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BUDGET COMMITTEE

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TOWN OF HOLLIS

34 TOWN FARM ROAD

929-8552

**Minutes of Budget Committee Meeting  
13 March 2017**

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:15 PM by Vice Chair Jim Dyer.  
(Mr. Williams arrived shortly thereafter.)

**Roll Call:** Members present; Win Williams, Chair; Jim Dyer, Vice Chair; Len VanGaasbeek Jr.; Lenny VanGaasbeek III; Jack Rogala; Meg Gardner; Martha Turner, secretary.  
Absent: Rita Anderson.

**Minutes:** Len made a motion to add one correction to the minutes of 6 March 2017. Under the first item of Old Business, 0900 Health & Sanitation/Solid Waste Disposal, the first sentence reads "Mr. Seely presented a revised budget request for 0900." Len's motion is to add the word "draft" so the sentence will read: "Mr. Seely presented a revised draft budget request for 0900." The motion was seconded and discussed. The motion carried unanimously.

Motion to approve the minutes of 6 March 2017 as amended. Motion was seconded, and carried unanimously.

**Old Business:** Budget Committee Bylaws.

Lenny raised some questions concerning Article V Section 9, Public Statements for the Record. He asked why it is necessary to use the index cards for members of the public wishing to make a statement at a Budget Committee meeting. Mr. Dyer noted that he has not run into this requirement for other Boards or Committees. Mr. Williams stated that in the past, the Budget Committee would have to vote on whether to allow someone from the public to speak.

Len suggested eliminating the three minute time limit. Mr. Williams suggested offering the three minute limit with the possibility that the Budget Committee could vote to allow the speaker more time. Len also suggested eliminating Article VII "Subcommittees."

In reply to questions about the amendments included in the "Amended 2017" bylaws distributed tonight, the secretary explained that nothing of substance has been amended. The only changes that have been made include language corrections such as "Select Board" instead of "Selectman" and "Chair" instead of "Chairman." Nothing has actually been amended.

Board members discussed at length their many concerns with both the Budget Committee Ordinance and the Bylaws. Mr. Williams noted that any proposed changes to the Ordinance must appear on the ballot to allow all town residents the opportunity to vote yes or no. The bylaws may be changed by a vote of the members of the Committee, but the bylaws must not be in conflict with the ordinance.

Mr. Williams noted that any proposed ordinance changes must be prepared well in advance of the town meeting date, to allow time for public hearings. To be ready for the November 2017 ballot, the Committee would have to meet no later than the first week of September. Motion was made to schedule a Budget Committee meeting for Monday 28 August 2017 to elect officers for the new budget year, and to review suggested changes to the ordinance and the bylaws. The motion was seconded, and carried unanimously.



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The secretary will mail to each Budget Committee member a copy of the most recent Budget Committee Bylaws and the most recent Budget Committee Ordinance. Members will then have the opportunity to review both documents and submit suggestions for changes. Members will return their proposed revisions to the secretary, who will meet with the Chair to combine all suggestions into one cohesive draft of each document, which will then be reviewed on 28 August by the newly elected Budget Committee.

**Public Comment:** Dana Gray addressed the Committee on several items. He noted that the budgets recommended by the Committee this year amount to an increase of approximately 16% over last year's budget, which he feels is too much of an increase. He also expressed concern about the lack of documentation to justify the proposed 3% wage increase.

Mr. Gray discussed the inclusion of Select Board wages in the GA budget. He noted that last year's Budget Committee voted to remove those wages from GA and move them back into Administration with the rest of the Select Board's wages.

Mr. Gray expressed concern about the bidding process required by last year's warrant article. He noted that the article on last year's warrant stated "Shall the Town vote to require the Select Board to bid out or request at least three proposals for any single expenditure that is over \$10,000 in value when possible." Mr. Gray explained that originally the proposed article added the following language: "or when the sourcing of same type of work that in aggregate to any one vendor accumulates to over \$10,000 in value. This Article shall remain in effect until repealed or amended." He expressed concern that the bidding requirement will not be continued into the new year if not specifically renewed. Mr. Williams suggested that the Select Board should especially be required to bid out two of the Town's largest contracts: trash collection, and snow plowing.

Mr. Gray noted that the Select Board still has not established a five-member Finance Committee, although the article requiring it was passed by the voters in June 2005. Members of the Budget Committee agreed that even though there was no date of completion included in the article, the Select Board should have acted on this long ago.

Mr. Gray expressed concern about the article proposing to authorize up to \$450,000 for phase two of the Community Building renovations. John Paul Rondeau, Chair of the Hollis Community Building Committee that has been working on phase one of the renovations, commented on the process involved in determining the estimated cost of phase two. He noted that the two biggest projects include fire protection and ADA accessibility. He explained that the first estimate for completing the renovations was \$700,000. The Committee then eliminated some projects that were not considered essential to the operation of the Community Building, such as landscaping. The largest cut involved eliminating the construction of a commercial kitchen. Mr. Rondeau noted that if this article passes in June, and bids are received, all bids will be opened at a Select Board meeting, which is always open to the public.

**Next Meeting:** Monday 28 August 2017, 6:00 PM, at the Community Building.

**Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Minutes submitted by Martha Turner, Executive Secretary.

Approved by Budget Committee 10 April 2017