

1 **APPROVED**

2
3 TOWN OF PELHAM
4 BUDGET COMMITTEE – MEETING MINUTES
5 Thursday, September 9, 2021
6

7 **CALL TO ORDER** – at approximately 7:11 pm
8

9 Amber Capone opened the meeting.
10

11 **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
12

13 A roll call for attendance was not called at the start of the meeting.
14

15 PRESENT: Bob Sherman
16 Meg Bressette (Vice Chair)
17 Philip Haberlen
18 Darlene Greenwood
19 Bob Haverty
20 Jason Croteau
21 Amber Capone (Chair)
22 Brian
23 Brian Demers
24 Eduardo Martony
25 Deb Padykula
26 Jennifer Castles
27

McCarthy

28 ABSENT: Kannan Sasi (Excused absence)
29 Jas Moorjani (Unexcused absence)
30 Paul Grant (Excused absence)
31 Megan Larson
32
33

34 **MINUTES REVIEW:**
35

36 **April 22, 2021:**

37 **MOTION:** (Sherman/) To put the meeting minutes on file the January 22, 2021.
38

39 Ms. Capone read off her edits to the minutes:
40 Line 13, should say Ms. Capone instead of Ms. Cronin.
41 Line 38, the second should be Haberlen.
42 Line 86, the second should be Mr. Croteau.
43
44

45 **MOTION:** (Haverty/Sherman) To approve the April 22, 2021 meeting minutes as amended.
46

47 **ROLL CALL VOTE:** Bob Sherman – yes
48 Philip Haberlen – yes
49 Darlene Greenwood – abstain
50 Bob Haverty – yes
51 Jason Croteau – yes

Meg Bressette - yes
Amber Capone - yes
Eduarto Martony - abstain

(6-0-2) The motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Capone welcomed Darlene Greenwood. She will be filling in for Meg Larson for the next few weeks as the School Committee representative.

Reminder: Town walk is Saturday 9.11.2021 starting at 9 AM, which will include breakfast.

OLD BUSINESS:

Regarding the meeting on 4/22/21, Ms. Capone will be reviewing the By-laws and sending them over to Meg for her input and review. This will be on-going business. This year they will be updated for best practices. Any changes will be reviewed by the Committee and will be voted on by the Committee. Mr. Sherman mentioned the Planning Board elects a secretary in the event the chair and the vice chair cannot meet. He thinks that this committee could have a secretary also for a back-up. Mr. Haverty said that there is a recording secretary, but also can have a secretary that can take the place of a chair or a vice chair.

NEW BUSINESS:

Welcome Deb Padykula as the new Finance Director.

Brian McCarthy agreed with the current list 'as is' regarding elections.

Linda Newcomb (Deputy Town Clerk Tax Collector)

Election Budget-

Salaries: Supervisors of checklist are same. Moderator is same at \$800.00. The assistant moderator is the same at \$600.00. Ballet clerks increase of \$3,840.00 because there are three elections next year. The same with overtime, this has gone up due to the three elections.

Ms. Capone clarified the number of individuals that work at each election. It's broken out to one at fifty hours and they are allocating for each election.

Supplies: Postage is increasing because of the three elections and absentee ballots are also increasing.

Miscellaneous postage is going up \$20.00 because postage has increased.

Office supplies: Increase for a cartridge for the printer because they'll be doing more printing.

Ballots and coding: Has gone up \$500.00 for coverage depending on if they are printed on one side vs. two sides. There has been an increase in absentee ballots, so this increase will cover more of the ballots. General coding is \$3,000.00 because there is a general election next year. State primary coding, which is an increase of \$1,800.00.

Mr. Sherman asked if it is a Presidential primary next year. Ms. Newcomb said this was for last year.

Ms. Newcomb said postage was .51 when the budget was done, and it just went up to .53 two weeks ago.

This is metered mail pricing.

Expenses: Voting booths \$1.00 as placeholder. New line item is election worker meals, \$1,000.00 for the three elections. This used to come out of Brian McCarthy's budget, but it should be a separate line item going forward. Acu-vote annual maintenance increased by \$50.00, due to their maintenance.

