronic books and Internet use. Increasingly, people are looking for Internet services.
- o There is no plan or discussion for facility expansion at this time.
- o The Library meeting room holds only 25 people. Gay has been able to book the Lawrence Barn for larger programs, but that is also heavily booked.
- o Bill suggested that the Hollis School Board and Library touch base on hardware and software vendors to see if there are economies of scale.
- o Gay stated that the Library is a vital public service, and it provides services for less than \$1/week per resident.

Hollis Police Department:

- o Chief Russell Ux described the 24 hour/7 day service that is provided, including: Role, Mission, Code of Ethics, Legally Mandated Authority.
- o Since Hollis borders another state and a city of 80,000 people, there are unique issues that they experience.

- There are 15 sworn full-time police officers. Patrol division consists of 10 members, the minimum necessary to provide 2 officers on duty 24 hours a day.
- Detective bureau now has 2 officers.
- One police officer assigned to schools, whose salary is 60% reimbursed by School budget.
- Budget is 82% salaries
- Mobile upgrade has been extremely effective.
- 5% reduction impact = 60,646, and the only way to do this would be to lay off police officers, and Chief Ux responded that he would retire rather than do that.
- More interactive Web-based training is now available. We have \$6000 budgeted for training 15 officers. We do a lot of remedial training and have documented it.
- Ray Valle commended the Hollis Police Department for doing as much as they do with so little, and asked where extra resources would be applied if a donation came in. Chief Ux responded that he would assess replacing antiquated equipment.
- Chief Ux stated that it is cheaper to pay overtime compared to adding more staff. What drives overtime is replacing officers on shifts. Total budget for overtime is \$71,000.
- Chris asked about potential impacts looking out 2-3 years. Chief Ux responded that building wise we are OK for ~15 years. We are OK with equipment and personnel for 3-4 years. Firearms are 12 years old and will need to be replaced in time.
- SRO (School Resource Officer) has made a tremendous impact on the safety of our schools. Using free software, she is able to track issues.
- Bill Beauregard stated that when a 10% budget reduction is asked for, an exercise like this it needs to be done at a town level, since Chief Ux does not own his entire budget.
- Chairman Manoukian stated that the Board of Selectmen will not support laying off any police officers, because safety is our priority.
- Mike Harris expressed his appreciation for the great work that Chief Ux and his department are doing.

Town Report:

- Peter stated that the town is tracking nicely under budget. Collections are on target. Delinquent receivables are percentage-wise the same as in the past.
- Welfare cases have not increased – at \$3200 on a \$10,000 budget.
- For the fee schedule – selectmen have voted affirmatively to have public hearing.
- First draft of CIP – Paul tasked to prioritize.

School Report:

- Audit and budget preparation is ongoing.

Public Input: None

Other Business:

- August Agenda: DPW, Town Hall, and Fire Department Reviews

Motion to adjourn was made and seconded. Meeting adjourned: 9:35 P.M

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Drottar, Recording Secretary