

Present: Budget Committee Members Mary Jo Holmes, Michael Nygren, Joshua Yokela, Steve Bonaccorsi, Joe Miccile, Gene Cordes, Gordon Muench, and Pat Martel; School Board Members Greg Fraize and Angela O'Connell; Superintendent Allyn Hutton, Business Administrator Sue Penny, Members of the public Peter and Lisa Marggraff; Town Administrator Heidi Carlson and Recording Secretary Shawn Perreault.

Chair Holmes called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm in the first floor meeting room at the Fremont Town Hall. All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Holmes announced the Planning Board meeting downstairs was beginning with a presentation on School Impact Fees and it was decided that Heidi Carlson would go downstairs to gather information so the Committee could keep moving, and all of the School members including Muench, went downstairs to hear the presentation.

Cordes updated the Budget Committee that the estimate for Motor Vehicle revenues has been updated to \$1,100,000 based on how the 2019 year ended. He also stated that the Selectmen met last night to discuss some residual Parks & Recreation budget items. Carlson had reached out to the School Administration to see if Ellis School could be used for summer camp. The School has agreed it can be held there with some adjustments needed. The Board of Selectmen would like to stay at the school and drop the program from 8 weeks to 6 weeks. (The School cannot accommodate the program using their space for 8 weeks, and in fact there are still some scheduling issues to be worked out with a six week program). The Board disagrees with reducing the field trips to one per week and will stay at recommending two per week. The prior Selectmen's recommended operating budget for Parks & Recreation was \$69,675. but was changed to \$66,385.00 by reducing the summer camp program to \$29,261. The ability to recruit great leaders will determine if this program is a go. There were three or four viable applicant candidates and Carlson has interviewed two candidates so far and is meeting with one more soon; followed by second interviews and background checks. Holmes reminded the Budget Committee that they agreed if no one was in place by January 1<sup>st</sup> they would not go forward. She wants to make sure that Carlson and the Selectmen's Office doesn't end up administering the program and Cordes said the Selectmen feel the same way. It is going to depend on finding a strong director. Once the program is underway, we own it. The Board also talked to Parks and Recreation Commission Chair last evening and she feels that Park & Rec will be able to become more involved. Further discussion was held.

At the last meeting there was mention of a Park and Recreation Revolving Fund and Carlson had prepared and circulated a fact sheet this evening outlining that Fund was established in 2016 by appropriating \$1,000 from the Unreserved Fund Balance. As of December 31, 2019 the balance was \$3,627.10 with the additional funds coming from vendor fairs, Town wide yard sales and a road race.

### **Warrant Articles**

No Warrant Article for a Pavilion has been submitted.

Cordes stated the Board had taken a position on the Veteran Credits and Exemption Articles (this includes WA 18, 19, 20 and 21). Holmes noted some typos in the Warrant for correction. Carlson noted that net income includes Social Security and any wage income as outlined in the Statute, and further that your primary residence in Fremont and up to two (2) acres are exempt but that other assets are considered. Carlson explained that the amount of the exemption is what is increasing because of the revaluation and an anticipated increase in property values. We will not know exactly what assessed value changes are, but the new values will affect what portion these lower income residents pay. Carlson explained the changes in terms of what the anticipated tax rate increase is for credits, as that is a direct add as if it was an appropriation. The changes to valuation cannot be figured the same way and is an overall net change

in the taxable base from an estimated \$410,000,000 (current) reducing it by \$200,000 for the proposed changes in Warrant Article 20 and 21. Further discuss was held.

On the exemption property, if a property is owned by two separate sets of married couples, and one set qualifies for the exemption they only get 50%, because you don't own the whole house. Married couple count as one person.

Joshua Yokela arrived at the meeting at 7:30 pm from the Planning Board's meeting. Gordon Muench returned at 7:47 pm from the Planning Board meeting along with the rest of the School Board members and School Administration.

### **Town Warrant Articles**

Article 18 – Veteran's Tax Credit increase from \$500.00 to \$750.00. Motion made to recommend this Warrant Article by Bonaccorsi, seconded by Nygren. Motion passed by a vote of 6 Yes – 1 No (Yokela) – 0 Abstain.

Article 19 – Disabled Veteran's Tax Credit increase from \$2,000 to \$4,000. Motion made to recommend this Warrant Article by Bonaccorsi, seconded by Miccile. Motion passed by vote of 6 Yes – 1 No (Yokela) – 0 Abstain.

