

**Wolfeboro Board of Selectmen
Public Meeting Minutes-Unapproved
Budget Hearings
October 30, 2018**

Members present: Chairman Linda Murray, Brad Harriman, Paul O'Brien, Dave Bowers and Dave Senecal

Staff present: Town Manager Becky Merrow, Fire Chief James Pineo, Parks and Recreation Director Christine Collins, Finance Director Deb Zabkar, Public Works Director Dave Ford and Recording Secretary Michele Chamberlain

Chairman Murray opened the meeting at 7:33 PM.

Non-Public Session RSA 91-A:3, II

Ms. Merrow stated a non-public session is needed to discuss litigation and personnel. This may be discussed at the next meeting depending on the time of tonight's meeting.

Chairman Murray stated she reviewed Ms. Merrow's October 23, 2018 proposed 2019 budget and she added \$278,011.00 for Capital Outlay since it was not included in the figure. This would make this budget \$882,491.00 greater than last year's budget. This would make the budget increase by 6% compared to last year.

Mr. O'Brien stated it says we will spend less money on principal and interest but we have not done the warrant articles yet. The 6% increase could be higher if there are more things in warrant articles and we bond them.

Ms. Murray stated yes. This figure does not have either one of the union contracts in it either.

Interfund Operating Transfers Out

Chairman Murray stated the requested total is \$721,818.00 which is a decrease of \$19,485.00.

The Board agreed to put this amount in the budget.

Budget Hearings Review Revisit List

Technology

Chairman Murray stated we were looking for back up material and we received the ad that was placed in the newspaper for this position.

Clark House

Chairman Murray stated at our last meeting we talked about eliminating this from the Barn.

Ms. Merrow stated she was in support of vinyl siding and the Board was not.

Ms. Collins stated the Historic Society was not opposed to the idea.

Chairman Murray stated we removed it from Capital Outlay.

Ms. Collins agreed it could be put off.

Brewster Building (Energy Audit)

Chairman Murray stated at the last meeting we agreed to delete the energy audit.

Parks Maintenance – Overtime

01-45202-140

Ms. Collins stated this amount was increased but she level funded the amount. She removed 100 hours for a total of \$2,312.00.

Chairman Murray stated the new total would be \$6,663.00.

Ms. Collins agreed.

Community Center - Telephone

01-45207-341

Chairman Murray stated we removed \$282.00 from this line at our last meeting.

Ms. Collins agreed.

Capital Outlay – Parks and Recreation Replace 1 Ton Truck

Ms. Collins stated she updated this material. The only parts that we will be able to use are the toolbox and dump cart.

Chairman Murray stated the new cost is \$47,100.00.

Mr. O'Brien stated this amount was added into the Capital Outlay total.

Capital Outlay – Parks and Recreation Bridge Falls Path Light Replacement

Chairman Murray stated we had removed this at our last meeting because we were going to put it as a warrant article.

Ms. Collins stated she had a new proposal. She stated she had met with Daniel's Electric, the company who did Huggins Hospital. She will be receiving a quote from them with two options. The first option would be to leave the poles and change out the lights and the second option would

be to replace making it look a little nicer as well. Daniel's Electric suggested putting the lights on light sensitivity instead of timers. The Hospital paid \$164,000.00.

Mr. O'Brien questioned if there was a charge for the proposal.

Ms. Collins did not think there would be a cost for the proposal.

Chairman Murray stated \$20,000.00 is for temporarily fixes.

Ms. Collins stated it will be a few weeks before she can get the proposal.

The Board agreed they were going to remove this item. It can be looked at as a warrant article.

Buildings and Grounds – Supervisory Salaries

01-43192-113

Mr. Ford provided the Board with the job description for this position.

Mr. O'Brien stated this is the Facilities Management job description that we are not going to do.

Mr. Ford stated the job description can be amended. This position is a high level foreman that fixes things opposed to cleaning things. This position has been removed due to the budget concerns.

The Board agreed but stated it should be looked at again next year.

Capital Outlay – Public Works RR Station

Chairman Murray stated this was removed.

