



BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING/September 5, 2017

Mr. Lynde suggested that the requested budget figure be the ‘number on the floor’, unless a Board member offered an amendment. The Board agreed that the department’s requested budget figure would have a standing motion on the floor.

**MOTION:** To accept \$184,802 as the 2018 Assessing 2018 operating budget.

**VOTE:** (3-0-0) The motion carried.

**Budget Committee - \$162**

**MOTION:** To accept \$162 as the 2018 Budget Committee operating budget.

**VOTE:** (3-0-0) The motion carried.

**Cable Department - \$131,392**

**MOTION:** To accept \$131,392 as the 2018 Cable Department operating budget.

**VOTE:** (3-0-0) The motion carried.

**Cemetery Department - \$145,196**

*(Selectmen don’t vote regarding the budget; Cemetery Department is run by their Trustees)*

Ms. Spencer arrived.

**Conservation Commission - \$3,947**

**MOTION:** To accept \$3,947 as the 2018 Conservation Commission operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Debt Service Interest - \$118,780**

**MOTION:** To accept \$118,780 as the 2018 Debt Service Interest operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Debt Service Principal - \$648,815**

**MOTION:** To accept \$648,815 as the 2018 Debt Service Principal operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Elections - \$19,631**

**MOTION:** To accept \$19,631 as the 2018 Elections operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Emergency Management - \$8,548**

**MOTION:** To accept \$8,548 as the 2018 Emergency Management operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Fire Department - \$2,178,295**

Ms. Spencer questioned if the budget figure included additional funds for the dispatch transfer. Fire Chief James Midgley replied that the budget was updated to include the additional funds for the dispatching contract, which were listed under Rentals.

**MOTION:** To accept \$2,178,295 as the 2018 Fire Department operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Health Officer - \$45,766**

**MOTION:** To accept \$45,766 as the 2018 Health Officer operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Health Services – 73,500**

**MOTION:** To accept \$73,500 as the 2018 Health Services operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Highway Department - \$1,519,510**

Mr. Leonard wanted to know if the budget figure reflected the reduction of \$5,000 from the equipment repair budget, as discussed at their previous meeting.

**MOTION:** (Leonard/Spencer) To reduce the repair line by \$5,000.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

Ms. Spencer questioned if the Board was going to add the priority item into the budget. Mr. Viger replied she could make a motion to do so.

Ms. Spencer made a motion to add the priority item of a 2018 Skid Steer Tractor into the operating budget with a cost of \$92,000. She noted the cost would pay for itself after three years of mowing and side walk cleaning. Mr. Leonard questioned if the equipment was considered new (which may need to be approved by voters), or if it was replacing equipment. Mr. Lynde noted the budget contained a 'new equipment' line item. Mr. Viger stated it was the Selectmen's discretion to put things into the budget; typically it was up to the Budget Committee if they wanted to 'kick it back' out of the budget.

Mr. McCarthy inquired if the equipment could be purchased using the original Highway Block Grant money. Highway Agent Frank Ferreira believed they should be able to. Mr. McCarthy said the fine print in the Block Grant indicated that equipment could be purchased to relieve the burden to the taxpayer. Mr. Ferreira noted if he took money from the Block Grant it would be from the 2016 grant that he still had. Ms. Spencer and Mr. Viger were in favor of doing so.

Mr. Lynde wanted to know if taking money from the Block Grant would leave the department's budget short from being able to maintain roads. Mr. Ferreira didn't believe it would leave them short.

Ms. Spencer withdrew her motion. The Board unanimously agreed to expend the \$92,000 this year out of the Highway Block Grant so the department would have the equipment during the winter.

**MOTION:** To accept \$1,514,510 as the 2018 Highway Department operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Human Services - \$88,040**

**MOTION:** To accept \$88,040 as the 2018 Human Services operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Insurance - \$2,426,881**

The Board decided to vote on the figure although the 'real' numbers aren't received until November/December. Mr. McCarthy noted they usually vote on the actual figure during Budget Committee reconsideration.

