

APPROVED
TOWN OF PELHAM
BUDGET COMMITTEE - MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, September 27, 2018
APPROVED – October 4, 2018

CALL TO ORDER – at approximately 7:30pm

PRESENT: Mr. Michael Bailey, Ms. Daryle Hillsgrove, Mr. Dave Cronin, Ms. Meg Bressette, Ms. Amber Capone, Selectmen Representative Doug Viger, School Board Representative Deb Ryan

ABSENT: Mr. Dave Cate (excused), Mr. Bob Sherman (excused)

MEETING MINUTES

September 27, 2018

MOTION: (Hillsgrove/Capone) To approve the September 27, 2018 meeting minutes as written.

VOTE: (5-0-2) The motion carried. Mr. Cate and Mr. Sherman abstained.

ByLaw Amendment Discussion

Mr. Bailey asked the Board if they had any discussion regarding the proposed ByLaw change. Mr. Sherman

The Board was provided with an amended ByLaw to cover the ‘Total Compensation Threshold’ where a Warrant Article would be needed. He used the text from the existing published ByLaws and included the text approved by the Board October 3, 2016. The proposed update was included for review. This update will define what the total threshold and include with it a schedule for the next eight years.

For discussion, Mr. Bailey opened the tabled item from the Board’s previous meeting involving the proposed ByLaw amendment. His intention was to re-table the discussion and bring it up again at the next scheduled meeting for additional discussion or vote. He read the proposal aloud.

Mr. Cronin believed Mr. Sherman (who was excused/absent) had a question as to when the Board could revisit proposed ByLaw amendments. Mr. Bailey replied he checked the ByLaws and knew the Board had discussed limiting amendments to the Board’s organizational meeting; however, the Board had not voted regarding such or put any changes in place. After thinking about doing so, Mr. Bailey felt it would be a bad idea and believed the Board would want the flexibility to change the language in the ByLaw in the event of a significant change during the year. He said if someone wanted to make a motion to limit the Board’s review of ByLaws he would accept a motion but asked that it be separated from the ‘salary threshold’ discussion. There was no motion brought forward.

Mr. Bailey moved to table the discussion regarding ‘salary threshold’ to the Board next meeting. Ms. Hillsgrove seconded.

MOTION: (Bailey/Hillsgrove) To table the discussion regarding 'salary threshold' to the Board's next scheduled meeting.

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

2019 BUDGET REVIEW

Senior Center – \$136,845 proposed.

Presented by Hobbs Community Center Director Sara Landry

Ms. Landry provided the Board with the center's latest newsletter, so they could see the activities and programs offered. She then discussed the salary increase for the administrative assistant position. As they reviewed staffing and the salary lines they saw that the position was underfunded from where it should be. She provided the Board with backup documentation showing comparison salaries from other communities. The other salary that had an increase was the Director's salary. Ms. Landry explained that while researching salaries from across the State she found there weren't a lot of other senior centers that work as a town department. She explained her position also covers human services and program planning, and those two job descriptions mapped best with what she does. Salary backup information was also provided for position. Other salaries in the budget were merit increases.

Supplies, Telephone were level funded. The Gas & Oil figures were placeholders until the State bid figure is released; an amended line will be submitted during reconsideration.

Repairs showed a small increase because with their aging equipment they've found the budget line has been underfunded the last two years. Mr. Baily asked if any of the current equipment was nearing 'end of life'. Ms. Landry answered yes but believed they would be purchasing a new refrigerator and stove. Mr. McCarthy explained they were looking at a replacement schedule, but for budget purposes, they were leaving the budget lines as listed. If a purchase is made prior to the end of the year the budget will be adjusted during reconsideration.

Expenses line was increased for a bi-annual full-Town mailing. They are putting together a brochure for all residents to make the community aware of all the programs they offer.

Cemetery - \$145,470 proposed.

The Cemetery had no representative present. Town Administrator Brian McCarthy was available to discuss the budget.

Mr. McCarthy explained that the Cemetery budget was similar to the Library budget in that the Selectmen have no governing ability.

