

APPROVED

TOWN OF PELHAM
BUDGET COMMITTEE – MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, October 7, 2021

CALL TO ORDER – Amber Capone opened the meeting at approximately 7:00 pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PRESENT: Amber Capone (Chair)
Meg Bressette (Vice Chair)
Philip Haberlen
Thomas Gellar
Bob Sherman
Brian Demers
Brian McCarthy
Eduardo Martony
Bob Haverty
Jason Croteau
Deb Padykula
Jennifer Castles

ABSENT: Kannan Sasi
Paul Grant

MINUTES REVIEW:

MOTION: (Mr. Sherman/Mr. Martony) To place the September 30, 2021, meeting minutes on file.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Bob Sherman – yes
Meg Bressette – yes
Edwardo Martony - yes
Philip Haberlen – yes
Bob Haverty – yes
Jason Croteau - abstain
Thomas Gellar - abstain
Amber Capone - yes

(6-0-2) The motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

Ms. Capone said she and Ms. Bressette are continuing their review of the by-laws and are working to have them updated to reflect current processes and procedures.

NEW BUSINESS:

REVIEW OF TOWN BUDGET

CIP BUDGET

2022 Municipal total is \$3,478,301.00. The school total is \$4,754,995.00 for a total of \$8,223,296.00. There have been some changes since this was last discussed, including the removal of the Muldoon Park renovations. Mr. McCarthy said it was never in the CIP or shouldn't have been. Mr. Martony said it was in the last CIP. Mr. McCarthy said he's not part of the formation of the CIP. Ms. Beauregard had emailed Ms. Capone to remove the Muldoon Park from the CIP. Ms. Capone asked if this will be moved to later in the year. Ms. Beauregard said at this point it is going to be removed entirely. Ms. Capone asked if there were going to be more changes to the radio infrastructure. Ms. Beauregard said there are going to be changes but she does not have an update yet, but hopes to by the 13th. She is waiting for the final numbers from the quote and hopes to have them by next week's meeting and is hopeful the numbers will go down. Mr. Sherman said the CIP got a request for the \$70,000.00 for the Parks and Recreation. Their detailed budget didn't have this in the budget that was submitted to the Selectmen. There was only one item in there that was a wish list for \$1000.00 for a raise in salaries. Therefore the \$70,000.00 was not in the budget. Mr. Haverty said it's been removed from the CIP. Mr. Sherman said it wasn't formally removed, but it passed the planning board. Ms. Capone said as of right now, it is null and void. Mr. Sherman said we are voting on a budget that was from the Selectmen and it was not in the budget from the Parks and Recreation, the \$78,000.00. Mr. Haverty said it can be in the CIP but not in the budget, he also said the Selectmen can take things out and they haven't acted on this. Mr. Sherman said that we have the final say on what is in or not. Mr. Sherman asked about the police department and the animal shelter renovations. Ms. Beauregard said the only thing in question is the radio infrastructure and everything else on there should be accurate. Mr. McCarthy said there is no renovation to the animal shelter in the budget. Ms. Capone said it is on the CIP schedule and asked for an updated CIP schedule. Ms. Capone asked if these things are getting moved to another year or should this group reconcile this against the budget and see what is actually going through or not. Mr. McCarthy said he would not suggest reconciling it against the budget and they are working to get numbers for that project. Chief Roark said he has no intentions of doing three projects at once, so those numbers for the shelter and renovations are placeholders. Mr. Sherman asked about their request for a new police officer. Chief Roark said they requested two officers. Ms. Capone said there is funding in there for two officers. Ms. Beauregard said she would talk with Mr. Thomas and those projects had a 2022 date on them and they will talk and re-prioritize those items. Ms. Capone asked her if she can review the rest of the line items to make sure they are on the right schedule. Mr. Haverty said in regard to the CIP, the Selectmen can decide when they choose to do projects and it may not appear on the budget, but it will stay on the CIP and the year may not be as relevant. Mr. McCarthy talked about the animal shelter and if it goes on, it would be in our town building's project budget and not in the police's budget. Mr. Haverty said the CIP is an advisory document to the Selectmen that gives them a roadmap of large projects and the CIP group schedules them over a period of time to flatten the tax rate. The Board will take the recommendations from the CIP to keep the tax rates flat but are not required to do so. Ms. Capone said we use this as a tool to make decisions and she wants it to accurately reflect the budget. She asked if they can move them to next year and doesn't know if they are looking at this board to make the decisions to give them the money or not. Chief Roark said that both the police and fire came forward with radio projects. This was all within the past six to nine months, due to their equipment coming to the end of its life. Chief Roark and Chief Midgely met with Mr. McCarthy and the radio company this week to combine the projects to hopefully lower the integration and engineering costs. They want further explanation on those costs, and he believes those costs will shrink and believes it will be a warrant article going forward. Mr. McCarthy said the Board of Selectmen would decide if it will be a warrant article or a budget item. Mr. Haverty said it could be either and if it goes into budget, it will come back for reconsideration. If it goes in as a warrant, they will review it. Mr. McCarthy said they wouldn't have a project like this brought to this committee for this board to decide if it goes into the budget or not and the board would have already researched that out. Mr. Sherman

