

**Budget Committee**  
**October 21, 2019**

**Present:** Jerry O'Connor, Chair; Priscilla Colbath; Dave Mankus; Paul Romano; Tracey Kolb, School Rep; Peter Kasprzyk, SWP Rep; Charlie Shine; Elizabeth Conner; Kenneth S. Paul, Selectmen's Rep; Kelley A. Collins, Town Administrator; and Toni Bodah, Secretary.

Also present were Cheryl Schlenker; William Van Husen; Denny Miller; Cindy Bickford; Connie Twombly; Wayne Robinson; Valerie Ward; and Sandy Johnson. Jim Miller and Tim Ouellette were videographers for the evening.

Mr. O'Connor called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. O'Connor then referred to the resignation of Howie Knight from the Budget Committee. **Ms. Colbath moved to accept, with regret, the resignation of Howie Knight from the Budget Committee. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 9-0.**

Mr. O'Connor noted that this vacancy has been posted, and 2 letters of interest were received—one from previous member Denny Miller, another from resident William Van Husen. **Ms. Colbath moved to appoint Denny Miller to the Budget Committee, due to his years of experience. Mr. Kasprzyk seconded the motion.** Mr. Paul acknowledged Mr. Miller's experience on the Budget Committee, but asked that the second candidate have an opportunity to introduce himself and, further, encouraged that candidate to run for office in March if he continues to have an interest. Mr. Van Husen provided a brief background and noted he is interested in stepping up and helping out. **The motion then passed 8-1 (Ms. Kolb voting against).** [Note: The Town Clerk was present and proceeded to officially swear in Mr. Miller as a member.] Mr. Val Husen was encouraged to attend upcoming meetings. Mr. Miller then joined the members at the table.

**General Government – Elections, Registration, etc. – Valerie Ward**

Mr. O'Connor referred to there being 4 elections in 2020, opposed to 1 in 2019. This represents most of the increase in this budget. Ms. Ward noted that she has included the cost for year 2 of the 3-year NEMCI program. Ms. Conner sought clarification regarding the 54 pay weeks in the salary line. Ms. Collins explained that employees are paid every 2 weeks, which will result in 27 payrolls in 2020. Salaries will be adjusted accordingly; however, we must budget for hourly employees for 27 pay periods. The Town's auditors will make necessary adjustments during the audit. Mr. Kasprzyk referred to the Town Clerk and Tax Collector being elected officials rather than employees of the Town. Ms. Collins explained that they have an employee relationship for purposes of Workers' Comp, Unemployment, NHRS, and insurance; however, they are elected officials who set their own hours. **Ms. Colbath moved the section total at \$121,600. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 10-0.**

**Community Services – Parks & Recreation – Wayne Robinson**

Ms. Conner noted that it appears as though the salary line increased by 14% and questioned whether this is due to the 27 pay periods. Mr. Robinson advised the increase reflects 27 pay periods, as well as some additional hours and anticipated rate increases. The website host increased the monthly cost for the first time in 5 years. Mr. Robinson was able to negotiate an increase to \$100/month (instead of \$125/month). That line (01-45201-390) was increased from \$900 to \$1200.

Ms. Collins shared the current step plan with Ms. Conner (she will email it to all Budget Committee members)

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Mr. Robinson referred to the Memberships line (01-45201-560), which does not reflect outstanding invoices. In addition, there has not been much expended from the Facilities/Repair line (01-45201-430). Mr. Robinson explained that there has not been time until recently to address several planned projects.

Mr. Miller referred to Parks & Rec now having its own truck and questioned whether the mileage line (01-45201-637) could be reduced. Mr. Robinson noted the budget was prepared prior to purchase of the truck and agreed the line could be reduced—which it was, to \$100. Mr. Romano was advised the new truck is under warranty. **Ms. Colbath moved the section total at \$184,676. Mr. Miller seconded the motion, which passed 10-0.**

### **General Government – Town Hall Annex – Wayne Robinson**

Mr. Robinson continues to plan to make repairs to the building. He is working on shelving and lockers. **Ms. Colbath moved the section total at \$16,385. Ms. Conner seconded the motion, which passed 10-0.**

### **Sewer**

Ms. Collins explained that we used to budget 50% of the wastewater superintendent position to Transfer Station, 50% to sewer. Most of the cost of benefits was being charged to Fund 1. However, the attendant actually spends more time on wastewater. Therefore, the proposal is to split these costs 75/25 to sewer and transfer station. [Ms. Collins noted that Brock Mitchell, Director of Public Works, was unable to attend tonight's meeting.] In addition, there are 27 pay periods and an anticipated step increase, on top of the increased percentage. These changes will affect the sewer user rate. Mr. Miller spoke to his long-time concern that the Town and Sanbornville Water Precinct work together on line replacements in order to minimize tearing up the roads. Mr. Kasprzyk noted that the SWP and Town are, in fact, working together to prioritize replacement of lines. The Rines Road loop is an emergency situation that the SWP is trying to get done before winter. Mr. Mitchell is ready to discuss with the Board of Selectmen the possibility of replacing sewer lines on Rines Road if the SWP project does not take place before winter. Ms. Collins noted that Mr. Mitchell has included funds in the budget to begin the process of camera-ing the sewer system. She noted that Mr. Mitchell has been instrumental in bringing the sewer system up to par.