**MOTION:** To accept \$2,426,881 as the 2018 Insurance operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Legal - \$85,000**

Mr. Lynde inquired the contract value with Town Counsel (John Ratigan). Mr. McCarthy replied they were entering the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a three year contract; 1<sup>st</sup> year-\$80,000 / 2<sup>nd</sup> year-\$85,000 / 3<sup>rd</sup> year-\$85,000. Mr. Lynde questioned where they would get the money to hire another lawyer for other matters. Mr. McCarthy said he would take it out of the Legal budget. He felt they would be okay, as they had minimal usage of the other attorney.

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Mr. Lynde proposed amending the budget and adding \$5,000 to take care of other legal expenses that may occur. Ms. Spencer was willing to go with the proposed figure and amend at reconsideration if needed. She asked if Mr. Lynde would amend his figure to \$2,500. Mr. Lynde answered yes.

**MOTION:** (Lynde/Spencer) To add \$2,500 to the budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**MOTION:** To accept \$87,500 as the 2018 Legal operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Library - \$422,391**

*(Selectmen don't vote regarding the budget; the Library is run by their Trustees)*

**Park & Recreation - \$233,615**

**MOTION:** To accept \$233,615 as the 2018 Parks & Recreation operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Planning Department - \$413,927**

Ms. Spencer recalled during their previous discussion they spoke about the proposed compensation for inspectors. Instead of doing it in one lump sum, she proposed a motion for an incremental increase over 3 years. Mr. Lynde seconded and suggested a 'step' increment of: year 1= 45% / year 2=35% / year 3=20%. Ms. Spencer was amenable to an incremental increase as Mr. Lynde suggested.

The Board took a brief recess to calculate the figures, when they came back, Mr. Viger indicated that the motion they were making for the inspector's (building, electric, plumbing) salary adjustment was for 45% of the total increase in year one.

Ms. Spencer made a motion that the 45% of the total increase in year one would reduce the overall bottom line by \$29,420, making the new proposed bottom line \$384,507. Mr. Lynde seconded the motion.

Mr. Leonard understood that the proposed reduction to the salary line was based on the fact that the submitted budget included a 'one time payment' amount to the inspectors. Ms. Spencer replied that was correct. She said next year the figure would increase 35%, and the following year the increase would be 20%. Mr. Leonard reiterated his concern from the previous meeting of creating an administrative burden. He was still in favor of a one-time increase, which would total (for the three inspectors) approximately \$50,000. He believed they had been sorely underpaid for years. He realized it was a large percentage increase, but felt the dollar amount was minimal. Ms. Spencer respectfully disagreed and didn't consider the amount to be minimal as the figure was more than many people make in a year. She couldn't recall the Board giving a 300% lump sum increase to anyone during her time as a Budget Committee member or Selectwoman. She respected the need to bring employees up to a

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190 more market rate, but in fairness felt it should be done incrementally. Mr. Lynde felt an incremental  
191 increase was better than a lump sum increase. Mr. Viger agreed with Mr. Leonard for a one-time  
192 increase, but seeing that the Board was missing a member he said he would support Ms. Spencer's  
193 motion.

194  
195 Mr. Gowan brought to the Board's attention that the inspectors were busy because the Town was busy  
196 with building, which equated to a huge jump in revenue. He reviewed the figures from the recent three  
197 years. He noted all the permits and applications fees was money coming into the department, which he  
198 felt should be shared with the inspectors to bring them up to a favorable rate.

199  
200 Mr. Lynde commented that the Board was going to vote on a salary that could continue over the next  
201 few years and questioned if the number of permits would remain as high as they currently were. Mr.  
202 Gowan replied it was a difficult thing to predict.

203  
204 Mr. Viger stated the motion on the floor was to essentially to fund the first year, of a three year salary  
205 increase for the inspectors. Mr. Leonard questioned if the Selectmen would vote next year for a 35%  
206 increase. Ms. Spencer presumed that the 35% would be included in next year's budget. Mr. Lynde  
207 stated the Board's intent was to provide direction for the salary increase for all three years, but noted  
208 they could only vote on what they were doing to the currently proposed budget. He wanted future  
209 boards to understand it was the wish of the current Board to carry out the additional incremental  
210 increases (of 35% and 20%) in the next two year's budgets. Mr. Leonard asked if another motion could  
211 be made. Mr. Viger replied the Board couldn't secure future money. Ms. Spencer also understood that  
212 they couldn't bind future boards. Mr. Lynde asked that the minutes reflect that the Board wanted the  
213 salary increments to be 45%, 35% and 20% over three years, with the 2018 budget being the first year.

