

MINUTES
SELECT BOARD
TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH
Tuesday, February 3, 2015 – 5:30pm
1 Grove Street, Peterborough, New Hampshire

Present: Barbara Miller, Tyler Ward

Roland Patten, Paul Sullivan, Ed Henault, Steve Jones, Bob Lambert, Leslie Lewis, Ron MacIntire

Also Present: Pam Brenner, Rodney Bartlett, Nancie Vaihinger, Nicole MacStay

Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

State Representative Peter Leishman

Rep. Leishman began by displaying a copy of his hearing calendar, pointing out the many budget related hearings he attends as a member of the House Finance Committee. He said that he met earlier in the day with the Attorney General about the flood control reimbursements that communities like Peterborough have been receiving in compensation for tax revenue lost when dams and other flood control structures were built to control flooding in the Merrimack River System. He said that New Hampshire has not received full compensation from Massachusetts, and the State is now looking hard to see if those reimbursements are still affordable. He said that Ms. MacStay spoke to the Finance Committee with regards to State Aid Grants that have been promised to many communities, but again the State is finding it difficult to keep those promises. Rep. Leishman said that Peterborough should not expect to receive any of flood control reimbursement in the upcoming biennium.

Rep. Leishman continued, saying there is a little good news, in that at the end of this budget cycle they anticipate a small, \$40,000 surplus. However, there are many competing issues in this budget, particularly the need to maintain and repair roads and bridges versus a movement to repeal the gas tax, as well as a movement to reduce the business enterprise tax and business profits tax.

Chair Miller said that everyone would like to see faster broadband in this area, but municipalities do not have the ability to bond for this infrastructure. Ms. MacStay explained that RSA 33:3-c I states that “a municipality or county may issue its bonds or notes for the purpose of defraying the cost of...broadband infrastructure...to be purchased or constructed in areas not served by an existing broadband carrier or provider.” Despite the fact that Fast Roads has laid their backbone down Route 101 and 202 in Peterborough, the town is unable to take advantage of the program and extend broadband service to outlying areas because any extension would have to cross large areas where Comcast and Fairpoint are already providing service that is considered “broadband” by current FCC definitions. Rep. Leishman said that he would be willing to introduce a bill for the next legislative session that would seek to amend that language.

Pat Neery, resident of Cheney Avenue, asked about natural gas; Mr. Leishman said that he spoke with Rep. Parison of New Ipswich, who said that those against the extension of a natural gas pipeline into New Hampshire got mobilized before those who are in favor. He said that he doesn't know enough about the issue, but he said that it seems to him that it makes sense, and would help to lower energy costs in New Hampshire. He added that there is already an eighteen inch gas line that serves Hendrix and Hitchner in Milford, and that there were no issues raised when that extension was proposed. The Board thanked Rep. Leishman for taking the time to meet with them. As there was no further business, the Board adjourned their regular meeting.

Joint Select Board/Budget Committee Meeting

The Select Board was joined by the Budget Committee, and the joint meeting was called to order at 6:10pm by Chair Patten.

Proposed GAR Hall/Riverwalk Parking Lot

Mr. Bartlett, reading from a memo provided in the meeting packet, said that the cost estimate for the parking concept presented to the Select Board on January 20th has been completed. The cost estimates include numbers for 60 spaces and for 80 spaces, with 80 spaces representing the maximum number of spaces at the site. The overall estimated costs are:

- Land acquisition for portions of lots U017-022-000 and U017-023-000 is \$250,000
- Pedestrian bridge construction is estimated at \$350,000
- Parking lot construction for
 - 60 spaces - \$394,635
 - 80 spaces - \$424,235
- All construction estimates will include an additional 20% contingency
- Total estimated costs for
 - 60 spaces - \$1,143,562
 - 80 spaces - 1,179,082

Mr. Bartlett noted that the ballpark estimate made in the spring of 2014 was \$1,020,000. He explained that if approved, the annual bond payments of roughly \$74,000 would be covered in part by the proceeds of the sale of the GAR Hall, and the balance paid by the Downtown TIF fund. Revenues raised by the TIF district are approximately \$100,000 a year. Ms. Lewis asked what the Town usually spends out of the Downtown TIF fund on projects in a given year, and if anything else would be impacted; Mr. Bartlett said that the cost of porta-potties, lights on the Grove Street bridge and ongoing sidewalk work is expected to be funded by the TIF District. Ms. Lewis asked if there were any environmental concerns; Mr. Bartlett said that so far they are clear, but the project team will be reviewing the site and proposal with DES for their input.