103
104 **Town Clerk and Tax Collector Budget-**

105 Salaries: All contractual.

106 Wish List: Part time clerk for 24 hours per week, due to the increase of traffic coming into the office. There
107 is an increase in new residents, more vehicles and three elections next year. E-registrations are increasing,
108 increase in vital statistics, such as marriage licenses and 'certifieds' for births and deaths. The Board of
109 Selectmen have already endorsed this to add to their budget. Mr. McCarthy mentioned that surrounding
110 towns are sending people over to Pelham, so this is adding to our workload. Mr. Sherman asked about the
111 transfer station checking for permits. Mr. McCarthy said that they did a permit check one day. Mr. Sherman
112 asked if people could get a transfer station permit when they are registering their vehicles at the town hall.
113 Mr. McCarthy said it's a procedural issue with transferring this information back and forth. Mr. Haverty
114 said the Board of Selectmen will consider this.

115 Supplies: Postage increase for tax bills. Impending tax liens increase. Dog license reminders are postage
116 only. Weekly and monthly reports have stayed the same. Return check is an increase in postage.

117 Ms. Capone asked how they were initially calculated and do they need to be recalculated. Asked if we need
118 a motion. Mr. McCarthy said we can make a recommendation and then when we go to review, we can
119 make changes then. It will get updated though. Dog tags have been increased by 100 tags for an increase
120 of \$368.00. All others are staying the same. Mr. Sherman asked what the revenue is from dog licensing.
121 Ms. Newcomb will get back to him on that.

122 Telephone: is the same at \$90.00. Postage meter rentals same at \$660.00

123 Expenses: Mortgage lien searches are increasing by \$625.00 because the cost of the searches has gone up.

124
125 **Assessor - (Susan Snide, Assessing Assistant)**

126 Supplies: postcards, labels, copier paper that is shared with town clerk and laser printer cartridges.

127 Telephone – same. Postage meter – same. Document software and cloud maintenance remain at \$3,600.00
128 (\$300.00 a month for cloud maintenance).

129 Expenses: Postage gone up to .53. They use metered mail as well.

130 Decrease in tax maps. Vision maintenance is going down. Web host decreased, but cloud backup increased
131 an extra \$288.00. Consultant fees will increase for 2022 and this is contractual. Cyclical reevaluation
132 under 690 specials is contractual and will increase slightly.

133
134 Ms. Capone read the amounts:

135 Elections: 2022 Board of Selectmen approved \$31,147.00, an increase of about 91% (\$14,864.00)

136 Tax Collector: 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$305,449.00, an increase of about 11% (\$31,008.00)

137 Assessor: 2022 Board of Selectmen approved amount is \$225,563.00, a decrease of approximately 1%,
138 (\$3,159.00)

139 Budget Committee 2022 Board of Selectmen approved \$2.00 with no increase from last year. This has two
140 place holders, one for salary and one for supplies.

141
142 **Paul Gagnon - Chairman of Conservation Commission**

143 Conservation Committee 2022 BOS approved amount is \$5,989.00 with no increase from last year.

144 Their budget is very small, and they are not asking for anything more. It's broken into three categories:
145 Salaries \$3,100.00. They almost never spend it as Karen McKay is both the recording secretary and the
146 secretary of the conservation commission and she doesn't ever charge. (She donates her time). Supplies
147 are \$200.00 and they don't usually spend that, except for printing maps.

148 Expenses are \$2,700.00 and are broken into two categories, dues for NH Association of Conservation
149 Commission are \$700.00 and \$2,000.00 for a prime wetlands study. They did have this on for last year,
150 but they weren't able to notify enough people, so they must re-notify all abutters. It's \$5.00 or \$6.00 for a
151 certified letter and they will need to send out hundreds of them. It is not an increase from last year though.