asked if this will be a bond. Mr. McCarthy doesn't know what the cost will be, and a bond would be unlikely. Mr. Haverty said it would be sub a million. Chief Roark said it would probably not be a municipal bond and that it might be put into a finance situation or a lease program. So not a bond, more of a lease program to lower the cash spike each year and spread it over a period of time. Mr. McCarthy said they did that before with the renovations to the communications center and they leased it for five years. Mr. Sherman reminded us that if it gets voted down, he wants to make sure they have enough money in this case. Mr. McCarthy said if it's voted no, then they can't spend the money. Ms. Capone said it hasn't even been decided yet. Mr. Midgely said that there will not be two numbers, there will only be one. It will encompass all of the public safety communications for the dispatch center and the infrastructure. He would caution the board to put this in as a warrant article because if it fails, and the police lose parts of their system then new parts cannot be purchased. They can't replace the infrastructure components. This number will decrease, as there was a lot of overlap. He believes it will be less than one million dollars after having many conversations. There is engineering that has to go into this project, as there is changeout from tone-controlled system to an IP based system that has to ingrate with their microwave system. Ms. Capone asked if the 13th is the date that we will have a number. Chief Midgely said that's the date they are meeting. He said there will most likely not be a number then, but probably by the following week. He feels this is the reality and Ms. Capone asked if this will be an item that gets adjusted at reconsideration and Chief Midgely agreed. Mr. Sherman asked Mr. McCarthy about the three and a half yard, four-wheel loader in the CIP and the \$66,000.00 GVW 10-wheeler dump truck that's listed and the transfer trailer with the live floor. Mr. McCarthy said that two of those will get moved. If there is a surplus, then he will pay for the trailer this year. Ms. Bressette asked Mr. McCarthy about the future meeting rooms in the space across from the Planning Department and Parks and Recreation. She asked to get this on the CIP so they can look at it. Mr. McCarthy said that for right now they have to move the Planning Department into that area during the renovations, so that won't be for a while, but he will work on that. Mr. Croteau asked if there will be a big renovation after the Planning Department moves out into their new space. Mr. McCarthy said they are going to knock a hole through the wall and utilize the two classrooms for the time being with Planning in there. He's already had someone assess that area and the cement walls are not load bearing. The heat and air conditioning will be resolved with the COVID funding project. It will be taking walls down, redoing floor and adding permanent desks. Ms. Bressette asked if the \$1,325,000.00 for the COVID funds are all federal funds and Mr. McCarthy said yes and that we've received half of the money so far. He's already gave them a notice to proceed with this project. Ms. Beauregard added that the CIP committee meets before the budget committee reviews it, so there can be submissions before that happens, therefore it's an advisory document. She spoke to NRPC, Cassie Mullen, who assists with preparing the report and she recommends not constantly changing it. She said they should edit it the following year, either move it or take it out, but not amend it as you go. Ms. Capone said that then 2022 won't be on the schedule next year. Ms. Capone asked if they can highlight those in different colors. Ms. Beauregard agreed to do that.

ASSESSOR

The 2022 default budget is \$232,755.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$225,563.00, a decrease of \$3,159.00, approximately 1.45%. With the postage change, it brings the budget to \$225,413.00.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

The 2022 default budget is \$2.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$2.00. This is a level funded account.