Mr. Jones asked why the bridge was beefed-up; Mr. Bartlett replied that it was necessary to make the bridge more substantial to accommodate the sidewalk plow for winter maintenance. Chair Miller asked how wide it would be; Mr. Bartlett said between six and eight feet. Ms. Lewis asked if the sale of the GAR Hall is contingent on the construction of the parking lot; Ms. Brenner said that they have been assured that the purchase will go forward; having said that, the plans to redevelop the building have not been worked out yet, and currently they are asking the Town to help them find a non-profit who can take over the building.

Mr. Lambert asked about lighting; Mr. Bartlett said that the bridge and parking lot will have pedestrian lighting. Mr. Lambert then asked if downtown businesses will require that their employees park there; Ms. Brenner said that they do have a commitment from the developers that the tenants of their buildings will be required to park in this lot. Mr. Ward asked if green islands will be included in the final design; Mr. Bartlett replied that the landscaping shown in this conceptual have been kept to a minimum to save money until we know the outcome of Town Meeting. Should the proposal fail at Town Meeting, then the remainder of the \$80,000 could be used to look closer at alternative solutions. Mr. Ward said that Mr. Bartlett had come a long way to convince him that this proposal is a great idea, but would really like to see some more green in the design.

Recreation

	<i>2014-2015 Budget</i>	<i>2015-2016 Budget</i>	<i>% Change</i>
Net Operating	\$428,359	\$452,561	5.6%
Net Capital	\$19,000	\$20,000	5.3%
To be raised through Taxation	\$447,359	\$472,561	5.6%

Mr. King said that there is a net increase of 5.6% is primarily due to an expansion of Senior Programming. Said that he and Stacy Kulk, member of the Recreation Committee, met with seniors who are looking for more support from the Recreation Department for programming and activities. There is an increase in salaries due primarily to two additions. The first is an increase in hours of the Senior Program Specialist, the position currently being filled by Terry Reeves ten hours a week. Terry is doing a great job, and we are looking to increase her hours so that she can offer more programs and provide more support. He said that they have also proposed a Facility Supervisor position, which is a position they had in the past when it was called Bath House Attendant, but have left vacant for a few years. Mr. King said that person would serve as a gym monitor, supplemental office staff, and would be available to provide program support as needed.

Mr. King then turned to the increase in the other professional services line, and explained that the new pool's chlorination system is complex and requires a high degree of knowledge to keep it operating properly, but the bath house is run by high school and college students. He said that it is easy to throw it out of calibration, and when that happens it uses more supplies than it should. The increase in this line would pay for a private contractor to come once every other week, take a look at the system and provide the expert system analysis necessary for it to run as it should. In the long run, that should save the town money in supplies.

Electricity is up with increased usage; Mr. King said that the field lights at Adams Playground use a lot of electricity, and are not as efficient as newer models would be, but they do try to keep their use under control as much as possible. Printing is up, also a result of the meeting with the seniors. The Recreation Department has tried to move from advertising in print to electronic media, but what they have found is that the seniors do not get their information that way, and prefer the printed media. Advertising is up for the same reason; seniors have told us that they look for ads in the newspaper. Chair Miller asked if the calendar section of the newspaper was free; Mr. King said that it is, and they do use that, but keeping it updated can be challenging, however it can be effective for some things. Lastly, Mr. King said that general supplies is also up to purchase supplies for senior programs. Chair Miller asked if that could be offset by the expected savings in pool supplies; Mr. King said that he hoped that would be the case.