152 Ms. Bressette asked what the letters to the abutters are for. Mr. Gagnon said the letters tell them that they
153 are having warrant articles declaring certain wetlands and these folks either own part of this land or are

within 200 feet of the prime wetlands. This needs to be done before the election and be shown on the maps of where the wetlands are. Mr. Gagnon is still working with DES to know who and how many people need to be notified. Mr. Sherman asked if he knew how many people this impacts. Mr. Gagnon said there are 11 prime wetlands in the town and many people's property will be affected by this. Many of these boundaries were determined back in the 1980's and they now believe they weren't accurately described as there was no GPS back then. So new boundaries have been created with updated tools and now can be enforced. Ms. Bressette asked if they were looking for another bond. Mr. Gagnon stated the current use balance is \$1,044,000.00. If you add what's left of the bond from 2004 there is \$315,000 left from that bond. They still have a 2018 bond which is 1.5 million dollars. If you add it all up, they have 2.86 million dollars. Four properties are currently under Purchase and Sales and have gone through the Board of Selectmen and had public hearings. They have a 40 acre parcel off of Blueberry Circle for \$225,000.00. The Steck property on Jeremy Hill is 240 acres for \$1.7 million. 85 acres owned by the Zolkos family at Bush Hill and Mammoth Road is another \$655,000.00 and a small parcel for \$80,000 on Dutton Road. All are under Purchase and Sales and should close between now and March. That's a total of \$2.7 million and they will be left with about \$184,000.00. That's why they will want an additional bond. They are only purchasing the development rights and nothing else. Mr. Sherman asked if they could at some point purchase the agricultural rights. Mr. Gagnon said it's possible at some point, but it's up to the families that are selling. These bonds are only when needed and don't cost taxpayers anything. Most of what they've bought has been purchased with current use money. Ms. Capone asked how much land is currently in conservation. Mr. Gagnon said there is 2,400 acres of town owned conservation land. These new purchases will add about 400 more so will have a total of about 2,800 acres of town owned and/or protected land. There is also about 400 acres of privately owned protected land by owners. Total is about 3,200 acres. We are at about 16% - 17% and back in 2003 we set a goal to protect about 25%. That's why they are requesting an additional bond. The question was asked what the bond rate is, and no one was sure exactly.

Brian Johnson, Parks and Recreation Director

Parks and Recreation, 2022 Board of Selectmen approved budget is \$275,840.00, an increase of \$10,164.00 or 3.8%.

Salaries: Director has a contractual increase between the Director and program director. Program director has a contractual increase.

Administrative office help has a decrease there for a difference in salary, due to a different person in the role. Regarding lifeguards, they are asking to bring them from \$12.00 to \$15.00 and waterfront director to \$17.00 an hour. Which is a total increase of \$5,760.00. Total increase in salaries of \$9,164.00. They really need this increase to try and get people to work there. The plan was to bring them up incrementally. They usually have staff turnover every three to four years with kids leaving to go to college. Ms. Capone wanted to point out that Pelham is a border town close to Massachusetts and they have a higher minimum wage, we really need to try and keep up with them to keep our employees.

Supplies \$3,793.00, level funded with no increase and is just basic office supplies.

Telephone is level funded and is \$4,841.00.

Gas and oil for truck and yard equipment \$833.00 and is level funded.

Repairs and projects \$4,000.00 with no increase and is level funded.

Mr. Sherman asked how old the truck is and how many miles are on it. Mr. Johnson said about 90,000 miles and it's a 2007. He said the truck is in good condition and rarely leaves Pelham.

Rentals: road repairs, portable toilets are \$6,665.00 and are level funded with no increase.

Expenses: Asking for an additional \$1,000.00 for the skate park maintenance, which is an increase of \$1,000.00 to bring to \$2,000.00. Looking for additional funds to manage the park to keep it in good condition.

Ms. Capone asked if they've had a professional come in to look at our skate park. Mr. Johnson said every year the insurance company comes to inspect it as well as all of the playgrounds. They've had no issues and were commended on their upkeep of it. John Jepson (a local contractor) comes out every spring and

goes through the whole park for a very minimal amount. Mr. Sherman mentioned the Muldoon playground and asked if it's going to be updated. Mr. Johnson said they are planning on upgrading it and installing a shade structure, updating the swings, and upgrading the equipment. This will happen in the future, maybe a little every year. Mr. McCarthy said between him and Mr. Johnson, they will work out the details. Mr. Croteau asked about gas and oil and if he's comfortable at \$2.35 a gallon with an estimated 350 gallons of fuel. Mr. McCarthy said he will get the AAA gas report in January and get the cost for the coming year and adjust the cost of fuel in January. That number will definitely change for next year and during reconsideration in January and he will have an updated number for recommendation. Ms. Capone asked what amounts have been spent on maintenance for the last five years for the skate park. She wants to make sure enough is being allocated. Mr. Johnson said yes that he will get that info.

