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APPROVED
TOWN OF PELHAM
BUDGET COMMITTEE - MEETING MINUTES
Monday, November 13, 2017

CALL TO ORDER – at approximately 7:30pm

PRESENT: Mr. Dave Cate, Mr. Michael Bailey, Mr. Bob Sherman, Ms. Daryle Hillsgrove, Mr. Dave Cronin, Mr. Brian Carton, Ms. Deborah Gibbons (excused prior to adjournment), Selectmen Representative Doug Viger, School Board Representative Megan Larson. Also present was Interim School Superintendent Betsey Cox, Business Administrator Deb Mahoney

ABSENT: None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

MEETING MINUTES

From a discussion during the November 6th meeting, Mr. Cronin questioned if a bus traveled to Alvirne (CTE classes). Ms. Mahoney believed there was an arrangement, and will find out what it is.

November 6, 2017

MOTION: (Sherman/Cronin) To approve the November 6, 2017 meeting minutes as written.

VOTE: (7-0-2) The motion carried. Ms. Gibbons and Mr. Carton abstained.

2018 SCHOOL BUDGET VOTE– (Representing the School’s 2019 Fiscal Year)

Interim School District Superintendent Betsey Cox and School Business Administrator Deborah Mahoney came forward for budget review and vote.

Mr. Cate stated he would like the Board to use the same procedure for voting as was done when they considered the Town’s operating budget.

MOTION: (Viger/Sherman) The (budget) number presented is considered to automatically have a second; the Board will vote on that number unless an amendment is offered.

VOTE: (9-0-0) The motion carried.

Pelham Elementary School

Mr. Cate noted under Nurse Services, there was a line for an AED unit, which would be purchased in this year’s budget; therefore, the budget line could be removed.

36 **MOTION:** (Hillsgrove/Bailey) To remove \$897.00 from the stated line item.

VOTE: (9-0-0) The motion carried.

37
38 Mr. Cate stated there were no other adjustments proposed. The Board voted on the bottom line.

39 **MOTION:** To approve \$6,797,793 as the (FY2019) Pelham Elementary School budget.

VOTE: (9-0-0) The motion carried.

40
41 **Pelham Memorial School**

42
43 Mr. Cate stated there were no proposed adjustments.

44 **MOTION:** To approve \$4,785,633 as the (FY2019) Pelham Memorial School budget.

VOTE: (9-0-0) The motion carried.

45
46
47 **Pelham High School**

48
49 Mr. Cate stated there were no proposed adjustments.

50 **MOTION:** To approve \$7,787,876 as the (FY2019) Pelham High School budget.

VOTE: (9-0-0) The motion carried.

51
52
53 **District / SAU**

54
55 Mr. Cate asked that the Board consider a reduction of \$500 under the Improvement Instruction
56 miscellaneous line for refreshments for meetings to level fund the line. He noted last year's budget
57 was \$500 and the request for this year was \$1,000. He felt since there were other areas in the
58 budget for refreshments and if they really needed it, they could find it.

59
60 Mr. Cronin understood the refreshments were for meetings between mentors and mentees. Ms.
61 Cox replied that was part of it; the line would also be used for trainings and curriculum committees
62 because they had long meetings.

63
64 Mr. Bailey moved Mr. Cate's recommendation to reduce \$500 for refreshments for meetings. Ms.
65 Hillsgrove seconded for discussion. Mr. Cronin advocated to keep the money in the budget because
66 he felt a mentor/mentee program was very important and if a refreshment would enhance the
67 meeting it would be a small price to pay. Mr. Cate said he would love to have refreshments during
68 budget meetings, but they don't include money in the budget to do so.

69
70 Mr. Bailey questioned how many additional meetings would be generated. Ms. Cox replied they
71 had high turnover this year and believed there were twenty-seven new teachers; last year there were
72 approximately fifteen. The Director of Curriculum was running more meetings in an effort to create
73 a broader, more effective program for keeping people. Mr. Bailey noted his meetings were more
74 effective by bringing refreshments.

