



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

Minutes of August 25, 2009

Meeting was held in the Community Room, Hollis Town Hall. The Budget Committee was called to order by Chairman Chris Hyde at 6:35 PM.

Members present: Chris Hyde, Chairman; Mike Harris, Vice Chairman; Peter Band, Selectmen Representative; Bill Beauregard, School Board Representative, Frank Whitemore, Tom Jambard, Bob Labelednick, Ray Valle
 Also present: Paul Calabria, Finance Director; Jeff Babel, Director of Public Works, Rick Towne, Fire Chief, Troy Brown, Town Administrator; Rick Towne, Fire Chief; Town Clerk: Nancy Jambard

Review of July Minutes: Postponed to September meeting.

Public Input: Kathy Kirby, 8 Rockhaven Drive, Hollis – Kathy had Co-op School Budget questions. Ray Valle is on both the Town and Co-op Budget Committees, and can direct Kathy to the appropriate body. Kathy was urged to come to our next Budget Committee meeting where the School will present. Kathy stated that she will attend the next meeting. She also had Communications Dept. issues.

DPW Review: Jeff Babel, Director of Public Works (Hand-out provided, covering workload and budget)

Overview of Services:

- DPW Workload in rank order: Road rebuilding, road repair, signage, drainage, snow plowing, building maintenance, including Transfer station and stump dump (Budget of \$193,619, and an Actual of \$175,645).
- 13 full-time positions; 2 part-time positions; 1 part-time position unfilled
- Solid waste disposal: \$ 374,000 paid to Souhegan.
- Hazardous Waste/Nashua

Revenue:

- Largest revenue is from the dumps – scrap metal is the biggest revenue.
- Block grant - from State comes from gas tax
- 2008: \$42,430 from FEMA

Cost Reduction Options:

- Reduce road rebuilding
- Mandatory recycling could make a difference in our solid waste cost
 - In our district, it is voluntary. Other towns have mandatory, such as Peterborough, and soon in Concord.
- Curb-side pickup, pay-per-bag, and single stream recycling are options. Curb-side does not eliminate a transfer station, which is still needed for electronics, etc.
- Chris asked Jeff about Restricting hours of operation at dump: Jeff stated that it would be unpopular with the public.
- 10% of the budget is \$225,000 and would eliminate many of the current services

Research options for the future:

- Troy and Jeff to do the exercise to research on curb-side pickup, pay-per-bag, and single stream recycling for cost savings.
- Bring the problem to the schools to take on as a project.

Areas that need to be Addressed:

- Chris asked about any areas that need to be addressed, and Jeff indicated that culverts are a high priority. For 2009, Wright Road culvert and the engineering on Federal Hill Road were completed.

Equipment:

- Lease/Purchase really worked well. Dump truck needs replacement.

Fire Department Review: Rick Towne, Fire Chief

Overview of Services:

- Respond to fire calls, medical, and hazardous conditions, First Aid, Fire Prevention
- 8 full-time and 2 administrative. Volunteers/on call: 2-4 will respond at any one time out of 25 active. Ten years ago there were about 50 volunteers. Volunteers worked well until early the 1990's, when people's jobs moved to larger commutes.
- Ambulance Fund: Dr. Golden recommended charging what the insurance companies allowed. Typical charge is \$400-800+. Hardship cases are handled if there is no insurance.
- Station maintenance is done by the current personnel, except for stripping floors.
- Mutual Aid System: All fire departments in the area assist each other, without owing any costs (this includes neighboring Massachusetts towns, such as Pepperell and Dunstable).
- There is a plan to convert from volunteer to full-time, and Rick stated that we still need 11 full-time people, according to the plan approved.

Cost Reduction Options:

- Potential cuts: Elimination of any personnel would compromise the safety of the town. No one is at the station from midnight to 6 A.M. now.
 - If 5% cut, would have to cut a firefighter.
 - If 10% cut, would have to cut 2-3 firefighters.
- Fundraising and donations have been used to replace necessary equipment, for example:
 - \$20,000 replacing nozzles
 - \$8-9,000 replacing ventilation fans
 - Thermal image cameras

Equipment:

- Equipment: 2 trucks are on order, and no replacements should be needed for 10 years.

Donations:

- Chris asked what would be at the top of the list if donations were to come in. Rick stated that the Jaws of Life need to be replaced (~\$20,000).

Town Hall Reviews: Troy Brown, Town Administrator

Town Clerk: Nancy Jambard

- Budget is \$50,000. Revenue comes from automotive, dogs, boats, marriage, and she has collected \$41,000 to date.
- Nancy stated that we have been online with the State for a year and it is working very well. Next year, we plan is to add credit cards (2.75% fee).
- Options to eliminate postage are being researched, such as capturing email addresses. Issues have to be worked out for this.
- **Other Departments:** Board decided to eliminate smaller department reviews where operating costs are fixed. Troy stated that they will be working on the budget in October and November, and will present to the Budget Committee on November 24, 2009. Board of Selectman direction is level fund or less.
- **5% and 10% Reduction:** Troy stated that they are not in a position to reduce personnel. Troy's handout shows cuts in other areas to achieve the reductions.
- Town hall FTE is 8.75.

School Reports: There is a surplus year-end of ~\$357,000. At our next meeting (September 21, 2009), details will be presented.

Town Reports: Health insurance costs are going up 10-15%. There are 2 options: cost sharing with employees, continue hard negotiations with carriers.

Motion to adjourn was made and seconded. Meeting adjourned: 10:35 P.M

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Drottar, Recording Secretary