Mr.	McCarthy	-	Highway	Department
2022 Board of Selectmen approved \$1,844,946.00, an increase of \$30,252.00 and 1.6%				
Salaries: are all contractual obligations. A new employee started so there's a slight decrease, same with emergency overtime. Part time laborers were level funded.				
Supplies: level funded, and confident same numbers as last year should be fine again for this year.				
Telephone: level funded.				
Gas and oil: this number will be adjusted in January as needed.				
Repairs and projects: level funded.				
Rentals: contractual increases; such as the sweeper went up, the paint truck safety lines went up and the loader went up.				
Expenses: level funded.				
Specials: level funded.				
Mr. Sherman asked what the end result is for plowing private roads. Mr. McCarthy said they have stopped doing that. Mr. Sherman asked for an update on Sherburne and Mammoth and Rt. 38 and Old Gage Hill Road regarding a signal. Mr. McCarthy said we are in the que for Sherburne and Mammoth and Marsh Road. They still need engineering and design, but that it is ongoing and there is money allocated. The town might receive a 1.2-million-dollar federal grant that Congressman Custer is working on. He is waiting for an update from him. A 'MAC' grant was something we applied for, and it got approved and now we will not have to pay anything for it if we get this grant. Regarding Bridge and Old Gage, this project has begun. It is a control warning system for traffic coming out of Ledge and will activate a light indicator on Bridge Street near Beacon Hill. This was also a grant we were qualified for, so we did not have to pay anything. However, the state is doing these projects bit by bit (they are working on three projects at one time). This is all run by the State and should be completed by the fall. Mr. Sherman asked about redoing the Main Street bridge. Mr. McCarthy said Abbott bridge is currently in the que, it's in the design phase. A proposal has been submitted to the state and he said they won't touch the stone bridge and that they will install a pipe before the bridge so there will be no backup and flooding will be reduced. They are currently working with easements with the property owners and once that's taken care of it should be done 2023. The Main Street bridge is scheduled for 2024. They will have to meet with the state to see what kind of bridge they want to put there, but they need to be careful because they all connect to each other. The Abbott bridge is in the design phase and is slated for 2023. They also are using an environmental specialist, Dena Hoffman, who works in the planning department evaluating this. This year we have had about 15-16 inches of rain and other bodies of water releasing water at the same times, so this created a semi flood scenario in our town with our bridges. Going forward, we need to better communicate this with surrounding communities regarding release of water. Ms. Bressette asked if we had a new loader. Mr. McCarthy said it's the same one. Ms. Bressette asked about the increase of \$13,000.00 from last year. Mr. McCarthy noted the decrease of \$4,584.00 was the highway department office trailer is now off the books because the building is up. They are still renting the transfer trailer but are trying to work out a purchase arrangement for this. They have a lot of computer infrastructure that needs to stay dry, and it is also used as a cover for the employees to eat lunch. Ms. Capone asked if it's normal for an item like the loader to go up that much. Mr. McCarthy said yes that everything is going up due to COVID. Everything in construction has gone up at least 40%				

and yes, we lease it. Ms. Bresette asked about the historical under highway maintenance and why is there is a remainder. Mr. McCarthy needs to look into that more. He stated this is talked about every year and that they can only project what is going to happen. If there's a surplus it goes back into the general fund, and they can use this to offset taxes, so it's good to keep it there. They try to be conservative in their forecast, but never really know. Mr. Sherman asked when the wish list will be tackled. Mr. McCarthy said about the 10-wheel dump truck is on the CIP and trying to take care of it this year, and we will know better in a few months. The goal is to get a trailer this year. We were recently awarded a \$5,000.00 grant for a can separator at the station. There may be a possibility they do not even need a trailer. The cost of the can separator is \$27,000.00, we got a \$5,000.00 grant and we had budgeted \$20,000.00 for a glass crusher. The glass crusher went up to about \$100,000.00 and decided that was not reasonable so they are not pursuing it. The can separator was approved, and this will improve single stream.