CABLE DEPARTMENT

The 2022 default budget is \$153,731.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$153,731.00, an increase of \$3,128.00, approximately 2.08%.

CEMETERY

The 2022 default budget is \$166,343.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$172,983.00, an increase of \$11,017.00, approximately 6.8%.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

The 2022 default budget is \$5,989.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$5,898.00. This is a level funded account.

DEBT SERVICES INTEREST

The 2022 default budget is \$46,767.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$46,767.00, a decrease of \$24,215.00, approximately 34.11%.

DEBT SERVICES PRINCIPAL

The 2022 default budget is \$640,095.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$640,095.00, an increase of \$99,453.00, approximately 18.4%.

ELECTIONS

The 2022 default budget is \$25,047.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$31,147.00, an increase of \$14,864.00, approximately 91.53%.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The 2022 default budget is \$9,041.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$9,041.00, an increase of \$128.00, approximately 1.44%.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The 2022 default budget is \$2,801,937.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$2,875,451.00, an increase of \$229,141.00, approximately 8.66%.

HEALTH OFFICER

The 2022 default budget is \$45,916.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$87,956.00, an increase of \$42,040.00, approximately 91.56%.

HEALTH SERVICES

The 2022 default budget is \$73,700.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$73,700.00. This is a level funded account.

HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

The 2022 default budget is \$1,836,090.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$1,844,946.00, an increase of \$30,252.00, approximately 1.67%. Mr. Sherman stated that the fuel figures throughout this budget will be brought up again at reconsideration.

HUMAN SERVICES

The 2022 default budget is \$73,820.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$73,820.00. This is a level funded account.

INSURANCE

The 2022 default budget is \$2,637,814.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$2,683,974.00, a, increase of \$46,159.00, approximately 1.75%. Mr. McCarthy wanted to remind the committee that this is a placeholder.

LEGAL

The 2022 default budget is \$96,000.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$106,000.00, an increase of \$10,000.00, approximately 10.42%. Mr. Sherman is concerned about adding the wish list item of \$10,000.00, therefore he thought this should be reconsidered. Ms. Capone said they will take that into advisement and revisit this item.

LIBRARY

The 2022 default budget is \$566,795.00. The Library Trustee approved amount is \$564,051.00, an increase of \$17,051.00, approximately 3.12%. Mr. Sherman said the figure from the Library for the CIP was \$72,669.00. That should be the number in their budget as opposed to the \$50,000.00. Ms. Capone asked if he was talking about the noise abatement. He agreed and said that figure should read \$72,669.00 in order to do this project. The library director, Jennifer introduced Ms. Rose Karis, as the previous trustee president who had helped write this. She said the \$52,000.00 was listed in the budget and the CIP shows \$72,000.00, what is the ultimate amount needed for the noise abatement and do they expect that to change. Mr. Karis said the original \$52,000.00 was approved last year. The increase is due to the building costs and materials going up. They were advised to add a 15% increase to complete the project. This should be given to them in the third year, the RFPs can be written, and the work can begin in early 2022. The \$72,000.00 is with the 15% increase. She's asking to replace that number with the \$72,000.00. Mr. Karis said if they don't spend it, it will be put back, as this is the third and last year of this project. Ms. Bressette asked who advised the 15% increase. Ms. Karis said the CIP advised the increase. A year or two ago, the number was at \$48,542.82 and this was where the 15% number came from. However, the members did the math and realized that the 15% is based on the \$160,000.00 of the total project. Ms. Capone asked if we would base the 15% on the whole amount or just the amount outstanding. Jennifer said the work hasn't begun at this time and they needed more money to hire someone. Jennifer said they've started work on enclosing windows, started a sound panel going up the stairwell and this last money, the larger chunk, will be for filling in the ceiling area for the reading room and the teen area above it. Ms. Capone asked for year one and two, have they've saved that money. Jennifer said year one has been spent and they have not touched this year's money yet. Ms. Bressette asked if there's been an influx of teens coming into the library. Jennifer said they've seen an increase to about 25-35, from about 20, after school now and more are coming to their programs. They are seeing numbers that are going back to normal.