Mr. Kasprzyk noted that they have a tractor with a snowblower that could be appropriate to use in the downtown area. Ms. Collins will discuss with Mr. Mitchell. **Ms. Colbath moved the Operation and Maintenance section at \$67,991. Mr. Miller seconded the motion.** Brief discussion. **Ms. Colbath withdrew her motion, and Mr. Miller withdrew his second.**

**Ms. Colbath moved the Sewer budget at \$120,452. Mr. Miller seconded the motion, which passed 10-0.**

### **Public Works – Town Maintenance**

Reference was made to the Outside Hire line (01-43121-810), given the outsourcing of plowing dirt roads. Ms. Collins noted we also have sweeping, cleaning catch basins, big tree work, etc. We have added about \$24,000 for the contract to plow dirt roads. Mr. Mitchell proposed this arrangement.

We have 4 plow routes and each route includes dirt roads. Dirt roads require different materials than paved roads, so the trucks must come back to the garage and change materials. By outsourcing the plowing of dirt roads, we save that need to come back. This is a trial to see if it works. Hopefully Town drivers will be able to spend more time on the paved roads. Ms. Collins stated that we may see a small decrease in overtime, but that really is dependent on so many factors. This process will save wear and tear on the trucks. We anticipate all will receive better service. Again—this is a 1-year trial. Mr. Shine asked if other towns are doing this. Ms. Collins confirmed that they are—not only for dirt roads but also for outlying routes. She added that the Part-time Employee line in the Highway Department budget has been reduced as a result of this program. **Ms. Colbath moved the section total at \$194,000. Mr. O'Connor seconded the motion, which passed 10-0.** Mr. Kasprzyk asked whether the department keeps a running inventory of tools and where they are used. Mr. Paul stated there is usually an inventory for insurance purposes, as well as a maintenance book for each vehicle. Ms. Collins will ask Mr. Mitchell how they inventory tools.

#### **Public Works – Highway Department**

Mr. Miller referred to the lines for gas (01-43122-635) and diesel (01-43122-636). Ms. Collins stated that any increase in price is expected to be offset by lower use of newer (more efficient) vehicles. Mr. Kasprzyk asked if the wood furnace is still in use. Mr. Paul stated that it is not efficient. He added that we need to look at a long-term plan for that building. Mr. Kasprzyk suggested that a satellite structure might be a possibility. Ms. Collins spoke to the drastic condition of the highway garage, which is 30-40 years old. Mr. Paul referred to the water being contaminated with salt. Mr. Miller advised that the Food Pantry has good water, but not much of it. They could likely provide the Highway Department with drinking water, but not enough water to clean the trucks and equipment. The CIP Committee has discussed this building. Mr. Romano asked whether the building is monitored by a firm for security or fire. No, but there are cameras. Mr. Miller stated that we should eventually have a truck washing station. Ms. Colbath will email the explanation sheet regarding the CIP plan to all Budget Committee members.

Mr. O'Connor noted that it sounds as though we should have started a capital reserve fund for this building several years ago. He asked whether overtime is expected to stay constant. Ms. Collins noted that the hope is it might decrease, but we're just not sure. We need a year under our proverbial belt. Mr. O'Connor believes the vehicle maintenance line (01-43122-660) should decrease given our newer vehicles. Ms. Collins noted that we will need new diagnostic software, and we still have an old grader. **Ms. Colbath moved the section total at \$472,221. Mr. Romano seconded the motion, which passed 10-0.**

#### **General Government – Assessing – Cindy Bickford**

The increase in the legal line (01-41522-320) was questioned. Ms. Bickford noted that 2018 was the first year of the contract with a utility appraiser, resulting in the Town picking up \$8 million in utility values. In 2017, PSNH paid the Town of Wakefield \$79,000 in property taxes. That figure increased to \$137,000 in 2018. As a result, PSNH has filed abatements with a large number of towns. Those towns are grouping together for representation on those abatements. The Town's cost should be minimal. The abatement process was reviewed. The Assessors originally requested \$2000.