214  
**MOTION:** (Spencer/Lynde) To reduce the Planning Department's bottom line figure by  
\$29,420.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

215  
216 With reservation, Mr. Leonard voted in favor of the motion.

217  
**MOTION:** To accept \$384,507 as the 2018 Planning Department operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

218  
219 Mr. Gowan introduced Mr. Gary Webster to the Board, who was filling the role of Health Inspector  
220 when Mr. Paul Zarnowski was unable to do so. He will also be hired as a consultant for the MS4  
221 project. Mr. Webster stated he had previously resided in Pelham for 32 years and enjoyed the Town.  
222 He explained that he had assisted Hudson during the process and believed his knowledge would be an  
223 asset during the process.

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225 -----  
226  
227 **Police Department - \$2,690,261**

228  
**MOTION:** To accept \$2,690,261 as the 2018 Police Department operating budget. *(See below  
for motion increasing the operating budget)*

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

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Police Chief Joseph Roark came forward to review his priority list items as discussed during a previous meeting. 1) Drug Treatment/Prevention Officer working out of Detective division, 2) Additional Patrol Officer (to allow for 24/7 – 3 car map coverage) in 2019, with attendance at academy during the fall of 2018, and 3) replace the existing trailer mounted traffic speed monitor.

Mr. Viger questioned if the traffic speed monitor could be purchased out of the current year's budget. Chief Roark said he would be happy to attempt purchasing in December. He stated when speaking about expenses, the most important thing was people. He said if purchasing the traffic monitor this year would make it easier to have the other two priority items pass, he would do what he could this year, or possibly wait another year.

Chief Roark spoke about the treatment/prevention officer and the priorities of the position. He said the person in the position would also be the lead in any drug investigations coming in. The department would like to increase their ability to focus on drug investigations and also assist those in crisis. He discussed the request for an additional patrol officer. They would like the candidate to attend academy in the fall 2018 so they would be ready to step into the position at the start of 2019. He noted that surrounding communities were making requests for additional officers in preparation for the upcoming developments in the local areas.

Ms. Spencer questioned if the treatment/prevention officer request would be a new position, or funding to move an existing officer into the new role. Chief Roark stated the request was to add an officer. There was a brief discussion regarding the salary and benefits cost for both the treatment/prevention officer and the additional patrol officer to clarify the costs.

Mr. Leonard inquired if the mounted traffic monitor could be shared with the Highway Department during road closures since it had the ability to have changeable messages. Chief Roark replied it would be available for road closures, traffic advisories, Old Home Day, etc. He noted that the message board was approximately 1/3 the size of a highway message board.

It was Mr. Viger's opinion to put the two new positions into the budget and hold off on the speed trailer, with the anticipation of finding the cost for it in this year's budget. Mr. Lynde asked if there was a consensus of the Board to add the two officer positions. Ms. Spencer agreed with Mr. Viger's approach.

**MOTION:** (Lynde/Spencer) To include the Drug Treatment/Prevention Officer and Patrol Officer in the Police budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

The Selectmen then increased the salary line and approved the following as the amended Police budget:

**MOTION:** To accept \$2,755,256 as the 2018 Police Department operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Retirement - \$1,674,851**

Mr. Lynde confirmed that the budget contained the updated rates. Mr. Ramgopaul answered yes.

