

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Vice Chair Patricia Martel. All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance. Present were: Budget Committee Members Pat Martel, Jon Benson, Gordon Muench, Josh Yokela, Steve Bonaccorsi, Gene Cordes and Brian McGinn; Town Administrator Heidi Carlson.

At 7:00 pm Fire Rescue Chief Rich Butler was present to review the Fire Rescue Department (4220) budget proposal for 2022.

Chief Butler reviewed the areas of change within the budget. This included training, which has been reduced due to a reduction presently in the cost of the Firefighter curriculum through the State of NH. The wage lines consider a 2% cost of living increase but the number has not been increased over the 2021 level due to the current expenditures and areas of flux with calls and participation consideration. There was discussion and education about the EMS on-call wages and how coverage works for nights and weekends for those EMS members available, as well as how ambulance coverage works.

The total budget request is \$300,921. There was discussion about the items still planned for completion before year end. There are significant delays in production, as with everything during Covid. Several sets of gear and radios are currently on order.

There were no further questions for the Chief and he left the meeting at approximately 7:20 pm.

Copies of minutes for meetings of 30 January 2021 and 25 August 2021 have been circulated and reviewed. A motion was made by Bonaccorsi and seconded by Muench to approve the minutes of 30 January 2021 as written. The vote was approved 7-0.

Gordon Muench said there was a number incorrectly quoted in the minutes of 25 August as the SAU had not taken into account 2021 WA 5 which moved \$100,000 to the Special Education Trust. The minutes will be appended to add that statement updated as of today. The correct number for return of FSD funds to the District is \$565,067.05. Martel also asked for a correction to the discussion with Chief Twiss (bottom of page 3) to note that the Plan is a "Capital" plan. With updates as noted, a motion was made to approve the minutes of 25 August 2021 as amended by Bonaccorsi and seconded by Martel. The vote was approved 7-0.

The Committee then reviewed Town Budget items which had been previously circulated, with current expense reports.

4140 Town Clerk Tax Collector: Carlson explained the total budget request is \$68,414, down slightly from the current year due to being stocked with postage paid envelopes, and a reduction in the amount for mortgagee research, which was explained. The service contracts on the Clerk and Collector software programs increase slightly annually. Two percent wage increases for hourly personnel are included. Cordes explained that it is the Board's practice to put the Town Official Salary increase (2% for the Clerk/Collector) into a Warrant Article, so that is the only item not recommended in the operating budget. With little further discussion, Bonaccorsi moved to recommend \$68,414 for 4140. Benson seconded and the vote was approved 7-0.

4153 Judicial & Legal: There is no change in the request of \$35,000. This covers all of the Town's legal matters, primarily now related to Code Enforcement issues. Motion was made by Bonaccorsi and seconded by Muench to recommend \$35,000 for Legal expenses. The vote was approved 7-0.

4191 Planning & Zoning: The budget proposal is \$51,218. It includes a wage increase for the Land Use AA from 20.81 to \$23 per hour; and a 2% for other clerical services provided to the departments. Work

on Master Plan chapters continues and is the focus of the Professional Services budget. Carlson noted a lot of pending activity with development. With some further discussion about growth in town and the Stormwater Regulations adopted this year, Bonaccorsi moved to recommend 4191 at \$51,218. Muench seconded and the vote was approved 6-1 (Yokela).

4215 Ambulance: The budget is \$12,000 for 2022 based on the approved contract signed in 2020. This is a \$500 increase from the current year. There was considerable discussion about the contract, services, and the Town's abilities in terms of coverage. Muench made a motion to recommended 4215 in the amount of \$12,000. Bonaccorsi seconded. Motion passed 7-0.

4199 Other General Government – Town Report: Carlson indicated the printing of the Annual Town Report was put out to bid, with a total of 600 instead of 650 because of the number of Reports left over. However, postage has gone up, so the amount needed was left the same. Bonaccorsi moved to recommend 4199 in the amount of \$2,750. Muench seconded and the vote passed 7-0.

4240 Building Inspection: Carlson stated in March 2020 the Town hired a new inspector, who due to COVID did not have a lot of training opportunities. He did get some help from others and did training on his own. He has an electrical and general contractor background. Unlike prior inspectors, he is here consistently 30 hours a week. There are approximately 10-12 new houses under construction, a lot of home improvements, and an increase in code enforcement. The Code Enforcement takes a lot of Larry's time. There are letters that have to be mailed and if the individuals do not act, the Town's attorney has to then get involved. This budget reflects the 30 hours per week. Benson noted the revenue is up a little this year. Cordes stated this year the fees sometimes cover the entire budget, which is the case this year, but is not always. Bonaccorsi made a motion to recommended 4240 in the amount of \$43,152. Muench seconded and the vote passed 6-1 (Yokela).

4290 Emergency Management: Carlson stated the only change in the budget was the Director stipend was increased by \$50 per month, for a total of a \$600 increase. The Director, along with the Health Officer, have been called in a lot these last two years and are appointed by the Select Board. They get no real compensation, just these small stipends. The EMD position is currently held by one of the fire fighters and he is retired from a career in the Navy, currently working in safety. Carlson stated in the past this budget was more focused on flooding, now it is doing a lot more on the global pandemic. This budget covers the maintenance of the building generators as well. There were repairs and maintenance that needed to be done this year, which is why it is overspent.

