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Sanbornton Municipal Budget Committee

Meeting Date and Time: Monday, January 16 2017 at 6:30 PM – Town Offices

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ralph Rathjen at 6:30pm. All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Selectmen's Representative Katy North, Craig Davis, Roger Grey, Earl Leighton, Craig Weisman and Justin Barriault

Approval of draft minutes of 1/9/16 – Roger Grey made a motion to approve the draft minutes of 1/9 with minor corrections. Earl Leighton seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

a. Continued Review of BOS Budget

Recreation Department – Chair Ralph Rathjen stated that Recreation Director Julie Lonergan could not be present due to another commitment. He stated that he thought the Recreation Department had requested additional funding for security cameras that was denied by the Select Board. Selectman Katy North explained that both a gate and a secure storage trailer have been placed at the Town Park to address security concerns. Craig Davis asked if the revenue that the Recreation Department gives back to the Town is contractual or not. Selectman North responded that the money is given back to the Town per RSA 31:19a and so they essentially have to give the money back or else those funds will be the only budget that department can work with the following year. Craig Weisman made a motion to accept the BOS recommended budget of \$110,423 for the Recreation Department. Chair Ralph Rathjen seconded the motion and the motion passed, with Roger Grey voting No, stating that he is voting No because he does not agree with the budget committee process this year.

Transfer Station – Transfer Station Manager Kevin Austin was present to answer questions. Earl Leighton asked if the revenue from trash bags exceeded the expenditures this past year, and Solid Waste Committee member Bob White provided a spreadsheet showing that it had, by about \$2,000. Earl Leighton also asked about the process for estimating construction waste, and Kevin Austin responded that he tries to be fair in his estimates but without a scale he is purely guessing at weights. In regards to the salary line for part-time employees, Kevin Austin stated that it is hard to keep employees at the rate of \$10.50 an hour and he would like to see \$12.50 an hour instead. Selectman North explained that the Town's job descriptions have all been re-written to reflect current roles and responsibilities and sent to Thornton & Associates for a pay matrix study. Once that study is received, she stated that the BOS will then decide how to proceed with any type of pay raises. Roger Grey stated that he thinks the Budget Committee should be able to look at the study results, and Selectman North responded that the Budget Committee has the responsibility to recommend or not recommend the budget in front of them, but is not tasked with addressing personnel issues which includes salaries and pay grades. Roger Grey stated that he does not feel the process of the Budget Committee approving the budget provided by the BOS is valuable and that the Budget Committee has not changed any single line item thus far. Chair Rathjen explained that this is true, but this is the first year that the departments have provided a thorough attached narrative with their budgets and so he himself has not questioned any of the budget items yet. Craig Davis made a motion to accept the BOS recommended budget of \$169,585. Craig Weisman seconded the motion and the motion passed, with Roger Grey voting No, stating again that he does not agree with the Budget Committee's review process.

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Landfill – Chair Ralph Rathjen stated that he would like to see the line item for groundwater testing reduced, given the actual expenditures of the past several years. DPW Director Brian Bordeau explained that he is waiting on a report back from DES that will give the approval to reduce the frequency of testing. Chair Rathjen made a motion to reduce groundwater testing from \$5,000 to \$1,500, based on the past years' expenditures of less than \$2,000, for a new budget total of \$6,801. Roger Grey seconded the motion and the motion passed, with Selectman Katy North voting No.

Highway and Streets – DPW Director Brian Bordeau stated that his salary budget was down due to a staff vacancy. Roger Grey asked what the hourly rate was for this vacant position and Brian Bordeau responded that the previous employee was at \$16.46. Roger Grey asked if this was competitive, and Bordeau responded that other towns are higher and that he is having trouble keeping employees at the current hourly rates. Earl Grey asked why the line for Overtime was down, and Brian Bordeau responded that there was due to low snow last year. He also stated that the subcontractor has been a big savings for the department since they do not have to pay for truck maintenance or benefits. Roger Grey stated that he would like to see money in a capital reserve fund for the purpose of paying for future lease payments on trucks. Selectman North stated that there was a study done that showed that lease payments were a better deal, and she also explained that it stabilizes the tax rate to consistently pay lease payments versus funding capital reserve fund. Chair Rathjen stated that he would like to see more money go toward crack sealing as it is money well spent by the Town, and Brian Bordeau agreed. Roger Grey made a motion to increase the line item for crack sealing from \$12,600 to \$21,000, which would cover five days of crack sealing by an outside contractor. Chair Rathjen seconded the motion and the motion passed, with Selectman North voting No.

Chair Rathjen noticed that the line items for Fuel have been underspent. Earl Leighton made a motion to reduce the line item for Gas from \$5,000 to \$3,000. Craig Davis seconded the motion and the motion passed, with Selectman North voting No. Roger Grey made a motion to reduce the Diesel line item from \$45,000 to \$40,000. Craig Davis seconded the motion and the motion passed, with Selectman North and Justin Barriault voting No.

(Chair Ralph Rathjen made a motion to extend the meeting to 9:30 pm. Craig Davis seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.)

Brian Bordeau stated that the requested increase in the Equipment Purchase line was earmarked for a leaf blower, but that has already been purchased in this fiscal year and can be removed from the FY18 budget. Earl Leighton made a motion to reduce line 4312.629 Equipment Purchase from \$6,700 to \$2,500. Roger Grey seconded the motion and the motion passed, with Selectman North voting No. Due to differences in the Highways and Streets spreadsheet totals between members, the total budget number will be discussed and voted on at the next meeting.

Chair Ralph Rathjen provided the Budget Committee with a copy of a road study completed in Belmont regarding maintenance and timeline. Brian Bordeau stated that he has provided a spreadsheet of his plan for repair of major Sanbornton roads but explained that he is not an engineer, so an outside study may be useful.

The Budget Committee will meet with the BOS on **Monday, January 23 at 6:30.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:00.

Respectfully Submitted,

Audry Barriault, Budget Committee Secretary