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**ASHLAND BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
BUDGET MEETING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 15TH, 2017
ASHLAND TOWN OFFICE
6:00 PM**

Chairman Newton called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM with a roll call vote. Chairman Fran Newton, Vice Chairman Harold Lamos, Selectman Leigh Sharps, Selectman Tejasinha Sivalingam and Selectmen Casey Barney present. Others present: Town Administrator (TA) Charles Smith and Interim DPW Director Craig Moore.

At the start of the meeting TA Smith informed the Board of Selectmen about his directive to the Department Heads with budgeting for employee compensation. TA Smith advised Department Heads to budget a salary increase of \$0.75/hr. for nonunion employees to coincide with the Collective Bargaining Agreement. In the past Department Heads have asked for various pay increases. TA Smith suggested the increase to have equal compensation for all town employees without a contract. TA Smith also requested the Board of Selectmen consider changing the required weekly insurance payment for nonunion employees to be the same as union employees. Board members took the requests under advisement before preparing the budget.

Public Works

Interim DPW Director Craig Moore presented to the Board of Selectmen, the Public Works budget for 2018. Director Moore discussed the need for funding the training line, in part to the increased need for training in the department and the uncertainty of training for new hires next year. Prior to making a final decision on the Public Works budget the board requested a legal opinion about the town personnel action form (PAF).

Highway & Streets

Director Moore informed the Board about the need for repairs and maintenance with highway equipment, such as the loader. Board had concerns changing the highway fuel line from the uncertainty of future gas prices. Director Moore also mentioned the need to fix the rusted garage doors at the department shop. Selectman Sivalingam expressed concerns over the requested line item increases compared to present expenditures.

MOTION: Selectman Sharps

To approve the Highway & Streets requested budget of \$208,733.

SECOND: Selectman Lamos

VOTE: 4-1 (Yes: Sharps, Lamos, Barney, Newton. No: Sivalingam)

MOTION PASSED

Town Mechanic

Board agreed unanimously to reduce the Town Mechanic overtime line from \$3,000 to \$2,000.

MOTION: Selectman Sharps

To approve the Town Mechanic budget of \$86,553.

SECOND: Selectman Lamos

VOTE: 4-1 (Yes: Sharps, Lamos, Barney, Newton. No: Sivalingam)

MOTION PASSED

1 **Street Lighting**

2
3 Amount requested is offset by equal revenue.

4
5 **MOTION:** Selectman Sharps
6 *To approve the Street Lighting requested budget of \$42,000.*

7 **SECOND:** Selectman Lamos

8 **VOTE:** 5-0 (**Motion passed unanimously**)

9 **MOTION PASSED**

10
11 **Transfer Station**

12
13 Board members agreed to reduce the heat line from \$4,000 to \$3,250. Building maintenance at the transfer
14 station was discussed. Conversation focused on fixing the doors to keep heat in during the winter and installing
15 an air moving fan to get the air circulating for the health and safety of the workers. The Select Board agreed to
16 reduce the transfer station equipment line from \$2,500 to \$2,000.

17
18 **MOTION:** Selectman Sharps
19 *To approve the Transfer/Recycling budget of \$140,140.*

20 **SECOND:** Selectman Lamos

21 **VOTE:** 4-0-1 (**Yes:** Sharps, Lamos, Barney, Newton. **Abstain:** Sivalingam: to research further)

22 **MOTION PASSED**

23
24 **Election**

25
26 Board of Selectmen talked about the Town Clerk longevity line and the history behind implementing the line.
27 Selectman Sivalingam asked the board to consider combining the longevity line with the salary line. Budget
28 vote was tabled until response from legal about PAF.

29
30 **Financial**

31
32 Selectman Sivalingam expressed similar concerns to the longevity line for the Town Clerk as for the Tax
33 Collector. TA Smith recommended the town advertise for the open Financial Officer position, as presently the
34 town has a consultant. Selectman Sivalingam was satisfied with the service from the consultant, and had
35 concerns going forward over the costs for the Financial Officer position.

