



Minutes of Budget Committee Meeting 6 September 2016

Call to Order: A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Jack Rogala, Vice Chair.

Roll Call: Jack Rogala, Len VanGaasbeek Jr., Lenny VanGaasbeek III, Rita Anderson, Sandy Seely, Win Williams. Select Board: River Payne, Mike Seely

Election of Officers: Len nominated Win Williams for Chair. Motion was seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Len nominated Jim Dyer for Vice Chair. Motion was seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Review of Minutes: Motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of 3-21-16. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment: Dana Gray, former Budget Committee Chair, presented several areas of concern for the Committee to review. The first item concerned the consideration of write-in candidates. Mr. Gray contended that the Select Board disregarded the standard procedure for filling vacant Budget Committee seats. He stated his belief that Rita Anderson is on the Committee illegally and therefore cannot vote. The Select Board members affirmed that she was indeed a valid write-in candidate and was appointed appropriately.

Ms. Payne noted that she has consulted with the Maine Municipal Association regarding consideration of write-in votes. In June, the Town offered the Budget Committee position to the individual who received the most write-in votes, and that person turned it down. In reply to her question, the MMA replied that at that point the Select Board has fulfilled its obligation to write-ins and may now proceed to make appointments as needed to fill vacancies. Mr. Gray replied that he has searched Maine State Law and has not found such a statute.

Mr. Gray also voiced concerns about nepotism and conflict of interest. He stated his belief that having the wife of a Select Board member as a member of the Budget Committee presents the appearance of a conflict of interest. These concerns were discussed at length. Sandy Seely resigned as a member and excused herself from the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Emergency Request from Select Board: Ms. Payne stated that the town has a contract to repair the Community Building, and requested authorization from the Budget Committee to spend the \$100,000 from the Emergency Fund that was created by voter approval in June. This money would be used for repairs to make the Community Building usable again. Although the voters approved the creation of the fund, the Budget Committee is required to approve spending the money. Mrs. Anderson made a motion to authorize the Select Board to spend the \$100,000 Emergency Fund on Community Building Repairs. The motion was seconded and discussed. The motion carried unanimously.



Review of Proposed Warrant Articles: Mr. Williams remarked that any warrant article that has a dollar amount attached to it must be reviewed by the Budget Committee. Five such articles were discussed at tonight's meeting.

Mr. Rogala introduced discussion of the proposed warrant article to hire a contract deputy from the York County Sheriff's office, to provide 40 hours per week law enforcement coverage for the Town of Hollis. He stated his belief that this is not financially in the best interest of the Town. He suggested that perhaps it is time to consider creating the Town's own police department, especially in light of plans for a new multi-purpose community center.

Mr. Seely explained that the proposed article asks for a three- year contract with the York County Sheriff's department. This deputy would be able to enforce all state and federal laws as well as enforcing the Town's own ordinances, something that cannot be done by the State Police. He stated that the Select Board has approached the Buxton Police Department about possibly joining with them to share law enforcement officers, but this proposal is not agreeable to Buxton. He emphasized that a dedicated deputy for Hollis would be able to patrol all roads, including Town roads, and all fines collected would go directly into the Town's General Fund.

Mr. Williams noted that when Hollis had its own Deputy in the past, the District Attorney refused to prosecute most cases. Len noted that the State Police are currently present in Hollis as needed. Len made a motion to approve the Select Board's recommendation to hire a contract deputy for the Town of Hollis. The motion was seconded and discussed. The motion FAILED unanimously. The Budget Committee does NOT recommend this Article.

The next Article to be considered is a request to spend \$1000 from the General Fund to be used for operational expenses for the Hollis Community Clothing Closet, which provides free clothing to residents in need. Mr. Seely noted that the Clothing Closet has never before asked the Town for money, but has relied solely on donations. The Clothing Closet was previously housed in Hollis Fire Station 1 on Route 202, but has been displaced due to renovations to the fire station.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Select Board's request for \$1000 for the Community Clothing Closet. The motion was seconded and discussed. The motion carried unanimously. The Budget Committee recommends the Article.