**MOTION:** To accept \$1,674,851 as the 2018 Retirement operating budget.

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**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Selectmen - \$476,026**

Mr. Viger asked for a motion to increase the Selectmen stipend line to \$6,300; increasing members from \$900 to \$1,200 per year, and the Chairman from \$1,200 to \$1,500 per year. Mr. Lynde made the motion. Ms. Spencer wasn't comfortable voting to give themselves more money when they were being frugal and conservative with respect to others. She questioned why it would be a good time to increase the stipends. Mr. Viger replied there was never a good time to vote a raise for themselves. He stated he had been a Selectman for twelve years, and although it's never about the money, there were costs associated with the position that came out of his pocket. He believed there was some reimbursement that should be in order. Mr. Lynde noted when he was first elected in 1974, the stipend was \$600.

**MOTION:** (Viger/Lynde) To increase the Selectmen stipend salary by \$1,500.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.  
With reservation Ms. Spencer voted in favor of the motion.

**MOTION:** To accept \$477,526 as the 2018 Selectmen operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Senior Center - \$116,596**

Senior Center Director Sara Landry came forward.

Mr. Viger commented that the Selectmen had discussed the request to increase the bus driver's hours at a previous meeting. Additional information was provided to the Board.

Ms. Spencer didn't feel adding hours was the most efficient way to handle the situation. She'd be willing to hear a proposal for two part-time people, because from what she's reviewed, adding additional hours for a single driver wouldn't deal with the problem. She stated she would not support a full-time driver at this time.

Mr. Viger recalled when they interviewed for the current position they, in his opinion were lucky to find the current driver. He didn't think they would be able to find two part-time people. He agreed that the most economical way would be to have two part-time people, but didn't believe they'd be able to find them.

Mr. Leonard asked if there were any diminished services from the bus not going to places they had gone to in the past. Ms. Landry stated they had cut down the hours because of the benefits issue and modify the schedule.

Ms. Landry asked the Board to consider that the senior population was growing in Pelham. There were approximately 275 condo units for people aged 55+. With the changes in the Town's Ordinance, the housing will be for older seniors who require a lot more services. She didn't foresee the need for the bus getting smaller. Ms. Landry's concern for hiring two part-time employees was splitting the hours to work properly for the bus as well as for the senior center. She noted that the driver was utilized for more than just driving the bus; he helped with facility duties and maintenance. She added that she had



316 been trying to hire part-time drivers since 2015 and had only received one application. She stated there  
317 were a lot of places locally looking for part-time bus drivers, and guaranteeing 20-30 hours plus benefits  
318 and sign-on bonuses. Ms. Spencer didn't feel having a single driver with a single bus would solve the  
319 problem. She believed the center needed an additional bus and an additional driver who could go in  
320 different directions at different times of the day to serve the entire population. She would be amenable  
321 to purchasing another bus and hiring an additional part-time driver, rather than hiring a full-time driver  
322 with a single bus because it wouldn't solve the problem. Mr. Viger noted that the difficulty was that  
323 they couldn't make the loop to satisfy all the people within the hours that the driver had. He said they  
324 were able to service all the people; however, they had to fit to the center's schedule, rather than the  
325 center fitting into their schedule. Ms. Spencer said in looking prospectively down the road, rather than  
326 hiring a single bus driver and having one bus, if they purchased an additional bus, it would solve the  
327 other problem of having seniors on a bus for over an hour. Mr. Viger said even if they had an additional  
328 bus, they wouldn't be able to find anyone to drive it.

329  
330 Mr. McCarthy stated there was no easy answer to the situation. Having been involved with the hiring,  
331 he said finding someone to come in 10-11 hours per week would be difficult. He wanted the Board to  
332 consider if they cut the existing driver's hours, they might lose that great person. Ms. Spencer replied  
333 she wasn't suggesting to cut the driver's hours. She said if they keep the current driver at 20.5 hours  
334 and bring an additional person in for 20 hours and get a second bus, they could stagger the people in  
335 ways to get more services. Mr. McCarthy agreed that the ideal solution would be to have two busses,  
336 but the question would then be if they ask for funds to go into a capital reserve fund for the second bus.  
337 He believed everyone agreed there was a need to improve the quality of the service. To Ms. Landry's  
338 point, he said when they advertised the job no one applied. He understood Ms. Spencer's point and  
339 wanted to know how the Board wanted to proceed.