Article 20 – Elderly Exemption Amount for Fremont in light of pending 2020 revaluation increase from \$60,000 to \$70,000; \$80,000 to \$90,000; \$100,000 to \$110,000 for the three statutory age brackets. Motion made to recommend this Warrant Article by Bonaccorsi, seconded by Martel. Motion passed by vote of 7 Yes – 1 No (Yokela) – 0 Abstain.

Article 21 – Exemption for Disabled Elderly increase from \$50,000 to \$60,000. Motion made to recommend this Warrant Article by Bonaccorsi, seconded by Miccile. Motion passed by vote of 7 Yes – 1 No (Yokela) – 0 Abstain.

### **Parks & Recreation**

Cordes recapped the discussion on the Parks and Recreation budget for those that were at the Planning meeting. We need to be sure the Commission is engaged for day to day work on the Summer program. Discussion was held on the cost of field trips and the bus fees. Holmes reminded the Budget Committee that the Parks & Recreation Commission was invited to return but did not, and instead the budget was presented by Carlson. Carlson believes the Selectmen have set a deadline of March 15<sup>th</sup> on the Summer program. Once they have a Director in place, enrollment will be looked at too. They are looking to keep it to one bus with students and staff. Further discussion was held.

Cordes made a motion to recommend \$65,755 for Park & Rec, seconded Bonaccorsi. Discussion questioned other lines in the Summer Program are still have the numbers for 8 weeks. Motion failed due to tie vote of 4 Yes – 4 No (Holmes, Miccile, Martel, Nygren) – 0 Abstain.

Martel made a motion to reduce the summer program portion of the budget to \$20,000, seconded by Miccile. Cordes reminded everyone this is a bottom line budget, so Martel's new recommendation for the Parks & Recreation budget is \$56,494, which removes \$9,261 from the summer program. Cordes stated this is about kids. This is not an individual, this is well-attended and it should pay for itself. If we don't need that amount for buses we don't use it. He feels we should have this program as it is laid out. The parents are paying for it. Muench reiterated if they don't need it, they won't spend it. If we under fund it, it will be a failure. Bonaccorsi stated if you don't have a good product, it's not going to sell. We need to

be 100% committed to it. Martel stated she doesn't want to take the program away. They can figure something else on the field trip. The 4:00 pm time limit for the school building concerns her. The motion failed 2 Yes - 6 No (Cordes, Muench, Bonaccorsi, Yokela, Holmes, Nygren) – 0 Abstain

Nygren made a motion to change the sub-total of summer camp to \$25,800, making the new recommended Parks & Recreation budget \$62,294 seconded Martel. Nygren changed the numbers on the cost to get in to field trips and the cost of the rental for the bus. Muench stated the cost of buses has increased a lot. Nygren used \$300 for the buses going from 16 field trips to 12 field trips. Motion failed due to tie vote of 4 Yes – 4 No (Holmes, Bonaccorsi, Muench, Cordes) – 0 Abstain.

After further discussion, Bonaccorsi made a motion to recommend \$63,500 for the Parks & Recreation budget, seconded by Yokela. Motion passed on a vote of 5 Yes – 3 No (Martel, Holmes, Cordes) – 0 Abstain.

### **School Budget**

Holmes stated the School is back with an update on their budget and their Warrant Articles. Hutton stated that on December 18th the Budget Committee voted to adopt a FY21 School Budget with a decrease of no less than \$375,000 from FY20. As a result of the last meeting with Sanborn, the GMR has been revised. Regular tuition per student is \$18,017 a 4.6% increase; Capital Costs per student \$1,783 a 31.1% decrease; Special Education (additional per student) \$9,009 a 4.6% increase; giving us an overall decrease of just under .04%. The budget the school is bringing forward to the Budget Committee is now \$12,300,015. This is about \$0.78 cents less on the tax impact.

On December 18<sup>th</sup>, the Committee approved the general fund budget without the food services and grant funds. Cordes made a motion to recommend the general fund budget of \$11,857,515 and a total budget of \$12,300,015 adding the food service and grant funds into the School Budget. This was seconded by Nygren and the motion passed by a vote of 8 Yes – 0 No – 0 Abstain.

### **School Warrant Articles**

Article 3 for the School District concerning the \$285,000 is still being looked at by the District's Legal Counsel. The Budget Committee decided to review this at the next meeting when everything has been checked and they know exactly what it will say to make a final Committee recommendation.

Carlson then discussed some of the information reviewed at the Planning Board meeting downstairs relative to Impact Fees. The consultant's position is that the School District can still be using impact fees to recover/recoup capital costs like the ongoing roof replacement and the pending HVAC system replacement. Currently there is approximately \$90,000 that the District could add to their revenue schedule. There was discussion how to use the money as an offset. This would help with the ongoing capital needs, and the funds should be used now.

