

FREMONT BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
Fremont Town Hall, 295 Main Street, Fremont, NH 03044
October 31, 2018 at 7PM

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mary Anderson called the October 31, 2018 Budget Committee meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:07 PM at the Fremont Town Hall. Present were: Mary Anderson, Mary Jo Holmes, Joe Miccile, Brittany Thompson, Gene Cordes and Josh Yokela. Also present were Heidi Carlson and Susan Perry.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mary Jo Holmes made a motion to approve the minutes as amended of October 24, 2018. Brittany Thompson seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:0:1 (abstention, G. Cordes)

TOWN BUDGET REVIEWS

4155 PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION – TABLED

There was increase in the unemployment compensation line due to a case from a prior seasonal employee. The Town is not a “pay-in employer”. There was an increase in the worker’s compensation line. Ms. Carlson noted that there was new legislation regarding firefighters coverage for cancer and blood borne pathogens. The decrease in the medical insurance line is due to the employee census now. The line reduced for the current year as well given the new hires being a different demographic. There was lengthy discussion about the forecast and budgets for FICA/Medicare. Ms. Carlson will recheck the forecasted number, since it seemed higher than it should be (\$57,836.13 is \$10,000 less than the 2018 budget of \$66,250 but about \$15,000 more than the spent to 10/31/18 amount of \$41,399.17).

4195 CEMETERIES

The Trustees have been addressing cemetery needs that have been neglected for a while, including the necessary expansion of Leavitt Cemetery. There was discussion about doing the cemetery projects within two years instead of one and doing a cost comparison study of the price of cemetery plots in other towns (the Committee felt that \$300/plot seemed low). Of the \$300, \$60 goes to the town as sale of town property (general fund) and \$240 goes to the perpetual care fund (this cannot go into an expendable trust fund, but a revolving fund could be looked into as another way to save lot sale money for future maintenance needs).

Josh Yokela proposed the following line item revisions:

LINE DESCRIPTION	DEPT. REQ.	SELC REC	YOKELA SUGGESTION	REVIEW	REVISION
Mowing wages	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$3,300	\$8,300 is \$2,700 more than the 2018 budget (\$5,600) but not at the high end of wages as in the Dept. Req. number	
Superintendent Wages	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$5,000		
Trustee Stipend	\$450	\$450	\$450		
Cemetery Sexton	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$2,500	Based on historical spending	\$3,000
Administration	\$150	\$150	\$150		
Loam Seed Fert.	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$800	\$200 per truck x 4 loads instead of 6	\$1,000
Equipment Hire	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$4,500	\$3,500 for cleanups and \$1,000 for tree removal	
Contract Help	\$200	\$200	\$200		
Fuel	\$650	\$650	\$400	Based on historical usage	
Mower Equip & Rep	\$800	\$800	\$650	Based on historical usage	

Electricity	\$600	\$600	\$600	Based on historical usage	
Projects	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$4,500	\$2,000 - wells \$4,000 - removal of wall \$1,000 - shed	
SUBTOTAL	\$31,050	\$31,050	\$23,050		\$23,750

Mary Jo Holmes made a motion to recommend \$23,750 for the Cemeteries budget line 4195. Josh Yokela seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:1 (nay, G. Cordes).

4196 INSURANCE

Ms. Carlson noted that there was a bodily injury claim that affected the 2019 rating pool and a reserve is being held to cover the claim, as well as funds paid out.

Brittany Thompson made a motion to recommend the Selectmen's recommendation of \$61,694 for line 4196 Insurance. Gene Cordes seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:0.

4210 POLICE

Most of the police budget increase is in wages (\$60,000). There was discussion about: the wage increase of \$2.50/hour for uniformed officers; step increases; the length of time it takes for a newly appointed officer to be on duty (just under a year); the importance of recruiting/retaining well-trained officers; the need for reasonable budgets that will enable taxpayers to afford to live in town; and the importance of public safety. The special detail wages line is the revolving fund that pays for itself (extra is supposed to pay for cruisers). Ms. Carlson will review with Chief Twiss the disparity between the 2018 budget of \$560,604 and the forecasted amount of \$525,671.25 (see what it doesn't include).