Mr. Lambert asked why there was a large reduction in vehicle repair and maintenance; Mr. King said that was increased last year to cover the replacement of the dump body on the truck, a one-time expense.

Ms. Lewis said that it seems to her that there must be a way to train a regular Recreation Department employee, not a teenager, to run the chlorination system, and not rely on a contractor; Mr. King said that they have considered that, and have received training on the system from multiple sources which has been somewhat helpful, but hasn't gotten them to where they need to be to run the system efficiently. He said that it was a daily headache over the summer, and when it is not properly calibrated it can cause problems. Ms. Lewis asked if someone from utilities could calibrate and monitor the system; Ms. Brenner said that they have talked about it, and we may cross-train someone, but there may still be a need for contractor assistance.

Ms. Lewis asked how many hours the two positions would be increased; Mr. King said that the Senior Program Specialist would be increased to 28 hours a week, and the Facilities Supervisor would be a 20 hour a week position. Ms. Brenner said that she and Mr. King have worked very hard this year and looked closely at the Town’s demographics. The youth population is declining while the over 50 population has jumped. The goal is to move a lot of the Recreation Department’s mission to this demographic – not by leaving behind the youth, but to really focus on increasing services to the Senior community. Ms. Brenner added that as most people on the Budget Committee and Select Board know she is adverse to adding staff, however she feels that this is vital to the community that we will have here for at least the next five to ten years. Ms. Lewis asked if there were any cuts in youth programs; Ms. Brenner said that the school is now offering a number of youth programs a no cost, so we have been handing those over, and moving those savings to the seniors programming. Ms. Lewis asked if there is a decline in participation in the youth programs; Mr. King said that there is, and cited a reduction in participation in the soccer program. Ms. Lewis asked at what point does the Recreation Department stop offering a program because it is no longer cost effective; Mr. King said that it depends on the program, and that some have never been cost effective, but are nonetheless worthwhile programs to run at a subsidy. Mr. King said that the Summer Teen Challenge, a popular program, requires a subsidy, as is the playground program. Other programs, such as once they tried called “The Way of Tea” had very low attendance, and so was not offered again. Ms. Brenner said that with changes to the school district’s rental model the basketball program is no longer cost effective, and we have begun transitioning that program to the school. Mr. Sullivan asked, if there was a mandate to cut costs, where would Mr. King cut; Mr. King replied that he would probably look to maintenance since programs are funded through the revolving fund, and have no taxpayer impact. Ms. Lewis asked why Mr. King is asking for a subsidy for senior programming; Mr. King said that it is because many seniors are on a limited income and are not able or willing to pay the full direct program costs. A woman in attendance said that she and her husband have been going to the Community Center for several weeks, and that Ms. Reeves has been coming up with wonderful programs that she and her husband have enjoyed thoroughly. Mr. Jones asked what does Mr. King hope will be accomplished by increasing Ms. Reeves’ hours; Mr. King said that any expansion of senior programming requires more than ten hours a week, and that he hopes she will be able to plan new programs and trips. Ms. Kulk said that the Peterborough Press was always a focus in her house, and that when it arrived she, her husband and their kids would circle the programs they were interested in. She added that the Facilities Supervisor would also act as the gym monitor when the Recreation Department used a school gymnasium, which would save the \$28.00 per hour that ConVal would otherwise charge.

Revolving Fund

	<i>2014-2015 Budget</i>	<i>2015-2016 Budget</i>	<i>% Change</i>
Operating	\$203,397	\$190,335	-6.4%
To be raised through Fees	\$203,397	\$190,335	-6.4%

Mr. King said that the proposed budget is down 11%, which reflects a reduction in participation. Notably Deb Giamo, instructor of the very popular Zumba program has retired. Mr. Sullivan asked if the investment in automation and credit cards has realized a profit or increase in revenue; Mr. King said that the system is working very well, and he said that they anticipate that they will make the projected revenue for the pool passes, but will not know for sure until after June 30th.