The next Article to be considered was numbered Article 7 on the handout presented at tonight's meeting. (It was noted that all articles will be renumbered prior to preparation of the final ballot for November). Following is the text of the proposed article:

"Shall the Town vote to authorize the Select Board to expend up to \$45,000 from the undesignated fund balance to solicit competitive proposals and services from Architectural/ Engineering firms to complete Conceptual Planning and Schematic Design documents for a planned new mixed use Hollis Municipal Complex?"



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Ms. Payne reported that there is a large balance in the Undesignated Fund, and this request will not affect this year's tax rate because that has already been set. She also noted that a committee is already in place to begin the municipal complex planning, and they have held their first meeting.

Len moved to approve the above article as written. He noted that the Town has needed a new municipal building for a long time. The motion was seconded and discussed. The motion carried by a vote of 3-1-1. The Budget Committee recommends the Article.

The Article identified tonight as "Article 8" was considered next. It is the same as Art. 7, except that the money is requested to come from the TIF. Following is the text of the proposed article:

"Shall the Town vote to authorize the Select Board to expend up to \$45,000 of funds from the Poland Spring Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) account to solicit proposals from Architectural/Engineering Firms to complete Concept Planning and Schematic Design documents for a proposed new mixed use Hollis Municipal Complex?"

Len made a motion to approve the above article as written. The motion was seconded and discussed. The motion FAILED by a vote of 2-1-2. The Budget Committee does NOT recommend the Article.

The next article to be considered is identified tonight as "Article 9." Following is the text of the proposed article:

"Shall the Town vote to authorize the Select Board to spend \$20,000 from the Undesignated Fund Balance for information and services needed to initiate conception and/or design work for expansion of the Town Hall to accommodate ADA required access, space for consolidated services to the residents/visitors of the Town on the 1st floor and a conference room as well as expanded Select Board office space on the 2nd floor?"

Mr. Seely explained that this plan would include an addition onto the current Town Hall building, to allow all customer services to be consolidated on the first floor to be more accessible to the public. The second floor would be the administrative area. He noted that this Article does not include construction costs. This funding would be just for the design process.

Mr. Williams noted that as long as the existing building is not modified in any way, it is not required to meet ADA accessibility standards. As is the case with the Community Building, modification of any kind will require meeting all ADA standards.



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Mr. Rogala suggested that as the Community Building will be made accessible, including the elevator, that space could be used by Town employees who need to meet with anyone who cannot access the existing Town Hall building. The Chair of the Community Building Renovation Committee was present at tonight's meeting, and he emphasized that the plans do include a fully accessible conference room.

Motion was made to approve the article as written. The motion was seconded and discussed. The motion FAILED by a vote of 2-3-0. The Budget Committee does NOT recommend.

The final article to be considered at tonight's meeting is identified as "Article 10," and the text is as follows:

"Shall the Town vote to authorize the Select Board acting on behalf of Veteran Flag's to accept private donations and/or grants in the furtherance of the recognition of service to our fallen heroes in the Town of Hollis with monetary donations/grants being kept in a protected account to be carried forward at the year-end? This will include Veteran's Flags to be placed at all Veteran's resting sites in our local cemeteries and U.S. American flags to be flown on appropriate dates, i.e., July 4th; Veteran's Day, Memorial Day and MIA/POW Day, throughout the Town of Hollis?"

Mr. Seely explained that the Select Board would like all flag funds to be kept in a protected account that will carry over from year to year. Mr. Williams pointed out that since there is no dollar figure attached, this item does not need the Budget Committee's review.

Len suggested that the Town of Hollis needs to begin setting aside funds every year in a protected account for EcoMaine, in anticipation of future payment for landfill closure. He emphasized that there may be a lot of money involved. Mr. Williams suggested looking at a sinking fund.

Next Meeting: Ms. Payne stated that the Select Board will be calling on the Budget Committee for another special meeting within approximately 6 – 8 weeks when they have received a dollar amount for the Community Building renovations.

Mr. Williams recommended that the first regular meeting for budget review should be scheduled for the second week of January, at which time there will be a full six-month summary available from each department.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Minutes submitted by Martha Turner, Executive Secretary
Approved by Budget Committee 30 January 2017