PARKS AND RECREATION

The 2022 default budget is \$269,189.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$275,840.00, an increase of \$164,000.00, approximately 3.83%. Mr. Sherman asked about the \$1000.00 for maintenance to the skate park. Mr. McCarthy said this was added to the budget (Line 238). Ms. Bressette asked why nothing is happening with Muldoon Park now. Mr. Johnson said that he met with a Staci DiRocco and had a long conversation about inclusive playgrounds, and he realized that what he proposed to the CIP was not inclusive. Ms. DiRocco talked about fundraising and Mr. Johnson said there was some money set aside, but now needs to look into the renovations more to ensure the equipment and playground will be more inclusive. Mr. Sherman said in the submission there was an addition of a shade structure. Mr. Johnson said they are still going to add this during renovation. They may try to piecemeal the renovations and do some each year. They may try to raise money and look into corporate sponsorships, Ms. DiRocco has some contacts for this.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

The 2022 default budget is \$591,067.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$640,282.00, an increase of \$104,641.00, approximately 19.54%.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The 2022 default budget is \$3,505,409.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$3,616,398, an increase of \$182,862.00, approximately 5.33%. Ms. Bressette asked if this was to fund one or two new

officers. She said it may be prudent to just have one new officer, due to the radio infrastructure being added. Ms. Capone said they should see what the final numbers are for the radio infrastructures before we make this decision.

RETIREMENT

The 2022 default budget is \$2,440,514.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$2,438,082, an increase of \$344,750.00, approximately 16.59%. Ms. Capone asked if this was a placeholder and Mr. McCarthy said no, this is a good number.

SELECTMEN

The 2022 default budget is \$627,275.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$598,742.00, an increase of \$68,418.00, approximately 18.90%. The number discussed for budget committee consideration was \$630,532.00. This was for the correction on the assistant.

SENIOR CENTER

The 2022 default budget is \$170,148.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$171,950.00, an increase of \$10,785.00, approximately 6.69%.

TECHNOLOGY

The 2022 default budget is \$193,222.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$297,796.00, an increase of \$126,428.00, approximately 73.78%.

TOWN BUILDINGS

The 2022 default budget is \$640,864.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$994,121.00, an increase of \$368,784.00, approximately 58.97%. Mr. Croteau asked if there was a final number on the highway building yet. Mr. McCarthy said that will come up at the next few Selectmen meetings and said they are below budget by about \$100,000.00. Original budget was \$1,153,614.20 and they came in about \$110,000.00 below budget. That also included installing a generator, but because they got lower estimates, they were able to add some items to the project.

TOWN CELEBRATIONS

The 2022 default budget is \$9,260.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$9,260.00. This is a level funded account.

TOWN CLERK/TAX COLLECTOR

The 2022 default budget is \$286,848.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$305,449.00, an increase of \$31,008.00, approximately 11.53%. The budget committee presented number for approval is \$306,089.00 and this was a result of the postage.

TRANSFER STATION

The 2022 default budget is \$977,629.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$979,437, an increase of \$57,387.00, approximately 6.22%.

TREASURER

The 2022 default budget is \$15,249.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$15,249.00. This is a level funded account.

TRUST FUND

The 2022 default budget is \$150.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved is \$335.00, an increase of \$185.00, approximately 123.33%.

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING/Thursday, October 7, 2021

The overall total default Pelham budget is \$19,138,667.00. The 2022 Board of Selectmen approved budget is \$19,938,158.00. The total amount for consideration in front of the budget committee is \$19,972,910.00. Next week's meeting will be voting on the budgets with respect to any changes that need to be sent to Ms. Capone so she can notify the board of any changes that are planned. Ms. Capone reminded the group that there is the school walk coming up on October 16, 2021. She will confirm the meeting place, and this starts at 9AM. If someone can't attend, they need to let Ms. Capone know, as this is considered a regular meeting. Mr. Sherman reminded the group that there is a vacancy on this board. Mr. Haverty said that the position is already posted on the website and applications are being accepted.

MOTION: (Mr. Sherman/Mr. Haverty) To adjourn the meeting.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Thomas Gellar - yes
Edwardo Martony - yes
Bob Sherman - yes
Meg Bressette - yes
Philip Haberlen - yes
Jason Croteau - yes
Bob Haverty - yes
Amber Capone - yes

(8-0-0) The motion passes.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Castles
Recording Secretary