

HAMPTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
MINUTES
May 19, 2009

Budget Committee Members Present

Mary-Louise Woolsey, Chairman
Michael Plouffe, Vice-Chairman
Jerry Znoj, Selectman Representative
Norman Silberdick, School Board Representative
Victor DeMarco
Dick Hansen
Brian Lapham
Eileen Latimer
Jack Lessard
Michael Pierce
Larry Stuker
Peter Traynor

Excused

Richard Reniere

Unexcused

Pat Collins

Chairman Woolsey called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Chairman Woolsey introduced the members of the Committee

Chairman Woolsey welcomed Fred Welch, Town Manager, and Michael Schwotzer, Finance Officer.

Chairman Woolsey asked Mr. Welch to give a recap on the new recycling effort and asked if there was a start date. Mr. Welch said they are looking at July, 2010 and progress is being made. Once this is completed the Town will be joining the cooperative. There will be a small tipping fee of approximately \$5.00 per ton. There is even a possibility of Manchester joining the cooperative because the company they have been using is facing bankruptcy. Because of this there will be about 50,000 tons rather than 20,000 as originally expected. This will show a profit in year two and as always, the lowest possible cost is being sought.

Chairman Woolsey asked if there will be the ability to do the collection that is presently done until this takes place. Mr. Welch replied that there would.

Chairman Woolsey said she was very impressed with the job the State has been doing since Brian Warburton has taken over. She said her big question was when is commercial trash collection going to cease since keeping cost down is important. Mr. Welch replied that State law only refers to residential trash and he will address this in the budget. At the present time, only 70% of residential trash is being picked up and this does not seem fair.

Chairman Woolsey said it was patently unfair and she is waiting for the Board of Selectmen to address this issue. It is way past time. This is a big money saver for the Town. Chairman Woolsey asked Jerry Znoj to take this to the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Traynor said the money saved would go a long way towards public safety.

Mr. Lapham asked if there was any incentive for the beach businesses to join in this recycling program. Mr. Welch said this would be good for them also and he is working with them to get vendors to take care of their trash.

Chairman Woolsey asked if there are any hopeful signs regarding revenues as opposed to a month ago. Mr. Schwotzer said that not knowing how money will come in for tax bills is a concern. If they come in at 98%, there will not be a problem. Chairman Woolsey asked if there was much of a shortfall from the December tax bill. Mr. Schwotzer said there was not. Chairman Woolsey asked who pays the tax bill when a house is in foreclosure. Mr. Welch said the bank pays it.

Chairman Woolsey brought up the subject of emergency shelters. She said it was not good that the Town did not have an emergency shelter during the December ice storm. It is unfair to the residents and taxpayers not to have a shelter. She said some serious planning needs to be done on this.

Ms. Latimer said that when it comes to weather, it doesn't give a warning and the fact that there is not a plan worries her. A fortune has been spent on public buildings in the Town and there is no reason they could not have been opened to the people.

Mr. Welch replied that the Town does have a plan, but the State has the right to pre-empt it which they did. The State set up regional centers, but Hampton was not one of them. Ms. Latimer said she still would expect some sort of shelter in the Town. Mr. Welch said that just having a building is not all you have to think about. There is food, water, cots, blankets, equipment, etc. to be considered. Mr. Welch said the message has been sent to the State, but the decision is up to them. Mr. Znoj said this would be a good topic for the Board of Selectmen to discuss.

Chairman Woolsey said hopefully the legislation in Concord regarding tree trimming will have a positive effect. Mr. Welch said that at present in the State of New Hampshire

neither the Town or the utility can trim trees without permission from the resident. This is not true in other places.

Mr. DeMarco asked if the pension contribution issue had been finalized. Mr. Welch said it had not. The spiking charge has been taken care of. More will be known at the end of July.

Chairman Woolsey asked about the money spent for the architectural study of the fire station. Mr. Welch said it has already been done and what is left over from analyzing the uptown station will be spent on analyzing the beach station. Mr. Traynor asked if there was any federal money that Chief Silver could go after as a supplement. Mr. Welch replied that Senator Shaheen set forth a bill to have a separate stimulus package for fire stations, but most of this will go to two other towns. Mr. Welch said Chief Silver will answer all questions when he attends next month's meeting.

Chairman Woolsey discussed assessing. She said she is wondering if the Board of Selectmen would be open to setting up a capital reserve fund for remeasure/relist for every 10 years. If this is needed in 2015, they will have to start saving in 2010. She asked Mr. Znoj to take this topic to the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Welch said that the process they are using now is an attempt to save money. You are looking at between \$1.5 million and \$2 million to do the Town. You need to have a reval by 2013. This is the State standard. Mr. Welch said his recommendation will be to do a reval in 2010 and it will have to be done in-house.

Ms. Latimer asked about rotation. Mr. Welch said they are doing 1/5 of the Town every year. They are trying to be conservative and also fair.

Mr. Traynor asked if a property had just been through a reval and then made an addition and obtained a building permit, would that information be passed along. Mr. Welch said it would. It would be passed on-line from the Building Department to the Assessor's Office.

Chairman Woolsey thanked Mr. Welch for his input to the Committee.

Approval of Minutes – April 21, 2009

Moved by Mr. Plouffe, seconded by Mr. Lessard, to approve the Minutes of April 21, 2009 as amended.

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no, 1 abstention (Znoj). Motion passed.

Amendment to the Minutes is as follows:

Page 3, last line, should read:

Vote: 10 yes, 0 no, 2 abstentions (Hansen, Silberdick). Motion passed.

Selectman Report

Mr. Znoj said the Selectmen have been working hard on abatements and also the reduction in the budget.

Chairman Woolsey said she did not feel the Selectmen should take off every other Monday during the summer and asked Mr. Znoj to relay this to the Selectmen.

Mr. DeMarco said the idea of only one fire station as discussed by the Selectmen was looking at a problem in a whole different way and he applauds them for it.

School Board Report

Mr. Silberdick said there is still much controversy regarding the School Board. There was a meeting on April 23rd attended by approximately 300 people, most of whom were union employees and upset parents. There were some very valid comments made at the meeting. Mr. Silberdick said before the School Board does something, they need to get public comment. The surprise was the flip flopping of their decision. The problem was and is the excessive teacher planning periods. With fewer planning periods, fewer teachers will be required. In June we will see if the Board wants to support an overhaul. Mr. Silberdick said his opinion is that there is about \$1.5 million that could be eliminated without affecting the quality of education. Mr. Znoj asked about differences in curriculum. Mr. Silberdick said he was not able to discuss that. Chairman Woolsey said she would ask that at the meeting in September the School Board bring an explanation.

Old Business

Ms. Latimer discussed SAU withdrawal. In March a committee was formed to explore this issue. This committee has very strict guidelines and has to have an initial recommendation draft by September. There will be a financial impact. Ms. Latimer said the Committee would welcome opinions and all meetings are posted.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 16, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at which time the Committee will meet with Chief Chris Silver.

Adjournment

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There being no further business to come before the Committee, Mr. Lessard **moved**, seconded by Mr. Hansen, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Rice
Secretary

Mary-Louise Woolsey, Chairman