In consideration of the PSNH appeal, that line was increased to \$4000. **Mr. Miller moved the section total at \$139,960. Ms. Colbath seconded the motion, which passed 10-0.**

**Public Works – Solid Waste**

Mr. Romano received confirmation that the Transfer Station Attendants line (01-43241-110) is reflective of the change in percentage for the employee shared with Sewer. Ms. Collins added that Mr. Mitchell is considering hiring 2 fulltime seasonal employees (Memorial Day through Labor Day). The new process is working well, but they are extremely busy. Those seasonal employees would not receive any benefits. Mr. Kasprzyk suggested that we conduct 2 Household Hazardous Waste Collection Days. Ms. Collins noted the process is very expensive, and there also could be a legal problem involved. The Town combines with the City of Rochester. We are aware that residents want/need this service; however, we need to make some changes if we continue, which would be very expensive. Mr. Mitchell will discuss this with the Board of Selectmen. The Town does not have the resources to conduct such an event on its own and must combine with someone like Rochester. Mr. Kasprzyk suggested we might combine with the Town of Wolfeboro. He also suggested the railroad be contacted about a possible spur at the Transfer Station for transportation of the cardboard.

Mr. Paul noted we have had only a few months of the new process. The price per pound for aluminum has dropped drastically. We hope to stockpile material until the price goes up. Cardboard is on its way to New York. We actually save even if we only break even. Ms. Collins noted that the cost of disposal has increased; however, we project we will haul much less material. Mr. Paul stressed that the cost is in the trucking. We will have a better picture after 1 year.

Mr. O'Connor referred to the \$3500 for Plowing/Projects (new line). Ms. Collins noted that we have often paid either a Highway or Transfer Station employee overtime to plow. This line will also cover small projects. Mr. Miller suggested we spend funds on good signage—3x4 on a stand in yellow directing residents where to go. Mr. Paul noted that new signs are appearing. We are also looking at a message board, and we hope to relocate the scale so that one will be able to see all 4 lane much more easily. Mr. Paul added that we hope to be able to go back to recycling 1-7 plastic (just no black plastic). Mr. Romano referred to the explanation for the Equipment Maintenance line (01-43241-630) including repair of the loader; however, we purchased a new loader. The explanation will be revised. **Mr. Miller moved the section total at \$475,465. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 10-0.**

**Public Works – Street Lighting**

Mr. Miller asked who would pay if we were to move to LED lighting. Ms. Collins stated that Eversource may offer assistance, but they will not pay the entire amount. She has much information from another town to review/consider. Ms. Kolb noted that Joe Williams found a deal with Eversource for a 50/50 match of an \$80,000 project to change the lights at the school. Mr. Kasprzyk suggested we request solar panels on our street lights. Ms. Collins can approach Eversource. **Mr. Miller moved the section total at \$34,600. Mr. Romano seconded the motion, which passed 10-0.**

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### **General Government – Legal**

Mr. O'Connor noted that the Board of Selectmen reduced the department head request by \$10,000. Ms. Collins explained that funds for this purpose were moved to individual departments to more accurately reflect where the costs are being incurred. **Mr. Shine moved the section total at \$15,001. Mr. Kasprzyk seconded the motion, which passed 10-0.**

### **General Government – Executive**

Ms. Conner asked about the PT Executive Assistant line (01-41301-110). Ms. Collins advised she has 1 person 3 days/week, and 1 person 1/day per week. She also confirmed that the 54 pay weeks affect the NHRS payments. **Mr. Romano moved the section total at \$156,171. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 10-0.**

### **General Government – Town Hall**

Mr. Kasprzyk referred to the electrical renovation project conducted years ago. The entire process (of repayment) is complete. We may save kw, but the rates have increased. **Mr. Paul moved the section total at \$59,625. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 10-0.**

### **General Government – Insurance**

Ms. Collins advised that the Board of Selectmen has not seen these numbers yet; however, she does not anticipate any issue. We are in a CAP program with Property Liability and Workers' Comp. Our liability insurance includes enhanced cyber-attack coverage. **Mr. Paul moved the section total at \$110,509. Mr. Miller seconded the motion, which passed 10-0.**

### **General Government – General Administration**

Mr. Miller asked about the status of renovations in the finance area. Ms. Collins noted that the new counters have been purchased and are expected to be installed any day. We have invested in a mini-split. We will need to address the floors and some electrical work (outlets). The equipment line (01-41991-740) is down as we purchased a new phone system in 2019. Mr. Kasprzyk referred to the postage line (01-41991-625) being over-expended. Ms. Collins explained that this budget pays to fill the postage machine. Subsequently, various departments are charged for the amount of postage they use. Therefore, this line fluctuates. Mr. Miller asked whether we have a system to monitor the building if an emergency occurs over a long weekend. Ms. Collins advised there are some alarms that go to the Fire Department. This system gets tested periodically. The panic alarms are tested annually. **Mr. Miller moved the section total at \$111,304. Ms. Colbath seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

**Minutes – Ms. Colbath moved to approve the August 27, 2019, minutes with the School, with amendments. Mr. O'Connor seconded the motion, which passed 9-0-1 (Mr. Miller abstaining).**

**Ms. Colbath moved to approve the August 27, 2019, minutes with the Town as presented. Mr. Mankus seconded the motion, which passed 9-0-1 (Mr. Miller abstaining).**

**Mr. O'Connor moved to adjourn at 8:11 p.m. Ms. Conner seconded the motion, which passed 10-0.**

Respectfully submitted—Toni Bodah, Secretary