Ms. Merrow stated a study was added for \$30,000.00.

Mr. O'Brien stated we are removing \$40,000.00 for the deck.

Chairman Murray stated Chris Williams thought the study would cost about \$30,000.00.

Ms. Merrow stated for a Historic Structures Report.

Mr. Bowers stated he thought it was a lot of money to assess one little small building.

Ms. Merrow stated she had a similar proposal from another company for about \$17,000.00. The question is who you want to do the study.

Mr. O'Brien questioned who Ms. Merrow would like to do the work.

Ms. Merrow stated the Railroad Committee asked Chris Williams to be here.

Chairman Murray stated the Railroad Committee was trying to get a feeling of the Historic Significance of the inside of the building. They questioned if it should be on the State Registry.

Mr. O'Brien questioned who would be best qualified to conduct the study.

Chairman Murray stated we are still struggling on how to use this space.

Mr. O'Brien questioned if the building was Historic could the Town qualify for LCHIP money.

Mr. Ford stated work was done before to fix the building and at that time it was not done for Historic Preservation because of the extra cost.

Mr. O'Brien stated we do not know if this would qualify and it would take a lot of time and effort. We could complete a structural assessment and fix it up.

Mr. Bowers stated he felt fixing it up for current use would be better than Historic use for the cost of a million dollars.

Mr. O'Brien asked Ms. Merrow for her recommendation.

Ms. Merrow stated she is a preservationist.

The Board discussed.

Mr. Senecal stated Chris Williams is well liked and familiar with the LCHIP process. It is unfortunate that he costs 2 or 3 times more but if we are looking for LCHIP money we need to be careful of who we hire.

Ms. Merrow agreed with Mr. Senecal. She stated this would be her third LCHIP project.

Chairman Murray stated she felt the exterior look of the building is important.

Mr. Harriman arrived.

Chairman Murray summarized for Mr. Harriman their discussion. Chairman Murray stated the Board would like to see the building historically preserved but Mr. Bowers does not want to spend over \$100,000.00 and Mr. Senecal would like to hire Chris Williams. The Board was not sure if they had the money for the project this year.

Mr. Senecal suggested moving it to 2020.

Mr. Bowers agreed.

Mr. O'Brien agreed but would like to know the choices.

The Board agreed to remove this item.

Electric Administration – Worker's Compensation figure

03-43410-260

Ms. Zabkar checked all the worker's compensation figures and stated this is fine. It is based off of Primex's figures.

Fire/Rescue Supervisor Salaries

01-42200-114

Chief Pineo addressed the Board.

Chairman Murray stated she made a spreadsheet out of the information that Chief Pineo provided them about the increases. She stated the top increase is 16% then 12%, 10%, 6% and 2%. She stated she struggled with this because it is a large increase when we are only giving the others a 2% increase.

Mr. O'Brien stated he felt the line should be funded 2% and if the Chief wanted to give someone 16% then it is within his power to do that as long as he makes the bottom line.

Chief Pineo stated he agreed it was a generous package but some of these employees have been here since 2004 and are still making the same wage as someone that was hired in 2016. It is difficult to keep their morale boosted. He felt the turnover of employees had been stabilized. When he first arrived in Town he could not afford to lose his lieutenants so he pushed to have their wages increased. He felt the firefighters were his next step.

Chief Pineo stated the lieutenants were done over a two year cycle. He would be okay with that cycle for the firefighters.

Chairman Murray suggested starting with Group A this year and Group B next year.

Chief Pineo stated this is a position holder not a grade.

Ms. Merrow stated it is a crew. There is an "A" crew and a "B" crew.

Chief Pineo stated it is just a position holder.

Mr. Bowers stated the firefighters all get paid the same.

Chief Pineo stated correct.

Mr. Senecal stated part of this year's proposal is an increase to longevity which a lot of these guys will receive. We also looked at stipends for education.

Mr. O'Brien stated this compensation will recognize their tenure.

Chief Pineo stated he is trying to create separation and award that person who has been here for 14 years.

Mr. O'Brien stated Chief Pineo feels like his crew has been underpaid compared to other departments.