Financial Administration

	<i>2014-2015 Budget</i>	<i>2015-2016 Budget</i>	<i>% Change</i>
Net Operating	\$210,359	\$199,387	-5.2%
Net Special Articles	\$0	\$24,961	0%
To be raised through Taxation	\$210,359	\$224,348	6.7%

Ms. Vaihinger said that computer services are up 11.46% due to the costs associated with transitioning to the new financial system. She said that there will be an increase in licensing costs, and also noted that the telephone line is up based on the shared cost of a maintenance contract. She and Ms. Brenner said that they would follow-up on the Flood Control revenue that Mr. Leishman alluded to earlier to see if that should be removed.

General Government

	<i>2014-2015 Budget</i>	<i>2015-2016 Budget</i>	<i>% Change</i>
Net Operating	\$190,734	\$237,807	24.7%
To be raised through Taxation	\$190,7.4	\$237,807	24.7%

Ms. Vaihinger said that the increase in this budget is due to \$30,000 being budgeted for possible fines related to the Affordable Care Act.

Debt Service

	<i>2014-2015 Budget</i>	<i>2015-2016 Budget</i>	<i>% Change</i>
Net Operating	\$308,771	\$405,025	31.2%
To be raised through Taxation	\$308,771	\$405,025	31.2%

Ms. Vaihinger referred the body to the memo she included which completely breaks down each of those line items:

Lease Purchase Payments	FY 2016 Payment	Source
Fire Pumper Truck – 3 Year Lease (2017-2019)		
Police Vehicle – 2 Year Lease (2017)	\$14,000	Tax Dollars
Finance Copier (2016)	\$3,312	Tax Dollars
Recreation Copier (2020)	\$2,136	Tax Dollars
TOTAL	\$19,448	
General Obligation Bond - Principal	FY 2016 Payment	Source
WPTIF Loan (2.5 Million)	\$172,414	West Pboro TIF
Connector Road Loan (1 Million)	\$74,403	MCH/Healthcare TIF
Road Repaving Loan (\$250,000) – 5 year	\$50,000	Tax Dollars
Pool Loan (1.2 Million) – 15 year	\$80,000	Tax Dollars
Robbe Farm Rd/Legacy Ln Reconstruction	\$20,000	Betterment Assessment
Union Street Reconstruction	\$125,000	Tax Dollars
TOTAL	\$521,817	
General Obligation Bond – Interest	FY 2016 Payment	Source
WPTIF Loan (2.5 Million)	\$67,587	West Pboro TIF
Connector Road Loan (1 Million)	\$28,610	MCH/Healthcare TIF
Road Repaving Loan (\$250,000) – 5 year	\$2,170	Tax Dollars
Pool Loan (1.2 Million) – 15 year	\$21,809	Tax Dollars
Robbe Farm Rd/Legacy Ln Reconstruction	\$5,000	Betterment Assessment
Union Street Reconstruction	\$106,598	Tax Dollars
TOTAL	\$231,774	
Total from Other Sources	\$368,014	
Total from General Fund (taxation)	\$405,025	

Human Services

	<i>2014-2015 Budget</i>	<i>2015-2016 Budget</i>	<i>% Change</i>
Net Operating	\$154,177	\$154,701	0.3%
To be raised through Taxation	\$154,177	\$154,701	0.3%

Ms. MacStay said that she continues to see general improvement in the local economy and as a result, a lessened demand for welfare.

Conservation Commission

	<i>2014-2015 Budget</i>	<i>2015-2016 Budget</i>	<i>% Change</i>
Net Operating	\$3,050	\$3,050	0%
To be raised through Taxation	\$3,050	\$3,050	0%

Heritage Commission

	<i>2014-2015 Budget</i>	<i>2015-2016 Budget</i>	<i>% Change</i>
Net Operating	\$1,000	\$1,000	0%
To be raised through Taxation	\$1,000	\$1,000	0%

Ms. Brenner said that there were no changes to these budgets.

As there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:54pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nicole MacStay, Assistant Town Administrator

PETERBOROUGH
SELECT BOARD:


Barbara A. Miller, Chair


Tyler Ward


Elizabeth M. Thomas

ACTION ITEM PENDING LIST