McGinn asked what the communication line was for. Carlson explained it's for a part of the phone expense at the Safety Complex, with a prorated share charged to EM. Yokela asked why the stipend was increased by 50%. Cordes responded this has been a lot of hours and time they have put in for so much work. Further discussion was held. Carlson stated that Chair Holmes sent her a question asking about the EMD being available 24 hours a day and for floods as well. The answer would be yes. McGinn asked how the person is activated. Carlson stated there is a very active State-wide Emergency Management Team that all the area EMD's are plugged into. They get calls, emails and text messages. There are weekly COVID calls they are a part of. The EMD reports back to Carlson and the Select Board frequently. Bonaccorsi made a motion to recommend 4290 in the amount of \$6,432. Muench seconded and the vote passed 6-1 (Yokela).

4414 Animal Control: The Chief went over this budget when he was in a few weeks ago. Carlson stated the only changes were the 2% raise and an additional \$200 for office supplies. McGinn asked if the licenses cover this budget. Carlson stated yes for the most part, along with the fines for late fees on the licenses. Carlson also stated that there is software that works with the Town Clerks' Office and allows

ACO King to access the database when/where needed to find tag numbers and reunite dogs with owners and such. Martel asked about training that it didn't appear it was being used. Carlson stated the training program is held at UNH annually, but due to Covid, has been cancelled the last two years. Bonaccorsi made a motion to recommend 4414 in the amount of \$11,415. Muench seconded and the motion passed 7-0.

4583 Patriotic Purposes: Martel reviewed the recommendation of the Select Board. Carlson stated the increase in the budget is due to renting equipment to make it easier to put the flags up along Main Street for the Memorial Day to Independence Day season. Benson asked what the community section of the budget was. Carlson stated that is for the Memorial Day and Veteran's Day events which are hosted for the community (in non-Covid times). Last year it paid for the postage for the postcards the Town sent to the Veterans. Bonaccorsi made a motion to recommend 4583 in the amount of \$3,150. It was seconded by Muench. Motion passed 7-0.

4610 Conservation Commission: Carlson updated the Committee relative to the land coming out of Current Use with current developments, including Gristmill Road and Currier Lane. The Currier Lane development was all in current use and subject to a penalty of \$24,000. Benson asked what LUCT was and Carlson explained it is the Land Use Change Tax, a one time penalty when you remove land from current use. Carlson stated that the Town gets the first 10,000 of the LUCT in any one fiscal year, and after that it is split 50/50% with the Town's General Fund. The Commission uses those funds to purchase land or land rights.

Carlson went over a few examples such as the agricultural easement on the Brett property at the top of Beede Hill Road that the Commission has done. Benson asked if this was a possible tax impact. Carlson stated it could be, in that any general fund revenues offset taxes. There was lengthy discussion about the pros and cons of conservation and what development versus conservation do to taxes. Cordes stated that in general, the cost of what a house requires in services will exceed the cost of the taxes. Yokela feels that we pay for all the services that the Town requires. He feels our budget goes up or down depends on what the Town needs. Muench stated that once you reach a certain population, you will see a requirement to increase certain services. Further discussion was held. Yokela stated these services are not required they are chosen.

Carlson explained the process of purchasing land by the Commission. The SELT purchases of the Horsburgh property was discussed, as well as how that organization is run. There was discussion on conservation land and how and where to the trails. Maps are on the Town's website. There was discussion about forestry operations as part of good forest management. Further discussion on the kinds of activities allowed on conservations lands was held.

McGinn asked why the Conservation Commission budget wasn't being funded by what they collect in LUCT, leading to discussion of the statutes and the original purpose of the Conservation Fund and the allocation of the LUCT. The budget is the Town's obligation to the Conservation Commission for clerical and other services. Yokela noted that it is not required by law to have a Conservation Commission. McGinn feels the money they bring in should fund themselves. Further discussion was held. Cordes asked Carlson to bring more information next week. Bonaccorsi made a motion to recommend 4610 in the amount of \$3,672. Muench seconded and the vote passed 5-2 (McGinn, Yokela).

4711/4721 Debt Service: Carlson stated this is the Town's payment on principal and interest on one remaining bond, which is for the Glen Oaks Conservation land purchase. In 2005 we purchased 300+ acres, the bond was 20 years. The Library bond was retired in 2021. There are three years left on the Glen Oaks bond, it concludes in 2025. Motion was made by Bonaccorsi to recommend 4711/4721 in the amount of \$45,320. This was seconded by Muench. Motion passed 7-0.

Carlson circulated Town Budgets for review at a future meeting:

4130 Executive	4141 Election & Registration	4151 Fin Admin - Other
4197 Advertising & Regional Associations		
4312 Highway (next week)	4313 Bridges	4316 Street Lights
4323 Solid Waste Collection	4324 Solid Waste Disposal	4415 Health
4442 Direct Assistance	4550 Library (scheduled for 10/13)	4723 TAN

Carlson is hoping the Road Agent will be here next week. Martel asked for the Committee to review Police and Parks & Recreation next week as well. Carlson is going to try and have more next week for the following meetings. Library will be in front of the Committee on October 13th.

Carlson will gather the historical information, including the original Warrant Article and what the funds are to be used for under the Conservation Commission and try and have it for the next meeting. The Committee will reconsider it then.

Muench stated the School Audit is scheduled for October 18th.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Bonaccorsi, seconded by Muench. Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm with a unanimous 7-0 vote.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday September 29, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Shawn Perreault
Recording Secretary

Heidi Carlson
Town Administrator