There was discussion if longevity and stipends were part of Retirement benefits.

Mr. O'Brien questioned the increase on the budget.

Chief Pineo stated it will cost approximately \$30,851.00.

Chairman Murray questioned if this included the Deputy's increase as well.

Chief Pineo stated no just the firefighters.

Chairman Murray asked the Board if they were comfortable with giving a 3% increase to that line and letting the Chief decide.

Mr. O'Brien stated he did not agree. He thought it should be 2%.

Mr. Senecal stated he felt they could not go over the amount that they were giving everyone else. He stated he could understand the Chief's philosophies.

Chief Pineo questioned the union amounts.

Mr. Senecal stated they do not have agreements yet.

Mr. Harriman agreed with Mr. Senecal and Mr. O'Brien. He stated he would be uncomfortable giving a group more than another group. He agreed with the 2%.

Mr. Bowers stated he would be more generous and suggested looking at the wage study more closely but he would go along with his peers. He did not think they could give the Fire Department one amount and the Public Works Department something else. He felt they should pay their employees well.

Chairman Murray stated she would have liked to do more. She would like to look at this again next year.

Mr. O'Brien stated he felt people needed to be compensated fairly and compensation should be competitive. He would like to understand how their positions operate.

Mr. Bowers offered to have a committee to study every position.

Ms. Merrow stated she recommends that the Board implement the wage study that the Town of Wolfeboro paid for and authorized and that it should be done sooner rather than later.

Chairman Murray asked to have a copy of the wage study for the Board members.

Ms. Merrow asked when the wage study was done.

Chief Pineo stated in 2016.

The Board agreed they would like to look at this again.

Chairman Murray stated another wage study could be done.

Chief Pineo stated he wanted to be 100% clear so he asked if they were looking at a 2% increase.

The Board agreed.

Chief Pineo asked for clarification of the 2%.

Chairman Murray stated the 2% is across the board which is what the non-union people are getting. Then they will also get the longevity and extra money for education.

Chief Pineo questioned the education money. How is it defined?

Ms. Merrow stated it is above and beyond what your job requires.

Mr. O'Brien questioned if this policy was written done.

Ms. Merrow stated we are working on it.

The Board discussed in length and decided it needed to be revisited next week.

Chairman Murray stated she would like to seriously consider doing another wage study.

Chief Pineo stated he would give the Board copies of the wage study from 2016.

Fire/Rescue – Supervisory Salaries

01-42200-113

Chief Pineo stated this is a similar topic. He would like to increase Deputy Chief Zotti's pay. He stated Mr. Zotti has worked hard over the last two years to improve his delivery in working with citizens, businesses and clients in some very sensitive issues regarding code enforcement. He has truly stepped up his professionalism and he is a pleasure to work with as well. He is very well known and respected within the State.

Mr. O'Brien questioned if it was appropriate to discuss this with other employees in the room.

Ms. Merrow stated salary is public information. We cannot talk about performance.

Mr. O'Brien stated okay, please continue.

Chief Pineo stated the increase would bring Mr. Zotti up to the 10% rank difference.

Chairman Murray made two suggestions. She stated Mr. Zotti is a long term employee and she had no problem giving him a 3% or 4% increase. She agreed his wage was low. She suggested giving 3% this year and 3% next year.

Mr. Bowers agreed with 4%.

Mr. Harriman stated if they make exceptions then where is the line drawn. He thought it would create more morale problems. He felt they should look at the wage study again and then make a decision.

Mr. Senecal stated he was okay with the 3%. Mr. Zotti has improved when dealing with people. He has a better attitude and is easier to deal with now. He was held back before because of his attitude and his lack of discipline with local people. Mr. Senecal agreed to give him the 3% increase.

Mr. O'Brien agreed with the 3%.

It was moved by Dave Bowers and seconded by Paul O'Brien to give Deputy Chief Zotti a 3% increase (line 01-42200-113 Supervisory Salaries). Members voted and being none opposed, the motion passed.