75

MOTION: (Bailey/Hillsgrove) To remove \$500 from the Improvement Instruction miscellaneous line for refreshments.

VOTE: (1-8-0) The motion failed. Mr. Cate was the only vote in favor. The remainder of the Board voted in opposition.

76

77 Mr. Cronin proposed an increase of \$180/per School Board member stipend; total line increase of
78 \$900. With that increase, he understood that the social security line would need to increase \$68.85.
79 Mr. Bailey seconded for discussion.

80

81 Mr. Cate was in favor of the increase. He spoke about accounting knowledge that Ms. Larson
82 brought forward when budgets were presented to the Board, which was helpful during review.

83

84 Mr. Sherman questioned the amount given to the Selectmen. Mr. Viger replied the Selectmen
85 received \$900 each and the Chairman received \$1,200. Mr. Sherman stated he was inclined to hold
86 the line.

87

88

MOTION: (Cronin/Bailey) To change the School Board stipends as follows: each member will receive \$1,040, and the Chairman will receive \$1,540. Total increase for School Board Services salaries is \$900. Also, social security to increase \$68.85.

VOTE: (8-1-0) The motion carried. Mr. Sherman voted in opposition.

89

90 Mr. Cate stated that the vote of the Board increase the stipends as well as the social security line.

91

92 Mr. Cate proposed a reduction of \$2,010 in the Ground Services annual maintenance line. The
93 proposed reduction still represented an increase of \$5,000 over last year, which he felt would cover
94 any projects.

95

96 Mr. Sherman preferred to hold the budget line since he knew the school had a number of issues to
97 address.

98

MOTION: (Bailey/Cronin) To reduce the Ground Services annual maintenance line by \$2,010.

VOTE: (4-5-0) The motion failed. Mr. Cate, Ms. Hillsgrove, Mr. Cronin and Ms. Gibbons voted in favor. Mr. Sherman, Mr. Bailey, Ms. Larson, Mr. Carton and Mr. Viger voted in opposition.

99

100 The Board then voted on the amended District / SAU budget.

101

MOTION: To approve \$10,764,564 as the (FY2019) District / SAU budget.

VOTE: (9-0-0) The motion carried.

102

103 **Nutrition Services**

104

105 Mr. Cate stated there were no proposed adjustments.

106

MOTION: To approve \$1,094,945 as the (FY2019) Nutrition Services budget.

VOTE: (9-0-0) The motion carried.

Grants Fund

Mr. Cate stated there were no proposed adjustments.

MOTION: To approve \$750,000 as the (FY2019) Grants Fund budget.

VOTE: (9-0-0) The motion carried.

Mr. Cate stated that the total FY2019 School Operating Budget was \$31,980,811.

MOTION: To approve \$31,980,811 as the (FY2019) total School Operating Budget.

VOTE: (9-0-0) The motion carried.

Ms. Mahoney informed she had provided the School Board with a draft of the default budget, which will be reviewed/voted on Wednesday. She stated that the final warrant article will include the budget figure and the default figure for the Budget Committee vote at their next meeting.

2018 SCHOOL DISTRICT WARRANT ARTICLE REVIEW

Article 1 – Operating and default budget. Ms. Mahoney will provide the Board with the default number at their next meeting.

Article 2 – New position – Special Education Coordinator shared between Memorial School and the High School.

Ms. Mahoney provided the Board with an information packet. Ms. Cox discussed the data that had been collected in regard to the amount of time the Assistant Principal spent addressing special education paperwork, which equates to 2-3 days per week. She reviewed the type of coverage other high schools had. Mr. Cate inquired the salary range for the personnel at those schools. Ms. Cox replied they hadn't looked at the salaries, they only reviewed the responsibilities. She will provide the Board with information. She then discussed the responsibilities of a special education coordinator position. She told the Board that they are currently conducting an audit of the entire special education department.

