

**TOWN OF TUFTONBORO
BUDGET COMMITTEE
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BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Wednesday, February 15, 2017
6:00 p.m. - Town House**

Corrections made in bold and italics

Present: Chairman Carla Lootens, Vice-Chairman Steve Brinser , Tyler Phillips, Bob Theve, Selectmen's Representative Carolyn Sundquist, , Helen Hartshorn and Karen Koch. John Libby was absent.

OPEN MEETING: After declaring a quorum, Chairman Lootens opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CHAIRMAN COMMENTS: There were no questions from the group regarding the updated information that was distributed (revenue, MS-737 and updated budget charts).

As they were absent at the last Budget Committee meeting, Chairman Lootens asked Vice-Chairman Brinser and Helen Hartshorn if they would like to revisit the warrant articles. She explained that the articles will be listed in the annual report as voted upon at the last Budget Committee meeting. In response to Vice-Chairman Brinser, Chairman Lootens and Tyler Phillips explained how the warrant article vote changed to be in favor of recommending the 19 Mile Bay crosswalk at the last meeting. Neither Ms. Hartshorn nor Vice-Chairman Brinser wished to revisit the articles for a re-vote.

REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Chairman Lootens called for review and approval of the February 7, 2017 minutes. **Motion:** Tyler Phillips moved to accept the minutes as written, seconded by Chairman Lootens. Vote passed 4-0. Helen Hartshorn and Vice-Chairman Brinser abstained.

Motion: At 6:06 pm, Chairman Lootens moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Vice-Chairman Brinser. Vote passed 6-0.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Chairman Lootens called the public hearing to order at 6:30 pm. John Libby was in attendance for the public hearing.

Chairman Lootens explained the Budget Committee budget review process. She thanked Tyler Phillips for his 9 years of service, Vice-Chairman Brinser for his 3 years and Carolyn Sundquist for serving the Town for 9 years.

Chairman Lootens read aloud each budget line along with a short summative, the amount that was recommended by the Budget Committee along with the vote count and the dates they were voted on.

Specific budget questions/comments/clarifications from the public are noted below:

4140 Election, Registration, and Vital Statistics

Chairman Lootens confirmed for Sue Weeks that the 2017 budget amount exceeds 2016 expenditures, even though there is only one election in 2017, due to salary increases.

4155 Personnel Administration

Max Ledoux expressed his concern regarding the validity of this budget number. Selectmen's Representative Sundquist shared that the Budget Committee received a breakdown for health and dental expenses and a list to include each individual's name is not available due to privacy concerns. Chairman Lootens confirmed this information and read aloud legal advice from Stephen C. Buckley of NH Municipal Association summarizing that employee privacy trumps right to know.

4195 Cemeteries

Sue Weeks confirmed for Chairman Lootens the reasons for the slight increase in the Cemetery budget and explained the abandonment process.

4290 Emergency Management

In response to Max Ledoux, Chief Thompson explained the use of the Emergency Management budget.

4313 Other Highways & Streets (Bridges)

In response to Max Ledoux, Chairman Lootens explained that this line includes permitting expenses.

4324 Solid Waste Disposal

Clay Gallagher explained that the biggest reason for the increase is for construction debris removal. Per the request of Chairman Lootens, Mr. Gallagher also explained how avoided costs and revenue are derived.

The Budget Committee's total appropriation for 2017 is \$3,652,755. Selectmen's Representative Sundquist shared that the difference between the Selectmen's and Budget Committee's budget is \$5,000. The Budget Committee reduced the Direct Assistance line by \$5,000.

Helen Hartshorn presented charts to show the operating budget **by expense type** and operating budget **by** detail by department.

In response to Guy Pike, Selectmen's Representative Sundquist confirmed that money that is left over at the end of the year is put into the unassigned fund balance.

Chairman Lootens reviewed the 2017 warrant articles that the Budget Committee voted on. She explained that the votes that are listed on the warrant reflect a meeting when the whole Budget Committee was not present.

Specific warrant article questions/comments/clarifications from the public are noted below:

Article 11 (Library Facility Capital Reserve Fund): Tyler Phillips clarified that this article will have no money raised from additional taxation; that the money is from previous taxation.

Article 12 (Police Facility Capital Reserve Fund): Tyler Phillips shared that his previous comment applies here as well.

Article 13 (Preparation and Paving of Town Roads): In response to Max Ledoux, Chairman Lootens explained how the road maintenance plan is carried out. Selectmen's Representative Sundquist shared with the group that the road maintenance plan is preliminary. Bill Rollins questioned if we always take the lowest bid for asphalt. He expressed his concern that some of the asphalt that we receive is not the best. Chairman Lootens replied that is something that should be brought up to Jim Bean and the Selectmen.

Article 15 (Mirror Lake Boat Launch): Max Ledoux clarified for the public that this is for the boat launch on Route 109. Tyler Phillips expressed concern for safety in terms of the location of this launch. Selectman Wood shared information and pictures in regards to the Mirror Lake Boat Launch and Improvements. Tyler Phillips raised an objection. Selectman Wood raised a point of order to be allowed to continue his presentation.

Article 17 (Town-Wide Watershed Plan): Steve Wingate shared that the wording should be changed to state that this is for a watershed plan to be administered by the Lake Winnepesaukee Association. Selectmen's Representative Sundquist shared that this has been sent to the DRA a few times and has been revised. This request for revised wording will be re-submitted to the DRA.

Article 21 (Pier 19 Crosswalk): Selectmen's Representative Sundquist replied to a few questions from the public that if this project passes at Town Meeting the person who asked the Town to submit this project to the State will have the opportunity to move forward with fundraising to have the project completed.

Article 22 (Contingency Fund): In response to Max Ledoux, Selectmen's Representative Sundquist explained the use of the contingency fund.

Article 24 (Operating Budget): Helen Hartshorn moved to approve the Budget Committee's operating budget for \$3,652,755, seconded by Bob Theve. Vote passed 5-2. Tyler Phillips and Steve Brinser opposed.

Vice-Chairman Brinser shared his concerns in regards to budget increases. Chairman Lootens shared a reminder that Tuftonboro has the third lowest total tax rate in NH and unfortunately the third highest rate *in the country* in regards to healthcare cost. Chairman Lootens reminded the group of the availability of the property tax relief program as well as tax credits and exemptions. This was followed by a discussion of the requirements under which the MS-737 should be signed by members of the Budget Committee.

Chairman Lootens reviewed 2017 revenue. Selectmen's Representative Sundquist shared that the revenues are preliminary at this point and are estimated conservatively. Further discussion ensued regarding revenues.

At 7:55pm, Chairman Lootens moved to adjourn, seconded by Vice-Chairman Brinser. Vote passed 7-0.

Prepared and submitted by: Karen Koch