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**APPROVED**  
TOWN OF PELHAM  
BUDGET COMMITTEE - MEETING MINUTES  
Monday, April 21, 2014  
APPROVED – September 15, 2014

**CALL TO ORDER** – at approximately 7:30pm

PRESENT: Mr. Dan Guimond, Mr. David Cate, Mr. Bob Sherman, Mr. Dave Cronin,  
Ms. Daryle Hillsgrove, Mr. Leo Rush, Selectmen Representative Doug Viger

ABSENT: School Board Representative Megan Larson (excused), Mr. Greg Smith, Mr. Ken  
Dunne, Mr. Everett Gibbons

**MEETING MINUTES**

**January 13, 2014**

**MOTION:** (Sherman/Cronin) To approve the January 13, 2014 meeting minutes as amended.

**VOTE:** (7-0-0) The motion carried.

**February 7, 2014**

**MOTION:** (Cate/Cronin) To approve the February 7, 2014 meeting minutes as written.

**VOTE:** (7-0-0) The motion carried.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Mr. Guimond stepped down as Chairman for the following action. Vice Chairman Cate lead the Election of Officers. The floor was open for nominations.

Mr. Sherman nominated Mr. Guimond for Chairman. Mr. Cronin seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations made. The floor was closed to nominations.

**MOTION:** (Sherman/Cronin) To elect Mr. Dan Guimond as Chairman.

**VOTE:** (7-0-0) The motion carried.

Ms. Hillsgrove nominated Mr. Cate for Vice Chairman. Mr. Cronin seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations made. The floor was closed to nominations.

**MOTION:** (Sherman/Cronin) To elect Mr. Dave Cate as Vice Chairman.

**VOTE:** (7-0-0) The motion carried.

### **TOWN AND SCHOOL LIAISONS**

Mr. Cate and Mr. Cronin volunteered to share the position of School Liaison.

Mr. Guimond said during the past year Mr. Smith had been the Board's liaison to the Town. He said he would contact Mr. Smith by e-mail and ask if he would like to continue in the position. No objection was voiced.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **2014 Town Meeting Results**

The Board discussed the Town Meeting results beginning with the Town items.

Mr. Sherman believed the Fire Union contract wasn't passed. He questioned what other contracts would be coming forward in the next year. Mr. Viger said the Fire Union and Support Staff contract would both move forward with negotiations. He said the Selectmen wanted to have a new Town Administrator in place for those negotiations. Mr. Sherman questioned the timeframe for having a new Town Administrator and how it would affect the budgetary process. Mr. Viger replied the budget process had already begun moving forward; the Finance Director had a good handle on the situation. He told the Board there were twenty-four applicants for the Town Administrator position. The Selectmen had narrowed the field and conducted seven interviews. They will have a discussion regarding how they will precede at their next meeting. The hope was to

50 have a new administrator in place by June 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Viger said the Department Heads were currently preparing their budgets and presenting them to  
51 the Finance Director.

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53 Mr. Sherman wanted to know if the roundabout would be completed this year. Mr. Viger said weather permitting, the roundabout was scheduled  
54 for completion in the early July timeframe.

55  
56 Mr. Guimond wanted to know if any vehicles needed replacement. Mr. Viger hadn't heard of any from the department heads. He didn't recall if  
57 the maintenance or CIP schedule had anything listed. Mr. Cate asked if there were any police cruisers cycling in/out. Mr. Viger believed the  
58 police cruisers may be up for their regular lease cycle this year. He said he would verify if they were.

59  
60 Mr. Sherman asked if there were any Town construction projects coming in. Mr. Viger said nothing was in front of the Selectmen. He said the  
61 Selectmen knew the School currently had big capital projects with bonding issues. He said their operation in the coming year was to update Town  
62 Policies and make sure they were up to date. He said he would be trying to get a handle on the Town buildings by creating maintenance contracts  
63 and capital improvement projects to understand those expenses. He would be creating a plan for upgrades and maintenance-type issues.

64  
65 Mr. Guimond said the Board would like zero-based budgeting in the coming year. He said they would be requesting the same from the School.  
66 Mr. Viger asked for clarification. He wanted to know if the Board was looking for zero growth, which meant they would need to absorb any  
67 contractual increases. Mr. Guimond said his recommendation would be zero growth after contractual increases were absorbed.

68  
69 Mr. Cate said this year he had reservation about special education in the School's budget because they had a couple students come into district. He  
70 wanted to know if they had zero based if the school's budget would be contingent upon students coming in. Mr. Guimond recalled there had been  
71 a warrant for unknown special education costs, which he believed passed (at the last Town Meeting). He noted that the Board would have to  
72 consider special education because it was a mandate from the State and Federal governments.

73  
74 Mr. Viger commented in the past the Board had asked department heads to present zero based budgets and had to prioritize things they would like  
75 to include. The Selectmen review the budgets and decide what should be worked in. He said they could share that information for the Budget  
76 Committee to understand. Mr. Guimond said it was important for the taxpayers to receive the same level of service that they have come to expect  
77 from the Town.

78  
79 Mr. Rush wanted to know if the Selectmen would entertain speaking to an outside ambulance source. He referenced Trinity Ambulance, who had  
80 signed a multi-town contract that had worked well for those communities. They used the same building and had EMT/Firefighters. He said if  
81 Pelham was to have a private ambulance service, it would lead them to have a volunteer Fire Department similar to what some of the bigger cities  
82 use.

Mr. Rush also felt the School District should look into charter schools. He recalled a few years ago a woman had been an advocate for such schools, but the response from people was the fear of money being taken out of the school system. He said it would actually take children out of the system with a 20% savings.