Mr. Bailey noted that the budget was level funded except for a small change in salaries. Mr. McCarthy believed the increase was contractual.

Ms. Bressette questioned what was covered under the 'Specials' line for the requested \$18,450. In looking at the backup information she wanted to know if they had not gotten to the items listed. Mr. Viger replied they typically level fund the amount and complete what they could from the line; sometimes its expansion of the cemetery, building infrastructure, repairing building etc. He said they were vague at exactly what they do.

89 Parks & Recreation - \$248,850 proposed.

90 Presented by Parks & Recreation Director Brian Johnson

91
92 Mr. Johnson explained that the majority of the salary line increase was contractual. The
93 exception was a 2% raise for the office administrator, and a \$1 increase for each lifeguard,
94 increase for maintenance.

95
96 He told the Board that they had been steady at \$10 for lifeguards; however, during the last year
97 they struggled to fill the positions. In doing cost analysis of other towns they found that the
98 surrounding towns were all paying higher. They hoped to attract more people by raising the
99 salary to \$11/hr. They added additional hours for maintenance because Mr. Johnson found it to
100 be cost effective to get work done in-house.

101
102 Ms. Capone questioned the increase for the Program Director. Mr. Johnson replied the position
103 was moved two years ago from Office Manager to Program Director because it reflected the
104 responsibilities of the position. The budget shows the contractual increase. He felt the Director
105 was still underpaid even with the increase. He told the Board the employee had been in the
106 position for twenty years receiving 1% raises. Mr. McCarthy explained when he began in 2014
107 they started looking at salaries and positions and found what people were doing wasn't matching
108 their job descriptions. They went through the departments to see what people were doing versus
109 what was outlined in their job description; if there was a significant change, they met with the
110 union to restructure the position. For the Program Director position, they looked around and did a
111 salary comparison and came to an agreement with the number. Mr. McCarthy noted that the
112 Director was very dedicated, loyal and knowledgeable and for many years grossly underpaid.
113 Ms. Capone wanted to know if the increase was something the Board would see each year. Mr.
114 Johnson answered no, the salary increases were based on the union contract.

115
116 All other budget lines were level funded except for the Telephone. Mr. Johnson explained they
117 finally got Comcast cable/internet access at Pelham Veterans Memorial Park ('PVMP'). The
118 budget line reflected the monthly bill for each of the security cameras. It was noted they also
119 added an emergency Police call box on the lifeguard shack. Emergency calls go directly to
120 dispatch.

121
122 Mr. Johnson discussed the revolving fund that keeps the department running. Mr. Bailey asked
123 how many registrations the department usually has. Mr. Johnson didn't have figures for this year;
124 however, last year they had approximately 11,000 registrations in total (across all programs).

125
126 Highway Department - \$1,530,276 proposed.

127 Presented by Highway Road Agent Frank Ferreira

128
129 The overall budget showed a decrease of \$4,786 from last year. Salary increases were
130 contractual. Increase in Telephone was due to the addition of one cell phone. Mr. McCarthy
131 noted that the department was connected on the Town's voice-over-internet system; they got rid
132 of the old phone system. The Rentals line showed a decrease because the department purchased
133 their own brush cutter and wouldn't be subcontracting the work.

134
135 Other line items were level funded from the previous year.

136
137 Transfer Station - \$711,831 proposed.

138 Presented by Highway Road Agent Frank Ferreira

140 The overall budget showed a decrease of \$19,291 from last year.

141
142 The salary line showed a decrease. The previous administrative assistant left, and the position
143 was restructured into a part-time (32hr.) position. Mr. McCarthy noted that part of the salary cost
144 was transferred into the Selectmen's budget for an IT person. Ms. Capone questioned the
145 increase for Operator #4. Mr. Ferreira replied that position was moved from the Highway budget
146 into the Transfer Station budget.

147
148 Supplies showed a slight increase for office supplies. Mr. Ferreira replied they just acquired a
149 new printer and the cost for ink was more than the previous machine.

