

TOWN OF SEABROOK

BUDGET MEETING

JANUARY 19, 2009

Present: Don Hawkins
Peg Weare
Paula Wood
Richard Maguire
Ivan Eaton
Aboul B. Khan
Barry Brenner

6:00PM

Mr. Hawkins opened the meeting at 6:05PM.

PREVIOUS MINUTES - JANUARY 8, 2009

MOTION: Paula Wood To adopt the minutes of
Second: Richard Maguire 1/8.
Unanimous

PUBLIC HEARING - SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mr. Hawkins opened the public hearing for the school district at 6:07PM.

Chairman read the articles in order.

Operating Budget - \$11,181,383

There was discussion over the principle's salary, which includes a stipend.

MOTION: Ivan Eaton To reaffirm the previous
Second: Richard Maguire vote of the committee.

Maureen Ward discussed the default figures. Mrs. Wood asked if electricity is under contract. Bruce Cassassa explained they do have a contract and they also have a contract with Hess Oil.

Mr. Maguire asked about the health insurance and the employees pay for a co-pay. Maureen Ward explained it all depends on what the employees chooses.

Michelle Heywood arrived at 6:20PM.

Abstain: Paula Wood
Motion passed.

SESPA Article

Mr. Maguire asked how many employees are in this union. Maureen Ward said about 50-55.

MOTION: Ivan Eaton To reaffirm the previous
Second: Michelle Heywood vote of the committee.
Abstain: Paula Wood
Motion passed.

Long-Term Maintenance Article

Mr. Maguire asked about the remaining money from previous years. Bruce Cassassa said there is none as they had an emergency with a repair to the roof.

MOTION: Michelle Heywood To reaffirm the previous
Second: Richard Maguire vote of the committee.
Abstain: Paula Wood
Motion passed.

Asbestos Removal Article

MOTION: Richard Maguire To reaffirm the previous
Second: Aboul B. Khan vote of the committee.
Abstain: Paula Wood
Motion passed.

Special Education Expend Fund Article

Mrs. Wood asked for an explanation of the fund. Diana Pietrowski explained why the fund was created and what the money could be used for. There is about \$40K in the fund and will be \$60K if approved this year. No funds have been used from this account.

MOTION: Richard Maguire To reaffirm the previous
Second: Michelle Heywood vote of the committee.
Abstain: Paula Wood
Motion passed.

MOTION: Richard Maguire To close the public
Second: Paula Wood hearing for the school
Unanimous at 6:30PM.

MOTION: Richard Maguire To take a 10-minute
Second: Paula Wood recess at 6:30PM.
Unanimous

Committee reconvened at 6:40PM.

Mr. Hawkins opened the public hearing for the Town at 6:40PM.

Article 2 - I-95 Water Main

Mr. Maguire said this is the most important article before the voters.

Mr. Brenner said there has been no change to any article and it is under legal review and said the committee could take a tentative vote. Mr. Eaton commented if the selectmen have not voted then the budget committee couldn't vote. Mr. Brenner said the selectmen did vote to approve the draft warrant.

Article 3 - Operating Budget

Mr. Maguire asked if the workers compensation had been assessed. Mr. Brenner explained they are taking initiative and have met with Primex to take on a comprehensive program.

Mr. Maguire commented that after speaking with an attorney at the LGC he does not believe the default number is accurate. The figures for electricity, gas, etc. should revert back to the numbers from 2008. Mr. Brenner said he did speak with other communities who indicated they go with the figure from the current year with no expansion of services. The electricity number was based on kilowatt-hours times the current rates to come up with the budget and default budget. The gas is based on the number of gallons used.

Mr. Maguire asked about the overtime figures. Mr. Brenner said the numbers were based on what the department had requested. Mr. Maguire believes the overtime in the police budget was carried over to the default and it includes additional hours based on the Chief's comments at the budget meeting.

Mrs. Wood said the line items in question for the fire department is one that the numbers were incorrect from the 2008 default budget. She said she believes in order for something to be considered default it needs to be a signed contract. Mr. Brenner said he does not know the formal arrangements for the gas or diesel that the fire department has.

Mr. Hawkins said he still has questions with the default budget for full-time employees line and large increases and the overtime large increase, telephone service. All utilities should be the 2008 number unless it is a formal contract. Mr. Brenner explained the staffing and said it is only for 2008 current staffing levels.

There was general discussion on how the default budget is formulated.

Mrs. Wood asked of any new hires for 2008. Mr. Brenner said none since August when he arrived. He is unsure of any before that.

Mrs. Wood read the amounts of each health plan for the public. Mr. Maguire commented it is about \$427 weekly benefit per employee.

Article 4 - SFA Contract

Mr. Maguire questioned the difficulty in filling positions within the Town. Mr. Khan said they did not receive as many resumes for the Town Manager position as they had in the past. Mr. Brenner spoke about the police dispatcher position and they only received a handful of application until they broadened the area. He said it was the same with the Foreman position in the Sewer Department.