Mary Jo Holmes made a motion to recommend the Selectmen's recommendation of \$621,423 for line 4210 Police. Joe Miccile seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:0.

Ms. Anderson stated that the Committee may need return to budget line items once they have the grand totals of all Town information, Warrant Articles, and have seen the School budget proposal.

4312 HIGHWAY

The recommended budget of \$568,513 is less than the 2018 budget of \$575,079. There was discussion about the increase in the new equipment line (\$7,000) for a mower and an increase in the sweeper maintenance line to cover a manufacture defect (warrantee is defunct). Ms. Anderson asked to have all Warrant Article costs within the Warrant Article so that year to year comparisons are consistent (ie: not separating out some items related to the Warrant Article and putting them in the operating budget).

Joe Miccile made a motion to recommend the Selectmen's recommendation of \$568,513 for line 4312 Highway Department. Brittany Thompson seconded the motion. Motion passed 3 aye: 2 nay (M. Anderson; J. Yokela): 1 abstention (M.J. Holmes).

4316 STREET LIGHTING

Brittany Thompson made a motion to recommend the Selectmen's recommendation of \$5,700 for line 4316 Street Lighting. Mary Jo Holmes seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:0.

4323/4324 SOLID WASTE COLLECTION & DISPOSAL

The budget increase on the tax rate is about \$0.30. Ms. Carlson reported that the Selectmen have awarded the trash bid which is a 5-year contract that will ultimately need to be voted by Town Meeting so that the contract changes from year to year are included in the default budget. The pickup cost is not much different, but the processing fee is in the form of a “blended value” which adds \$40,000 to the contract. If the Warrant Article to approve the contract fails, there would be more shortfall (e.g. bulky day might not be able to be done, etc.) Trash collections would change as the Town would not have enough money to continue as it is now. There was discussion about how there is less of a market for recycling (more processing is necessary now). It is projected to cost approximately \$13,000 more to recycle vs. tipping fee and other added collection costs. People should be educated as to what materials are contaminants and should not be recycled (e.g. plastics with necks such as laundry detergent are recyclable). It was noted that, even though recycling is costly, it is still good practice and far better for the environment.

Mary Jo Holmes made a motion to recommend the Selectmen’s recommendation of \$284,371 for line 4323 Solid Waste Collection. Joe Miccile seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:1 (nay, J. Yokela)

Mary Jo Holmes made a motion to recommend the Selectmen’s recommendation of \$116,664 for line 4324 Solid Waste Collection & Disposal. Brittany Thompson seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:0.

4445 VENDOR PAYMENTS TO SOCIAL SERVICE AGENCIES

There were increases in the American Red Cross and Richie McFarland Children Center lines (based on number of children served). The Selectmen’s current recommendation does not include the final request which was received after the Board’s vote (and thus Selectmen will consider it tomorrow night).

Mary Jo Holmes made a motion to recommend \$30,622 for line 4445 Vendor Payments to Social Service Agencies. Brittany Thompson seconded the motion. Motion passed 5:1 (nay, J. Yokela).

2019 WARRANT – TABLED

A revenue sheet was distributed, as well as an updated budget report dated 10/31/18 and an informative packet entitled *Frequently Asked Questions on Employer Rates for Fiscal Years 2020 and 2021*. This is information for the Committee relative to NH Retirement and their rate and rate-setting process.

NEXT MEETING DATE: NOVEMBER 7, 2018 AT TOWN HALL: 6-7PM School Budget Forum followed by regular Budget Committee meeting at 7PM

It was clarified that the School Board will be meeting at Ellis School following the Forum next week, and thus the School budget will not be ready for the next meeting. The Committee will try and finalize the Town information and Town Warrant.

ADJOURNMENT

Gene Cordes made a motion to adjourn at 9:05 PM. Brittany Thompson seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:0.

Respectfully submitted by

Susan Perry,
Recording Secretary