150
151 It was noted that the gas & oil lines would come back at reconsideration when the State figure
152 was obtained.

153
154 Mr. Bailey asked if there were any anticipated equipment repairs. Mr. Ferreira replied they may
155 do part of the conveyor in the main building and rebuild part of the ramp. He said they would see
156 what they had remaining from this year's budget. Mr. Bailey wanted to know the status of the
157 office trailer. Mr. McCarthy replied they were more than half way to getting funding for the new
158 building. They've met with a contractor who provided a quote of approximately \$850,000-
159 \$900,000 to construct and build a new Highway/Transfer office/garage. Currently the capital
160 reserve contains approximately \$500,000 toward the project. One facility will house both
161 departments. He said they were working through the process and currently had a conceptual
162 design. He hoped to get the project done within two years.

163
164 Ms. Capone asked if the new building housed tires. She wanted to know why they didn't need
165 the tire trailer anymore. Mr. Ferreira replied tires were now put into a box instead of a trailer. He
166 called attention to the budget line for tire trailer rental and removal.

167
168 Ms. Bressette questioned why brush removal increased \$3,000. Mr. Ferreira stated the company
169 increased \$100 per load; the budget line was based on actual expenditures.

170
171 Police Department - \$3,027,197 proposed.

172 Presented by Police Chief Joseph Roark, Police Captain Steven Toom and Office Manager Celia
173 Lingley

174
175 Chief Roark explained that the department was approved to have two new officers last year that
176 were showing up in the budget for the first time. He stated that the collective bargaining
177 agreement was also approved at Town Meeting, which drove the hourly overtime rate up. They
178 also added an additional School Resource Officer ('SRO'). He noted there wasn't a lot of 'new'
179 items in the budget other than the two approved police officers and the SRO. Ms. Bressette asked
180 if it was a new SRO and wanted to know which school they would be in. Chief Roark replied it
181 would be a second SRO who would split time between Memorial School and the Elementary
182 School. Mr. Bailey inquired if Pelham officers were given first choice at detail work before it
183 was offered to another town. Chief Roark replied their department has first opportunity;
184 however, they couldn't fill the requests. He spoke about the amount of construction that was
185 currently going on, which was why officers from surrounding towns worked in Pelham.

186
187 With the addition of the two officers and the additional SRO, Ms. Bressette asked if the
188 department was fully staffed for the foreseeable future. Chief Roark replied they were at twenty-
189 three full-time officers. He was comfortable with the number. He explained the benchmark
190 typically used was the Department of Justice FBI recommendation to have 1.9 Police Officers per

1,000 population. This would put Pelham at 25-26 officers. Ms. Bressette asked if the additional SRO had been planned for a while. Chief Roark replied he had preliminary discussions during the summer with the new Superintendent of Schools (and past discussions with the previous Superintendent). He said the Selectmen were generous to put the second SRO into the budget and explained that the current SRO has been asking for help during the last two years, but the time hadn't been right.

Ms. Capone wanted to know what the SRO would do during the summertime. Chief Roark replied they kept the current SRO busy by filling in for vacation shifts and catching up on evidence work. He also has community policing duties to perform. Ms. Hillsgrove asked Chief Roark to discuss the duties of the SRO. Chief Roark replied first and foremost the SRO's duty was the protection of the children at the schools. He spoke about the outreach the SRO offers to students given his extensive intervention, crisis training and drug intervention.

Ms. Ryan personally vouched to the integrity of the SRO position and the value it's brought into the schools.

Under Supplies, Chief Roark explained that tasers had a useful life of approximately five years; they are on a rotating replacement schedule. Mr. Bailey questioned the increase to the cell phone line. Chief Roark explained the line included the mobile data terminals in the Police cars, which were previously in their own expense line. He said they were connected to cellular service to function. He spoke to the increase for radio repairs and pointed out it was offset by a decrease for the tower rental. The increase to the IMC support contract (records software) was contractual. He noted they now had the ability to 'tap' into other enforcement agencies.

