

**TOWN OF TUFTONBORO
BUDGET COMMITTEE
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BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Tuesday, May 9, 2017
6:30 p.m. - Town Offices**

Present: Chairman Lootens, Bob Theve, Selectmen's Representative Albee, John Libby, Helen Hartshorn, Gordon Hunt, Guy Pike and Karen Koch.

OPEN MEETING: After declaring a quorum, Chairman Lootens opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CHAIRMAN COMMENTS: Chairman Lootens thanked Steve Brinser, Carolyn Sundquist and Tyler Phillips for their years of service as Budget Committee members and welcomed new members, Guy Pike, Gordon Hunt and Selectmen's Representative Albee.

REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Chairman Lootens called for review and approval of the February 15, 2017 minutes. **Motion:** Bob Theve moved to accept the minutes as corrected, seconded by Helen Hartshorn. Vote passed 4-0. Selectmen's Representative Albee, Gordon Hunt and Guy Pike abstained as they were not members of the Committee at the time that this meeting took place.

OLD BUSINESS:

Chairman Lootens asked for comments regarding public input. **Motion:** After some discussion, Gordon Hunt moved to approve "time limited" public input at the beginning and at the end of each meeting and restrict input to only be in reference to the certain lines items that are being reviewed that evening, seconded by Helen Hartshorn. Vote Passed 7-0.

When Chairman Lootens asked for input in regards to any areas of concern that the Committee had compared to last year she referenced a written suggestion from Bob Theve. He suggested that if anyone has requests for documentation, financial consideration/change in accounting, additional information, additional labor, etc. that it be put in writing and brought to the Committee first so the Committee can then act as a whole to ask the Selectmen's permission to perform those actions. All members agreed with this suggestion. There was discussion regarding Guy Pike's suggestion to change how reporting information in the annual report is presented. Mr. Pike will present this request in writing to the Committee. Selectmen's Representative Albee and Bob Theve reiterated that members of the board need to act as a board, not individually. All members were in agreement.

Bob Theve expressed his concern of being videotaped/photographed by private parties and not having any control of how this information is edited. He suggested that if Joe Kowalski is not available for videotaping a meeting that the Committee at least record the meeting for sound so an accurate record of the meeting is available. He also stressed the importance of members being civil in their conduct while conversing with each other.

John Libby requested to have the total budget available for review further in advance of the public hearing. Selectmen's Representative Albee will work on trying to expedite the Selectmen's portion of budget approvals in order for the Budget Committee to begin the budget process sooner to help with this. Chairman Lootens encouraged each member to keep their own records throughout the budget process. If doing so, the total budget number should not come as a surprise.

In light of recent 91-A requests for emails, Gordon Hunt suggested each member set up separate personal email accounts for Budget Committee purposes only.

In response to Guy Pike's concern regarding the reduction of Budget Committee cuts to the Selectmen's budget over the past years, Selectmen's Representative Albee expressed that budgeting is not all about cutting and that all line items will be reviewed on an individual basis.

There was a discussion regarding Helen Hartshorn's recommendation to work on the salary portion of the budget earlier in the budget process as a lot of time was spent on this topic last year. Selectmen's Representative Albee will bring this feedback back to the Selectmen and reiterate the Budget Committee's recommendation to the Selectmen from last year, which is that raises be based on merit and COLA increases tied to the Consumer Price Index.

NEW BUSINESS:

QUARTERLY REPORTS: In regards to review of the quarterly expenditure report, Chairman Lootens expressed concern regarding the expended amount of the Road Agent's budget. Selectmen's Representative Albee confirmed that the Selectmen are aware of this and have discussed it with Mr. Bean. In response to Guy Pike, Karen Koch confirmed that the expenditure reports provided are valid through the run date of April 28, 2017, not just for the first quarter of the year.

In regards to Chairman Lootens inquiry regarding the status of the sale of town owned property (in regards to revenue), Selectman Albee responded that the Selectmen have not yet finished their discussion regarding this.

UPCOMING NHMA TRAINING WORKSHOPS & NEWSLETTER:

Chairman Lootens shared a list of upcoming training workshops and particularly encouraged members to attend budget workshops.

BOS UPDATE:

Selectmen's Representative Albee shared that perhaps the Budget Committee can look at the historical trends in the Highway budget to see if the expenditures normally fall as they are currently. This was followed by further discussion regarding the Highway budget and events that have contributed to this year's expenditures (primarily Storm Stella), contingency fund(s), emergency management lines, etc. Selectmen's Representative Albee will bring the use of contingency funds/emergency management fund(s) to the Board of Selectmen's attention. In regards to the Revenue Report, Selectmen's Representative Albee shared his concern with the Transfer Station revenues to date.

In response to Chairman Lootens, Selectmen's Representative Albee highlighted the topic items that he will bring back to the Board of Selectmen: The Budget Committee agreed to have two public input sessions and that requests for information or documentation will be made by the Budget Committee as a whole rather than individually. He will suggest that the Selectmen close their books by January 30th and finish their budget by Dec 1st, and that the Selectmen work on reviewing the employee benefits package as well as look at the possibility of a larger contingency fund.

CIP REPORT:

Helen Hartshorn shared that CIP starts meeting around October and generally will have their report ready for the Budget Committee at the beginning of December.

LIBRARY REPORT:

Gordon Hunt shared that Skip Hurt made a presentation to the Selectmen advocating to add on to the existing structure of the library, rather than building a new building. The Library Trustees will have a meeting Thursday morning and will discuss this then to see if it is something they would like to move forward with.

Because of role with the Library, he shared with the Committee that he will recuse himself from voting when it comes to Library budget matters. There was discussion regarding Mr. Hurt's proposal and how it would affect a future standalone police facility, engineering, code changes, funding, public approval, timing of the proposed project, etc.

MEETING DATES:

The next Budget Committee meeting will be when the Selectmen have budget lines ready for the Committee's review.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Motion: Bob Theve nominated Carla Lootens to continue as Chairman, seconded by Helen Hartshorn. Vote passed 6-0. Guy Pike abstained. **Motion:** Bob Theve nominated Helen Hartshorn as Vice Chairman, seconded by Chairman Lootens for purposes of discussion. Ms. Hartshorn declined the nomination. **Motion:** Ms. Hartshorn nominated Gordon Hunt as Vice Chairman, seconded by Guy Pike. Vote passed 7-0. **Motion:** Chairman Lootens nominated Helen Hartshorn for CIP, seconded by Gordon Hunt. Vote passed 7-0.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: At 7:51pm, Gordon Hunt moved to adjourn, seconded by Bob Theve. Vote passed 7-0.

Prepared and submitted by: Karen Koch