Mr. Rush then spoke of the Fire Department apparatus. He saw the truck that was discussed during last year's budgeting and agreed it was an older vehicle. However, rather than having the Town do a custom built vehicle, which he didn't feel the Town could afford, he suggested providing the Fire Chief with a dollar figure (such as \$200,000) and tell him to get a pumper truck that would fit that amount. Mr. Viger noted that the voters had already approved a vehicle with payments spread out over a lease period. Mr. Guimond said the Board had asked the Fire Department if they needed any other vehicle replacements. He understood there was nothing at this time.

Mr. Viger spoke about the ambulance service. He recalled the Selectmen looking into independent ambulance services. He said the problem they learned was the availability of the ambulance service to be housed in Town. He said Atkinson, Sandown and Hampstead were in the same general area; however, Pelham is grouped in the area with Nashua, Salem etc. and because of which, Pelham didn't have enough calls to allow for an ambulance to be set in our facility. Pelham's response times would increase. Mr. Viger also noted that the Town would lose the revenues of the ambulance service if they had an independent company. He'll provide those figures to the Board. He said people would also be laid off. Mr. Rush replied if the Town went with an ambulance service they wouldn't need to lay anyone off. Mr. Viger said Trinity wouldn't hire the Town's EMT's to work their ambulance in Town. Mr. Guimond said they would have Trinity employees. Mr. Rush spoke with both Trinity and Patriot who were not contacted by the Town in the last five years. Mr. Viger said it may have been around that timeframe. He stated they had a comprehensive study and interviewed the companies. He said if the Board wanted to review the information, he would pull copies for the Board. Mr. Rush said he didn't want to see people laid off, but they could seek employment with the ambulance companies who were in the union. Mr. Viger noted that the ambulance responders were probably not in the International Association of Firefighter's Union. He said it may be difficult to have two separate unions work together. He reiterated if the Board wanted to move forward with reviewing ambulance companies, he would bring that request to the Selectmen.

Mr. Rush said his main concern wasn't the money being spent today for the ambulance and the firemen, it was the pensions and long term obligation.

In regard to the Municipal Building roof, Mr. Rush believed the Town had qualified people that could repair or clean up the roof during a time that wasn't busy. He wanted to know if the Selectmen would consider such in their budget.

Mr. Rush wanted to know if the School Superintendent/District would have an office within the new high school, or if it would be in the temporary building. Mr. Guimond said the voters approved having new portables replace the existing portables. The new portables (being put in place over the summer months) would contain the new School Administrative Unit ('SAU') offices and the preschool. He believed there was a five-year lease for those portables, but each year there was a cancellation clause because the School can't commit to more than one year at a time.

Mr. Guimond asked Mr. Sherman (who works in the Nashua School District) how popular charter schools were. Mr. Sherman explained charter schools tended to be for elementary and middle school age children and specialized in particular areas. He said the State gave charter schools \$5,000-\$6,000 per student enrolled, but that funding would be taken out from funding that would otherwise go to the local school district. He explained parent involvement and how charter schools can have children go back to local districts if they didn't meet certain expectations.

Mr. Cate questioned who determined admission standards for the charter schools. Mr. Sherman said charter schools had a board of directors, similar to a school board that established the standards for curriculum, rules and regulations. Mr. Rush understood there were two types of charter schools in New Hampshire, one was controlled by the School Board, and the other was controlled by the State. Mr. Sherman replied the State could authorize the setup of a charter school and the public school system could set up their own. He noted Nashua briefly looked into it, but decided against it.

Mr. Cate noted that the school budget contained \$75,000 for architectural plans in the event the addition warrant didn't pass. Since the warrant passed, he wanted to make sure that the \$75,000 was given back to the taxpayers. He asked for the consensus of the Board to request that money be returned. There was no objection by the Board.

Mr. Guimond asked the Board if they had received the latest financial report from School Business Administrator Steve Martin. He publically thanked Mr. Martin for keeping the Board informed.

It was noted that the School's financial year ends June 30<sup>th</sup>; the Town's financial year ends December 31<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Rush heard a rumor that there was \$600,000 remaining in the school's general fund last year. Mr. Viger replied that the school didn't have a general fund. He said if they had money remaining it had to go back to offset taxes in the next year, or be spent. The school doesn't have the ability to hold funds. Mr. Guimond said the prior business administrators never let the Board know what that number was. Mr. Rush understood that the current Business Administrator anticipated \$50,000. Mr. Viger cautioned getting information from people other than the source, as it may not be correct. He said the Board could send an e-mail to the school requesting what they anticipated for surplus this year. Ms. Hillsgrove noted according to the information sent by Mr. Martin the school anticipated \$165,000. Mr. Viger recalled the school had some items at the school they would be able to roll into the bond and have done at the same time as the addition.

Mr. Guimond asked the Board if they would like to have a budget schedule similar to that used during the previous year. The Board felt the previous schedule was sufficient.

Mr. Viger asked for a consensus of the Board if they would like the Selectmen to consider moving forward with investigating third party ambulance service. He asked if the Board wanted to assign someone to work with the Selectmen. The Board would like additional information. Mr. Rush volunteered to be the liaison with the Selectmen; Mr. Guimond said he would also be available.

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154 **ADJOURNMENT**

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**MOTION:** (Sherman/Cate) To adjourn the meeting.

**VOTE:** (7-0-0) The motion carried.

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157 The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:10 pm.

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Respectfully submitted,

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Charity A. Landry

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Recording Secretary