36
37 **MOTION:** Chairman Newton
38 *To have the Town Administrator advertise for the Financial Officer position.*

39 **SECOND:** Selectman Sharps

40 **VOTE:** 4-1 (**Yes:** Sharps, Lamos, Barney, Newton. **No:** Sivalingam)

41 **MOTION PASSED**

42
43 Before voting on the financial budget, the Board asked for clarification about the BMSI (town accounting
44 software) costs. Board agreed to reduce the Tax Collector training line from \$750 to \$500.

45
46 **Executive Budget**

47
48 TA Smith responded to questions about the overtime line. The line is used for overtime when needed to record
49 board meeting minutes and extended hours at the town office.

1 Selectman Sivalingam proposed the Board eliminate the Board of Selectmen salary line. Selectman Sharps
2 talked about how she makes donations with the stipend. Other members discussed about the importance of the
3 line item for travel to meetings etc. Selectman Sivalingam suggested a compromise of moving a portion of the
4 funding from the salary line to executive training, to offset his salary elimination. TA Smith notified the board
5 about the general expense line could be used for training and purchase of books for the Selectmen.
6

7 **MOTION:** Selectman Sivalingam
8 *To reduce the Board of Selectmen salary line to zero.*

9 **SECOND:** Selectman Lamos

10 **VOTE:** 1-4 (Yes: Sivalingam. No: Sharps, Lamos, Barney, Newton)

11 **MOTION FAILED**

12
13 TA Smith notified the Board about the increase to the telephone line. TA Smith suggested consolidating the
14 telephone line with the Police Department, instead of splitting the line among two departments. The line will be
15 used for the town office VOIP phones and the new fiber optical cable that runs into the Town Office building.
16 TA Smith recommended having the line under the General Government budget, but has reservations if the
17 budget went to default. New line items are not added to the budget under default. Board tabled the Executive
18 budget till a following meeting.
19

20 **Property Taxation**

21
22 Property revaluation line was increased to \$33,000 to coincide with town wide revaluation year (update of
23 property values) – per the NH Constitution Part II Art. 6.
24

25 **MOTION:** Chairman Newton
26 *To approve the Property Taxation budget of \$55,610.*

27 **SECOND:** Selectman Sharps

28 **VOTE:** 4-1 (Yes: Sharps, Lamos, Barney, Newton. No: Sivalingam)

29 **MOTION PASSED**

30 31 **Legal**

32
33 Chairman Newton opened the discussion about the legal budget and having the town move to a Request for
34 Proposals (RFP) for new legal services. TA Smith informed the board the line this year will go over after the
35 Trustee of Trust Funds legal case. By not knowing what might happen with an RFP and legal fees next year –
36 the Board anticipated they would be increased and agreed to increase the line from \$15,000 to \$20,000.
37

38 **MOTION:** Chairman Newton
39 *To increase and approve the legal budget to \$20,000.*

40 **SECOND:** Selectman Sharps

41 **VOTE:** 4-1 (Yes: Sharps, Lamos, Barney, Newton. No: Sivalingam)

42 **MOTION PASSED**

43 44 **Debt Service Principal**

45
46 **MOTION:** Chairman Newton
47 *To approve the Debt Service Principal budget of \$126,331.*

48 **SECOND:** Selectman Barney

49 **VOTE:** 5-0 (All in favor)

50 **MOTION PASSED**

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Debt Service Interest

MOTION: Chairman Newton
To approve the Debt Service Interest budget of \$59,032.
SECOND: Selectman Barney
VOTE: 5-0 (All in favor)
MOTION PASSED

Tax Anticipation Note

MOTION: Chairman Newton
To approve the Tax Anticipation Note budget of \$1.
SECOND: Selectman Barney
VOTE: 5-0 (All in favor)
MOTION PASSED

Prior to adjourning their meeting, the Board of Selectmen scheduled their next budget meeting for Tuesday, August 22nd, 2017 at 6 PM in the Ashland Town Office. Hearing no other business Selectman Sivalingam made a motion to adjourn, Selectman Sharps seconded, all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Charles Smith
August 16, 2017