Ms. Capone questioned why the copier contract had a large increase. Chief Roark replied they changed vendors (through Town Hall). Ms. Lingley stated they had a new (more advanced) Konica machine.

Chief Roark spoke to the increases under the Expenses lines. He discussed how certain required training/education they previously received through the academy was no longer available and they had to contract and pay tuition. He noted the cost had been increasing each year; they previously pulled money from other places in the budget but now set a specific budget line. He talked to the Board regarding the CALEA line and explained the process of accreditation to the new Board members.

Ms. Bressette asked for clarification for overtime as she saw the budget indicated three elections. Captain Toom noted the line was for the Town Deliberative, School Deliberative, Town vote and Election. Ms. Bressette saw there was a separate line for the Town & School Deliberative session. There was no further clarification.

Mr. Bailey stated that the Police didn't only handle law enforcement; they were active in the community and appreciated for being so. He thanked them for their service and asked Chief Roark to pass the message to the officers. Chief Roark said he would. He appreciated the support of the community, Selectmen and Budget committee.

Town Buildings - \$713,910 proposed.
Presented by Town Administrator Brian McCarthy

The overall budget showed a \$110,256 decrease from last year.

Mr. McCarthy noted that the salary he had increased approximately \$800 for maintenance. He spoke about the qualifications and broad skill set of the maintenance person. Based on the projects the maintenance person was involved in and the money he had saved the Town, Mr. McCarthy felt he was worthy of an increase.

Utilities showed a decrease because the electricity costs had gone down since the lights within the building had been replaced with LED lighting. He explained the Liberty Utilities program that had provided the Town with cost savings. He discussed the project and described the improvements. He then reviewed the projects scheduled for 2019.

Ms. Capone asked if the Town purchased computers annually. Mr. McCarthy replied they had a computer replacement plan; every three years they replaced desktop computers. He said the new equipment/tech plan funded licensing, software, etc. He spoke about the Town's volunteer IT specialist Victor Danevich, who was a long-time resident and former Selectman. He explained Mr. Danevich is the 'Albert Einstein of the IT world'. He spoke about the work he had done and dedication he had to the Town.

There was discussion regarding the Expenses lines. Mr. Viger described HVAC maintenance and CTI maintenance contract, which had an annual fee, but would have great savings through their oversight plan.

Selectmen - \$513,189 proposed.

Presented by Town Administrator Brian McCarthy

The salaries line included the IT Tech Support position Mr. McCarthy spoke about earlier in the meeting. This position was restructured from the previous administrative position at the Transfer Station. He explained that the Town had needed the IT position for a long time; currently they pay approximately \$40,000/year for a one-day per week support person. The difficulty with having only one day of support is the IT person handles all the work tickets and often doesn't make it through the entire list. Mr. McCarthy spoke about the other aspects the IT position would handle regarding social media, website and phone system. There was a cost reduction under expenses for Rockport Tech Support to offset the IT salary.

Ms. Capone questioned if the Town had enough of a need to fill the additional 32 hours for the IT position. Mr. McCarthy answered yes; they had more than a need.

Mr. McCarthy stated currently the Town had three companies that operated the phone system. He said it was grossly inefficient; therefore, he entered into a conversation with a company that believes they can handle the Town in an efficient and less expensive manner than the existing companies.

Ms. Capone understood the postage meter was rented throughout the departments and questioned if they each paid a flat rate. Mr. McCarthy replied the cost of the meter was based on a department's needs.

Ms. Bressette understood the salary lines took into account contractual increases. She asked for the term of the contracts. Mr. McCarthy replied they were basically 2-year contracts, but they were staggered so they wouldn't expire at the same time. He stated that the Town's legal team had advised that it would behoove the Town to get people who weren't under union positions into a contract, so the rules of engagement can be spelled out. He said everyone was under contract

292 except for two administrators at the senior center but expected they would be within a couple
293 months.

294

295 **ADJOURNMENT**

296

MOTION: (Viger/Hillsgrove) To adjourn the meeting.

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

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298 The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:11pm.

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Respectfully submitted,
Charity Landry
Recording Secretary