Mr. McCarthy - Transfer station

2022 Board of Selectmen approved budget is \$979,437.00, an increase of \$57,387.00 (approximately 6.2%).

Salaries: all contractual obligations.

Supplies: level funded budget.

Telephone: decreased as our contract with Windstream is gone.

Gas and oil: will be revisited in January.

Repairs and projects: level funded.

Rentals: office trailer and equipment, misc. tools, glass crusher (which will change to a can separator) but this is all level funded.

Expenses: increase for 5th year on trash disposal and hauling and brush removal there's a decrease because now we are going to start burning brush, saving \$15,000.00. A bigger area was created and has worked out. Membership has increased also. Mr. Sherman asked about cardboard with an increase from Amazon and asked if someone could pick it up. Mr. McCarthy said the highway department and transfer station are currently without a director, so supervisors are running the facilities. They are looking at new programs for separating and taking this time to reexamine what they are doing now. Looking at ways to increase efficiency and streamlining. They are also looking at the staff to see what might work and how to increase productivity and efficiency. They had a company come in and evaluate the transfer station about six months ago and received favorable ratings for their operations. They gave some recommendations, and they are going to try and implement them. The contract is up November 2022 so this will come up again next year. Bottom line is they are expecting a lot more trash in the future, so a plan is needed to figure out what to do (whether it a truck/trailer and hauling it out and looking at the building itself as to what to do with it). Mr. Sherman asked about the skid steer and its condition. Mr. McCarthy said it is old and they are looking to replace it with a piece of highway equipment and bring it down to transfer. They are trying to take things by urgency and try to repurpose equipment. Ms. Bresette asked how many miles of town road we have now. Mr. McCarthy said it is 118 but will let us know for sure. Mr. Haberlen asked if (Line 192) volume doubled because of the actual amount of trash and Mr. McCarthy said that yes, it is. Mr. McCarthy advised that if we stay with the trash removal company like now it is going to be outrageous. He also gave us a history of our contract with Republic (which we are currently in a 5-year agreement). The first three years were level funded and years four and five are increasers. This is a firm, fixed price based on an estimated amount of trash being moved. More people than ever are using the transfer station, so they are seeing a large increase. Mr. McCarthy mentioned they are looking at different color transfer station stickers for each year. They are going to continue to monitor the transfer station and continue to do sticker checks.

Ms. Capone talked about scheduling of the meetings. One falls on Nov. 11, 2021, and this is Veteran's Day, so we will not meet. She proposed to move the school vote on 11/4 after the review. We will review warrant articles on 11/18 before we vote on the warrant articles. Warrant articles will still be due on the 4th, they would just review and vote the same night, which historically has been done. Ms. Greenwood asked if she would have to notify the school of the changed date or will Ms. Capone send something. Ms.

Capone will send them something and said Deb pointed that out already and will ask their board on how to proceed. Mr. McCarthy stated that Ms. Newcomb gave him the dog revenue and it is as of 1.1.21 through 9.8.21 town dog revenue is \$10,284.00 and civil forfeiture revenue \$5,199.00.

Mr. Sherman addressed concern that the night they will review we will also be voting as far as the school budgets go. Ms. Capone said they will go through each school then have a separate night. So, he said they can send an email any proposed changes. Ms. Capone said that is correct and will see all the changes before the vote. She said that usually there are not many changes on warrant articles. She does not want to push it out another week, as the next week is Thanksgiving. Ms. Capone will send out an updated schedule to everybody by the end of the weekend that reflects those changes. She will let Deb and Chip know as well.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (Haverty/Croteau) To adjourn the meeting.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Bob Sherman – yes
Philip Haberlen – yes
Darlene Greenwood – yes
Bob Haverty – yes
Jason Croteau – yes
Meg Bressette - yes
Amber Capone - yes
Eduarto Martony - yes

(8-0-0) The motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Castles
Recording Secretary