Fire

01-42200-350 Medical Services

Stewart's Ambulance

Chief Pineo stated they are looking for a 2.7% increase making the Ambulance contract a total of \$253,730.00.

Chairman Murray stated the contract will be \$253,730.00, the annual physicals will be \$15,000.00 and the new hire physicals will be \$2,400.00.

Chief Pineo stated the new total will be \$271,130.00.

The Board agreed with the figure.

Ms. Merrow stated there is some friction over language.

Chief Pineo stated there is some language that we need to have clarified in the contract. He read the first paragraph of the contract.

Chief Pineo stated the only way an ambulance service can make any money is by doing transfer work.

Ms. Merrow agreed.

Chairman Murray stated she felt comfortable with them having two ambulances in Town.

Chief Pineo stated he could live with the shifts in ambulances as long as it is being done.

Chairman Murray stated the monitor will tell us so we will have a way to check them.

Chief Pineo stated the issue is the accountability. There is a \$500.00 fee per violation.

Mr. O'Brien questioned if we were getting less and still paying the same amount.

Chief Pineo stated we are paying the increase. They have been very problematic to deal with.

Mr. O'Brien stated there is no competition.

Chairman Murray stated we will discuss this again at our next Board Meeting.

Fire- Outside Services - Hydrant Fee

01-42200-380

The Board agreed with a 20% increase. The new line total would be \$363,791.00.

Mr. Ford gave the Board back up information to give to the Budget Committee.

Assessing - Office Supplies

01-41503-620

Ms. Merrow stated at the last meeting we changed this line to \$1,338.00.

The Board agreed.

Sewer Collection – Electricity

Mr. Ford stated the line could be cut to \$30,000.00.

Chairman Murray stated we would decrease the line by \$5,951.00.

The Board agreed.

Water Treatment – Electricity

04-43263-410

The Board agreed to leave this line at \$72,827.00.

Capital Outlay - Gates

Mr. Ford stated in 2018 there was a Water Department Capital Outlay line item for WTP gate replacements. The project went out to bid and we received no responses. After reviewing the bid specifications and the long term needs, we decided to increase the budget and upgrade the upper gate to an electric slide gate, which would be safer for our operators. This would increase the budget by \$25,000.00. Mr. Ford also included back up materials for all capital outlay projects that were requested by the Board at the last meeting.

Community Center

Ms. Merrow stated she suggested winterizing the facilities and then closing it down. We could test for air quality but it would be counterproductive.

Chairman Murray stated she was not interesting in closing the facility.

Mr. Senecal stated we need to do something. There is a horrible smell.

Chairman Murray and Mr. O'Brien questioned the quote.

Ms. Merrow stated \$1,775.00 was the quote for an asbestos/lead-based paint check. Another vendor was proposing installing a vapor barrier but the quote will not be back until after the budget is finalized.

Mr. O'Brien questioned if this was a health concern.

Ms. Merrow stated she thought it could be a liability. She stated it would be better to state we think something is wrong and we are going to be proactive and close the place down until we figure it out.

Chairman Murray stated the quilters are going to be upset. They just spent \$2,000.00.

Ms. Collins stated if it is a risk to their health then we need to do something.

Mr. Senecal stated we should get the test done to see if we have asbestos/lead paint.

Chairman Murray stated then we will add \$1,775.00 to the line.

Mr. O'Brien agreed with Ms. Collins. We need to identify the problem and deal with it.

Mr. Senecal stated we need to see if we have lead paint or asbestos and then we can determine what we are going to do with the building.

Mr. Ford stated we have money in the capital reserve account for this.

It was moved by Chairman Murray and seconded by Brad Harriman to use the Building Maintenance Capital Reserve Account to address the issues at the Community Center and to investigate. Members voted and being none opposed, the motion passed.

A. Parks Maintenance – Outside Services, Garden & Landscaping

01-45202-380 Outside Services

Ms. Collins stated the landscaping in front of Hunter's Shop 'N Save (IGA) is being done by a landscaper not in house. The cost is \$3,108.00.