Article 5 - SPA Contract

Mrs. Wood questioned the sidebar agreements how they were not signed in an open public meeting. She said the contract including the sidebar is being voted on in article 5. Mr. Brenner said no only voting on the cost item and the sidebar is not a cost item. He said the money for private details is reflected in the budget but this item for article 5 is only for collective bargaining. Ms. Knowles commented there was over \$10K in revenue for the police detail.

Article 6 - SSEA Contract

There was general discussion over the taxation of paying employees for not taking the health insurance the Town offers. The committee does not believe the selectmen can make agreements that have to do with money. Mrs. Wood read RSA 273.

Article 7 - SEA Contract

Bruce Cassassa said if an employee gets a step increase it must be disclosed in the article. Mr. Brenner said no step changes have been incorporated into the new contract. The step increases currently are included in the budget. Mr. Brenner said the SPA has a new step program beginning in 2011. The new step program gives about a 12% increase.

The committee does not feel the total impact is disclosed in the article for the SPA. The evergreen clause allows the contracts to carry over year after year even if not approved. If it is a multi-year contract it should be spelled out in the article so the voters see what the total impact will be.

Bruce Cassassa said when doing sidebar agreements they are usually only for language nothing to do with money. He commented it was a surprise to him to see both of these sidebar agreements.

Article 8 - Human Service Agencies

Article was read into the record.

Committee took a 10-minute break at 8:26PM.

Committee reconvened at 8:35PM.

Article 9 - Library Books

Article was read into the record.

Article 10 - Police Cruisers (2)

Article was read into the record.

Article 11 - Renovating 2nd Floor Police Station

Article was read into the record.

Article 12 - Rehabilitating Wells

Article was read into the record.

Article 13 - Truck Water Department

Article was read into the record.

Article 14 - Phase II Master Plan

Article was read into the record.

Article 15 - Improvements to Town Street

Article was read into the record.

Article 16 - Improvements to Town Drainage

Article was read into the record.

Article 17 - Truck Sewer Department

Mr. Maguire commented about adding to the fleet. Mr. Brenner said all new vehicles are for replacement only.

Article 18 - Truck Sewer Department

Article was read into the record.

Article 19 - Heating/Air Conditioning Rec Center

Article was read into the record.

Article 20 - Cemetery Monuments

Article was read into the record.

Article 21 - Council on Aging

Mr. Brenner said the group that was asking for funds would not have an article this year.

Article 22 - Revolving Fund Police

Mrs. Wood questioned the way the article is written. She said the article does not authorize the selectmen to transfer remaining money into the new account. Mr. Brenner said that money would go into the general fund and if article passes it would be handled differently.

There was discussion on the 20% administrative costs on the police details. The committee would like to see the selectmen revisit this and see all the benefits covered then the 20% on top of the wages.

Article 23 - Revolving Fund Fire

Mrs. Wood commented that the article does not dissolve the previous action of the voters or to authorize the transfer of funds from that account. Mr. Brenner said it is under legal review to see if additional language is needed. Mrs. Wood feels the ambulance service is too broad a term.

Article 24 - Bidding from \$5K to \$25K

Mr. Eaton is concerned with the wording and if the people would know what chapter 92 section 1 of the code is. Mr. Hawkins said he could draft additional language to be used as a note.

Mrs. Wood is concerned with the amount of the increase. She suggested going from \$5K to \$10K she does not support this large of an increase.

Mrs. Heywood suggested having the article read "Chapter 92 that now reads to be changed as follows". The committee agrees that would be helpful to the voters.

Article 25 - 31

Were not read into the record as they are not articles that need to be voted on by the budget committee.

Article 32 - Citizens Petition Exemption

Article was read into the record.

Article 33 - 34

Were not read into the record as they are not articles that need to be voted on by the budget committee.

Article 35 - Citizens Petition Cemeteries

Article was read into the record.

Article 36 - Citizens Petition Governor Weare Park

Article was read into the record.

Mrs. Wood questioned the order of the articles and said the planning board articles should be second. Mr. Brenner said it is up to the selectmen how the articles are placed. Mrs. Wood said she would investigate, as she knows there is a specific order. Mr. Brenner said it is under legal review.

Ms. Knowles has questions on the citizens petitions but no one on the committee could answer she will need to ask the questions at the deliberative session.

Citizens who submitted a petition article are urged to attend the deliberative session to answer questions.

Mr. Brenner said it is about \$4.90 per \$1000 for all the selectmen articles and budget, which represents a 3%, increase over 2008. The gross dollar amount is \$1,136,795 for all articles. Status of the plant is they are still in negotiations.

<u>MOTION:</u>	Michelle Heywood	To close the public
Second:	Paula Wood	hearing at 9:23PM.
Unanimous		

Meeting adjourned at 9:23PM.
Minutes taken by Kelly J. O'Connor

Approved and endorsed:

Don Hawkins, Chairman

Date: _____