Mr. Cate questioned who the person would report to. Ms. Cox replied the position would work closely with both principals and the director of student services. She said they would be an administrator and report to the director of special services. Ms. Larson spoke about the importance of having a person in the position because the current situation was not only impacting special education, it was impacting regular education by having the assistant principal tied up in meetings and dealing with special education issues. Mr. Cate saw that the request was for the middle school and high school and questioned how the elementary school was. Ms. Larson replied they made the request, but they had to pick their highest need. Ms. Cox noted that all three school had made the request last year as well. Mr. Cate questioned if they had ever had a comparable position. Ms. Larson replied it was a new position. She said the director of student services couldn't attend every meeting. Mr. Cate thought the department already had an extra layer and the position could be slid

148 into place. Ms. Cox replied there was currently an assistant director of student services; however,
149 that person's responsibilities were primarily out of district.

150
151 Mr. Bailey felt it was extremely important that they didn't underpay the position and that they
152 brought someone into the position who had advanced knowledge because in his opinion, dealing
153 with special education was one of the most complicated thing in the schools. He said it was in the
154 best interest of the children and the school district for the person to attend the meetings. He
155 reiterated the importance of bringing someone in who was highly qualified and who would look
156 out for the best interest of the children and the district.

157
158 Mr. Cate noted that proposing an appropriate salary would be important. Ms. Cox replied when
159 the position was researched they reviewed competitive salaries; however, she didn't have the
160 figures with her. Mr. Cate asked that the salary information be forwarded to the Board.

161
162 Mr. Cronin questioned how the position would be shared between the two schools. Ms. Cox replied
163 at this point they were looking at it as 50/50. She believed it would be under the director of student
164 services to make any changes with that. Mr. Cronin asked if the position would be during the
165 school year, or year-round. Ms. Cox replied it would be year-round (12 month) given there was
166 year-round school for students with IEPs. Mr. Sherman noted that the wording should reflect 'full
167 year' rather than 'school year'. He requested a copy of the job descriptions for the director of
168 special services and their assistant so they could review how the three positions would work
169 together.

170
171 Mr. Sherman wanted to know if the budget contained the materials needed for the proposed job
172 description. Ms. Cox answered yes.

173
174 **Article 3 – 5-year lease agreement for a modular building for Pelham Memorial.**

175
176 Mr. Cate saw a huge need for the proposed expansion given the increased enrollment within the
177 music program. He said moving the program would benefit those students in the special education
178 resource room, which is currently located directly above the music room.

179
180 In full disclosure, Ms. Larson noted that the School Board discussed including the lease payment
181 in the budget. They decided to think about it and discuss at their next meeting. They presented the
182 articles so the Budget Committee could review and provide any thoughts they had. Mr. Viger spoke
183 about some of the issues the Town learned by having a lease agreement. He said they couldn't
184 spend 'tomorrow's money' without voter approval and suggested they verify with counsel. Ms.
185 Mahoney stated they provided counsel with the language. The response was that the appropriation
186 could be included in the school's operating budget because RSA 33:7-e states that appropriations
187 to fund lease agreements with non-appropriation clauses may be approved by simple majority vote
188 of the legislative body and the governing body may enter into the leases of the equipment as
189 required by the municipality. Mr. Viger understood a vote of the 'legislative body' was a Town
190 vote. Ms. Mahoney replied the governing body was the Pelham School Board. Mr. Viger suggested
191 they confirm with counsel. Ms. Larson noted they hadn't made a decision either way.

192
193 If approved, Mr. Cronin wanted to know how much use the modular would have. Ms. Cox replied
194 it would be used all day. Mr. Cronin questioned how many rooms would be freed up in the school
195 building. Ms. Cox stated it would free up one room plus the stage and the gym; currently the music
196 program uses three spaces within the building. Mr. Cronin confirmed the modular would be a
197 permanent location for the band. Ms. Cox answered yes; everything would go out there.