01-45202-117 Part Time Wages

Chairman Murray asked Ms. Collins to explain the two part time positions (\$9,561.60 & \$11,952.00)

Ms. Collins stated she has one part time maintenance person for \$9,561.60. The second position for \$11,952.00 is a position she would like to add.

Chairman Murray stated then we will be adding \$10,941.70 to that line.

Ms. Collins stated the proposal is to hire a Town Gardener that will assist the Garden Club and other volunteers and manage all Town Gardens. We currently have a few departments involved with assistance, but it is unclear of who really is maintaining and it is falling through the cracks. Ms. Collins stated she reached out to UNH Extension and there are some resources for native plant selections and rain garden designs to assist the person we hire. Ms. Collins stated if the gardens are going to be maintained we need to pay someone either in the Parks and Recreation budget or the Public Works budget.

The Board discussed the issue of volunteers.

Ms. Collins stated if this money was put in the line 01-45202-117 then line 01-45202-380 would have \$3,108.00 removed.

Chairman Murray stated then there really is only a \$6,812.00 difference.

The Board agreed that the gardens needed to be maintained.

B. Community Center

See above

C. Senior Pilot Program

Chairman Murray stated we are looking at running a pilot program this summer. We are going to put it in a warrant article. It will cost \$9,828.00.

Chairman Murray questioned if the air conditioners were included in the figure.

Ms. Collins stated yes.

Chairman Murray stated she was comfortable with putting it out as a warrant article.

The Board agreed.

Mr. O'Brien stated the long term scheme is the move to take over this program.

Ms. Collins stated in 2020 we are looking to have a yearlong program run through the Parks and Recreation Department.

Chairman Murray stated she would like the Great Hall removed.

Ms. Collins stated this was for a worst case scenario but it can be removed.

Chairman Murray questioned if Ms. Collins would have time to add this to her responsibilities. She wondered if they could leave it as a 501c and just provide them with the space this summer.

Mr. O'Brien questioned if we wanted to be in this business.

Ms. Collins stated the seniors were under her department when she worked for the Town of Milton. She agreed if she was going to run the program she would need help.

Chairman Murray stated she thought they should do the summer program and wait until they build a Community Center to run the whole program.

The Board agreed that was a better plan. They would put it as a warrant article.

D. Fire Department Overall Increase Firefighters \$30,851.51 & Deputy \$3,946.80

See above

E. Water & Sewer Electricity

See above

F. Water Department Capital Outlay

See above

G. Parks & Maintenance Building Capital Project Request

See above

H. Parks & Recreation 1 Ton Truck Cost Update

See above

I. Water & Sewer Utilities – Water Treatment Plant – Union Pay Scale Adjustment for Water Treatment Plant Operator

Mr. Ford stated the Water Treatment budget needs to be increased. The old number was \$18,458.00 and the new number is \$20,556.00.

Chairman Murray stated Josh Thomas' salary will change from \$17.68 per hour to \$19.69 per hour making his total salary \$20,556.00. It will add \$2,098.00 to line 02-43350-114.

It was moved by Dave Senecal and seconded by Paul O'Brien to add \$2,098.00 to line 02-43350-114. Members voted and being none opposed, the motion passed.

J. Cost of the renewal Ambulance Contract with Stewart's Ambulance Service, Inc.

See above

K. Building Evaluation Needs/Study \$30,000 - Historic Structures Report for LCHIP eligibility?

See above

Date to finalize Budget

The Board decided to meet on Monday, November 5th at 7:00 PM to finalize the budget.

Other Budget Line Item Changes

Ms. Collins stated the basketball courts were taken out of the budget and she would like to ask the Board to add it back into the budget. It has been 9 years since they have been done.

It was moved by Paul O'Brien and seconded by Dave Senecal to add \$8,000.00 to the Capital Outlay amount to maintain the basketball courts. Members voted and being none opposed, the motion passed.

Executive Budget -870 Milfoil

It was moved by Brad Harriman and seconded by Paul O'Brien to subtract \$10,000.00 from line 01-41301-870 Milfoil Treatment. Members voted and being none opposed, the motion passed.