340  
341 Mr. Leonard questioned how much time the driver spent assisting the needs within the senior center.  
342 Ms. Landry replied it varied based on his available time, but believed realistically it was several hours  
343 per week. She spoke about how the passengers changed because of the frailty of the elders and new  
344 people seeking rides because they are giving up their license. Her biggest concern is hiring another  
345 part-time person and reiterated she's been actively trying for 2+ year to hire back up drivers. She  
346 explained the bus driver provided door-to-door, hands on service. The passengers need to have a  
347 comfort level with the person providing service; it could be very stressful for the seniors to have  
348 multiple people. Ms. Spencer understood the vulnerability of the population and discussed her personal  
349 experience caring for family members. She said if they spend the money, she wanted it to solve the  
350 problem. She didn't see that adding ten hours to a single person would solve some of the problems,  
351 but not the main problem of picking up all the people who need to be picked up in an efficient manner.

352  
353 Ms. Landry stated they needed at least the forty hour position because it extended the day so people  
354 could stay longer and participate in programs. She said when she looks at her overall budget she's  
355 extremely careful about costs being passed on to taxpayers. Her staff is not paid highly. When she  
356 looked at her budget the need was to have 10.5 hours added to the bus driver so the seniors could receive  
357 services. She stated the people they serviced were the neediest people in the Town.

358  
359 Mr. Lynde wanted to know the cost of the new bus. Mr. McCarthy replied the cost for the brand new  
360 bus was just under \$60,000. Mr. Lynde was concerned that they wouldn't be able to find a driver for a  
361 second bus; therefore he felt they should at this point extend the driver's hours. He knew the situation  
362 would become worse based on the proposed developments submitted to the Town.

363  
364 Mr. Leonard believed there should be a constructive plan of action set up over the next few years for  
365 the Senior Center. There was a brief discussion regarding the additional work the driver performs when  
366 not driving.

Mr. Viger made a motion to add the forty-hour salary position. Ms. Landry noted it would be an additional 10.5 hours. Mr. Lynde believed the salary figure would be \$33,280. Ms. Landry replied that figure would be for a full year. Mr. Ramgopaul stated that the figure for nine months (April-December) would be \$31,096. Mr. Viger made a motion to add a total of \$33,280 to the salary line item for the driver.

**MOTION:** (Viger/Lynde) To add \$33,280 to the salary line for the driver.

**VOTE:** (3-1-0) The motion carried. Ms. Spencer voted no.

Ms. Spencer voted no because she didn't feel it solved the existing problem and believed they should purchase a bus and look for either a part-time driver, or assistant.

Mr. Ramgopaul calculated the salary at the old rate from January through April, and the new rate (extended hours) from April through December. He said the total department request would be \$122,872.

**MOTION:** To accept \$122,872 as the 2018 Senior Center operating budget.

**VOTE:** (3-1-0) The motion carried. Ms. Spencer voted no (for the same reason stated above)

**Town Clerk - \$233,902**

**MOTION:** To accept \$233,902 as the 2018 Town Clerk operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Transfer Station - \$731,126**

Mr. Viger commented that there was a priority item listed to purchase a glass crusher; however, the Board previously decided to purchase it in the current budget.

**MOTION:** To accept \$731,126 as the 2018 Transfer Station operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Town Buildings - \$823,326**

**MOTION:** To accept \$823,326 as the 2018 Town Buildings operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Town Celebrations - \$9,260**

**MOTION:** To accept \$9,260 as the 2018 Town Celebrations operating budget.

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**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Treasurer - \$15,176**

**MOTION:** To accept \$15,176 as the 2018 Treasurer operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

**Trust Funds - \$70**

**MOTION:** To accept \$70 as the 2018 Trust Fund operating budget.

**VOTE:** (4-0-0) The motion carried.

Mr. McCarthy reported that the Arbor viral report had been received; no mosquitos have tested positive for EEE or West Nile Virus. He then reported that the intersection of Mammoth Road/Keyes Hill Road/Tallant Road had received the LED light with stop sign. He noted he received correspondence from neighbors voicing concerns about noise in connection with rumble strips, therefore, he asked the Department of Transportation to hold off installing them at this time.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:28pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Charity A. Landry  
Recording Secretary