If the Planning Board were to make a recommendation on changing or removing the Impact Fees it would be a Warrant Article vote (Zoning Amendment) which is a full year out at a minimum. O'Connell added that they can be used for the big ticket capital items but could not be spent against the High School contract, even though that involves capital costs because it is not our building.

### **For Committee members reference, the following information is posted relative to candidate declaration, voter registration and Deliberative Sessions:**

Tuesday January 21, 2020 - Last day for new registrants who want to register prior to Candidate Declaration Period. Supervisors of Checklist will meet from 7:00 to 7:30 pm at the Fremont Public

Library. Town Clerk is open 7:30 am to 3:00 pm. **This is the last time to register to vote prior to the Deliberative Sessions AND prior to the NH Primary (scheduled for February 11, 2020). If you are not registered, you cannot vote at either Town or School Deliberative Session, as same day voter registration is NOT AVAILABLE for Deliberative Sessions.**

Please bring proper ID and proof of residency to register to vote for all elections. The State has streamlined the forms, and if you don't have an ID with a Fremont address on it, you will need to bring documentation from the State Form Verifiable Action of Domicile RSA 654:7V (available on the Town's website or from the Supervisors at a sign-up session or from the Town Clerk.)

### **TOWN & SCHOOL ELECTIONS - CANDIDATE DECLARATION PERIOD**

The filing period for Town and School District Offices begins on Wednesday, January 22, 2020 and runs through Friday, January 31, 2020. You can sign up during any Town Clerk Office hours. On Friday January 31, 2020 the Town Clerk and School District Clerk will be available from 3:00 to 5:00 pm for sign-ups only, at the Fremont Town Hall.

### **TOWN POSITIONS OPEN in 2020**

Budget Committee: 2 for 3 years  
Cemetery Trustee: 1 for 3 years  
Moderator: 1 for 2 years  
Supervisor of the Checklist: 1 for 6 years  
Town Clerk Tax Collector: 1 for 3 years

Budget Committee: 2 for 1 year  
Library Trustee: 1 for 3 years  
Selectman: 1 for 3 years  
Trustee of Trust Funds: 1 for 3 years

### **SCHOOL DISTRICT POSITIONS OPEN in 2020**

School Board Member: 1 for 3 years  
School District Clerk: 1 for 1 year  
School District Moderator: 1 for 1 year  
School District Treasurer: 1 for 1 year

Additionally, any interested School District Candidate can contact School District Clerk by contacting SAU 83 at 895 6903 to make arrangements to sign up during the candidate declaration period.

You must be a Fremont resident and a registered voter to declare Candidacy for Town or School District Office. You can register to vote with the Town Clerk during regular office hours and also with the Supervisors of the Checklist during posted sessions.

To complete the Declaration of Candidacy form, you can see the Town Clerk during regular office hours or contact the School District Clerk. Other election questions can be directed to the Town Clerk's Office at 895 8693 x 308 or by email: [clerkcollector@fremont.nh.gov](mailto:clerkcollector@fremont.nh.gov)

In response to widespread community interest, we are holding the Town and School Deliberative Sessions on the SAME DAY, Saturday February 1, 2020. The meetings will be posted for 9:00 am and we will begin with the School District session. Once complete, there will be a brief intermission while the Town Moderator and Selectmen set up, and the Town's meeting will then begin.

Carlson reminded the Committee that there are four spots open on the Budget Committee. There are two one year (Nygren and Martel slots); and two three year (Yokela and Miccile slots). Anyone interested in running is urged to sign up.

Approval of the Meeting Minutes for November 20, 2019 was tabled for the next meeting.

Motion made by Bonaccorsi to approve Meeting Minutes of December 18, 2019, seconded by Martel.  
Motion passed by a vote of 8 Yes – 0 No – 0 Abstain.

**Warrant Article**

Article 7 – Town Operating Budget for 2020. With all of the numbers now included, a motion was made by Cordes to recommend \$3,395,997 for the 2020 Town Operating Budget, seconded by Muench.  
Motion passed by vote of 8 Yes – 0 No – 0 Abstain.

Holmes stated she will gather the Committee report information for the Town Annual report and send it out for review.

The next meeting is Wednesday January 15 and it is the Public Hearing for the Budget Committee to present all their recommendations. They will also review any petitions submitted. The meeting will be held at 7:00 pm in the basement meeting room next Wednesday.

Bonaccorsi made a motion to adjourn at 9:04 pm, seconded by Yokela. Motion passed by vote 8 Yes – 0 No – 0 Abstain.

Respectfully submitted,

Shawn Perreault  
Recording Secretary