

TOWN OF WOLFEBORO
BUDGET COMMITTEE
January 9, 2020
Minutes

Members Present: John MacDonald, Chairman, Bob Tougher, Vice-Chairman, Linda Murray, Selectman's Alternate Representative, Matt Plache, Steve Johnson, Brian Black, John Burt, Robert Loughman, Bob Moholland, Members.

Members Absent: Paul O'Brien, Selectmen's Representative, Tom Bell, Member (excused).

Staff Present: Jim Pineo, Town Manager, Troy Neff, Finance Director, Lee Ann Hendrickson, Administrative Secretary.

Chairman MacDonald called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM at the Great Hall.

The Committee participated in the Pledge of Allegiance.

WARRANT ARTICLES

Article 29: AFSCME Contract Agreement; \$46,239

John MacDonald read Article 29.

Article 11: Libby Museum Renovation and Expansion; \$2,856,599

Jim Pineo stated the BOS voted on such at their 1/8/20 meeting; noting the motion failed to support the article (vote of 3-2).

John MacDonald asked if the amount includes donations from the Friends of Libby.

Jim Pineo replied no. He stated he received an email late yesterday from the Biber Foundation stating the donation was reduced from \$844,000 to \$600,000 to be issued over a three year period. He stated that based on such information and the fact that the BOS were unable to weigh in on the matter that the warrant article should include the total cost of the project (both renovation and expansion).

John MacDonald asked if there has been discussion if the warrant article doesn't pass.

Jim Pineo stated he will be scheduling a meeting with the Foundation to discuss the matter and noted Town Counsel would be present at said meeting.

Linda Murray expressed concern that the BOS had no calculation for a short term loan based on the change in the donation to \$600,000 and no time to schedule a public hearing. She stated the BOS discussed putting for a warrant article to establish a capital reserve fund in the amount of \$200,000 which would provide voters the opportunity for input.

John MacDonald asked if the donation from the Biber Foundation is based on the entire project and questioned whether the project could be scaled down.

Jim Pineo stated the Biber Foundation is willing to donate \$600,000 toward the expansion of the building. He stated the Foundation feels the existing building and the HVAC system is the responsibility of the Town, hence the decrease in the amount of the donation. He stated the goal of the capital reserve warrant article is to be able to place the renovation and expansion project on the 2021 warrant. He stated due to the intent of the initial pledge by the Foundation the language of the warrant article was revised to include the total cost of the project.

Steve Johnson asked if it would be best to withdraw the warrant article.

Jim Pineo stated he discussed such with Town Counsel today; noting that Attorney Puffer advised that the Town could remove the article from the 2020 budget at the bond hearing. He stated the capital reserve warrant article could also be brought forth at the bond hearing. He noted the Budget Committee would have to meet on the date of the bond hearing as well to take action on the warrant articles. He noted the date of the bond hearing is January 21st.

Referring to paragraph 6 of the agreement between the Town and the Biber Foundation, Matt Plache stated the language states that if both parties agree in writing that the project could be placed on the warrant.

Jim Pineo stated the Town is well within their right to offer a counter proposal.

Matt Plache stated such has to be resolved prior to January 21st.

Linda Murray stated there is an ability to change the warrant article at the Deliberative Session.

Jim Pineo stated there needs to be a commitment from the Biber Foundation by January 21st so that the Town can move forward with a warrant article and the Friends of Libby can continue their fundraising efforts.

Article 13: Municipal Revaluation; \$200,000

John MacDonald read Article 13. He asked if a vendor has been found.

Jim Pineo stated the Town is currently in negotiations.

John Burt stated he dislikes the language “no tax impact” because any time money is spent there is an impact whether it is direct or indirect.

Linda Murray clarified that the language states “no tax impact in the 2020 tax rate.”

OTHER BUSINESS

John MacDonald expressed concern regarding the late changes to the warrant articles; noting the changes in the such affect the budget and requested a drop dead date in the future relative to when information is due.

Article 35: Electrical Generation Building Feasibility Study; \$25,000

Jim Pineo stated the Budget Committee will have to vote on such; noting the Committee could vote on the article at their meeting that will be scheduled for January 21st. He stated the Girl Scouts submitted a petition warrant article to initiate a feasibility study for the MED Generation building.

John MacDonald asked why the Girls Scouts chose the Generation building.

Dave Ford stated he has worked with the Girl Scouts for the past 3-4 years; noting this year’s project included a civic project and following discussion and due to its vacancy the Girl Scouts chose the building. He stated the Girl Scouts did research, conducted a survey and discussed the project with an architect and engineer. He noted he supports the project.

Article 32: Freight Shed

Jim Pineo stated John Simms met with the BOS at their 1/8/20 meeting and requested to re-appropriate the funds for the freight building. He stated the Budget Committee does not have to vote on such and noted the article would require a 2/3rds majority vote.

It was moved by John Burt and seconded by Matt Plache to adjourn the January 9, 2020 Budget Committee meeting. All members voted in favor.

There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 6:39 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lee Ann Hendrickson

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