Parks and Recreation 01-45206-117 Program Assistant

It was moved by Dave Senecal and seconded by Paul O'Brien to cut the position from 29 hours to 20 hours. It would remove \$7,488.00. Members voted and being none opposed, the motion passed.

Parks and Recreation Beaches 01-45203-117 Part Time Wages

It was moved by Chairman Murray and seconded by Paul O'Brien to remove \$7,096.00 to bring the line to \$57,000.00 which is the same as last year. Members voted and being none opposed, the motion passed.

Finance 01-41501-113 Supervisory Salaries

Chairman Murray suggested cutting the Deputy Treasurer to 29 hours making the amount \$35,100.00 and take out \$15,200.00 for Health Insurance.

Ms. Merrow suggested changing her executive secretary to a 29 hour position and giving the money back to the Finance Department. She felt the Town needed a full time Deputy Treasurer. She suggested changing the position from elected to appointed.

Mr. O'Brien objected.

Ms. Merrow stated the person that she wants to hire as her executive secretary only works 20 hours now and would be fine with 29 hours. She also does not need a benefit package.

Mr. Harriman stated the person could do the same amount of work in 29 hours.

Mr. Senecal felt the money should be left in the budgets as they are now. He did not want the Town Manager's office shorted. The Town Manager Office and the Finance Office are the two important pieces that we have.

Chairman Murray agreed.

Ms. Merrow stated she felt we should transition from an elected official to an appointed official. If John Burt were to run for office and then resign in April the Board could then appoint an interim.

Chairman Murray stated she was not willing to do that. She would not do that to the voters.

Mr. O'Brien stated that is a game.

Ms. Merrow stated he might run again and stay.

Chairman Murray stated if he ran again and stayed then that is something different.

Ms. Zabkar stated she needed clarity about the Finance Budget.

Chairman Murray stated we cut line 01-41501-113 Supervisory Salaries by \$21,000.00.

Ms. Zabkar stated \$21,000.00 was added into line 01-41501-380 Outside Services so that is a wash.

Chairman Murray stated that is when everyone got upset so she is offering to take 5 hours out of the Deputy Treasurer and the health insurance so we could come to some kind of compromise.

Ms. Zabkar asked if we did the position part time the first year could it be moved to full time.

Chairman Murray stated anything is possible.

Ms. Zabkar thought finding someone part time could be challenging. She questioned if the Town Manager's secretary would still be full time.

Chairman Murray stated yes but no one has seconded the motion.

Mr. Harriman stated he would second the motion so it could be discussed.

Mr. Bowers stated he felt the Finance Department should be given whatever is necessary. He felt it was wrong to cut.

Ms. Merrow thanked Mr. Bowers.

Chairman Murray stated she was looking at the overall budget and stated \$21,000.00 was cut and she was trying to add it back.

Ms. Merrow and Ms. Zabkar stated they appreciated it.

Chairman Murray stated the budget is very high.

Mr. Bowers stated this is not right.

Ms. Zabkar stated Mr. Burt does a lot of work. It is a full time accounting position. It will be hard to find someone part time.

Ms. Merrow stated it would be easier to find a part time executive assistant.

Ms. Zabkar stated Mr. Burt has offered to do the training for the position. She asked the Board to take all of this into consideration.

Mr. Senecal stated he agreed with Mr. Bowers.

Mr. Harriman stated we might find someone who has retired.

It was moved by Chairman Murray and seconded by Brad Harriman to cut the Deputy Treasurer to 29 hours. Roll call vote, Chairman Murray – yes, Paul O'Brien – yes, Brad Harriman – yes, Dave Senecal – no and Dave Bowers abstained. The motion passed.

Discussion of Preliminary Tax Rate

It was moved by Chairman Murray and seconded by Dave Bowers to sign the property tax levy for the Town of Wolfeboro in the amount of \$16,312,416.00. Members voted and being none opposed, the motion passed.

Public Input

Limited to 3 Minutes per resident, not to exceed 15 minutes in total

None

It was moved by Paul O'Brien and seconded by Chairman Murray to adjourn at 10:05 PM. Members voted and being none opposed, the motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michele Chamberlain