Mr. Sherman asked where the modular would be located and if they would own the modular at the end of the 5-year lease. He also questioned if it had a bathroom. Ms. Cox stated it was a lease-to-buy; they would own it at the end of five years. The location will be within 20ft. of the present modular in the back yard area. They had to ensure it wasn't over the septic system. It will have two practice rooms, an office and a bathroom. Ms. Mahoney pointed out that the information sheet included a quote and layout of the building.

Mr. Carton spoke about the other modular buildings they had leased, and commented that they had acquired higher quality product that is more robust than the typical model. He suggested they continue to pursue the better built modular. Ms. Cox commented that the facilities assessment committee had recently done a survey on school space needs. They will work on correcting problem areas.

Mr. Sherman questioned how the unit would be heated and if it would contain air conditioning. Ms. Cox replied it will have air conditioning and will also be tied into the heating system.

Mr. Bailey asked if anyone had evaluated the acoustics of the modular. Ms. Cox stated they weren't perfect, but were adequate. She noted they were better than being in the gym, and better than being located beneath the student resource room.

Article 4 – Convey an easement to Liberty Utilities for the purpose of installing an underground gas line. *(For Budget Committee information – no vote required)*

Mr. Sherman questioned what would happen if the article failed. Ms. Cox replied they would enter into a license agreement, rather than an easement. Ms. Larson explained that Liberty Utilities was currently working closely with the Superintendent's office and legal counsel and had a license agreement. She said the article would provide a permanent solution in the event Liberty Utilities needed to perform maintenance etc. Ms. Cox added if Liberty Utilities was purchased by another entity, an easement would go to the company who purchased the rights. Mr. Sherman wanted to know if any money would go to the district. Ms. Cox replied there would be discussion and negotiation regarding the rights.

Mr. Bailey asked if the easement would service the school district only, and questioned if it could service others. Ms. Cox replied it is the main line that is running through the Willow Street Bridge area.

Article 5 - Discontinue the Pelham Memorial Athletic Field Capital Reserve Fund. *(For Budget Committee information – no vote required)*

There is no current balance in the fund.

Ms. Gibbons left the meeting.

2018 TOWN WARRANT ARTICLE REVIEW

Town Administrator Brian McCarthy came forward for the discussion.

(Articles reviewed out of order)

Article A – Raise \$1,500,000 (gross budget) to purchase land and easements for conservation purposes.

Conservation Chairman Paul Gagnon came forward to discuss the proposal. Mr. Cate spoke about the benefits of the original \$3,000,000 bond (from 2002) and the land that had been purchased and conserved. Mr. Gagnon noted there was \$315,000 remaining from that original bond. He provided the Board with a spreadsheet showing all the parcels they had acquired since 2002. He noted there were two parcels they expected to close by early 2018, with those parcels 901 acres will be purchased and 120 acres will be donated (since 2002). Mr. Cate asked if the \$315,000 will then be exhausted. Mr. Gagnon answered no; they always spend current use monies before they go to the bond money. At present, there is approximately \$700,000 in current use monies available. He gave a brief explanation of how 'current use' money was generated. The goal of the article was to try and protect an additional 500 acres.

Mr. Sherman wanted to know if the conservation land could be used by the Town or the Schools if there was a need. Mr. Gagnon believed it could be, dependent on what restrictions were included in the deed. A Town vote would be needed to take land out of conservation to be used by the Town or School.

Mr. Baliey questioned if there was any information regarding the year-to-year cost of the original \$3 million bond and a way to determine the future yearly cost of the proposed bond. Mr. McCarthy replied they would find out. Mr. Viger noted that being a municipality, the bond rate was usually pretty low. Mr. Cate asked that information be emailed.

Article I – Raise \$36,300 from the Forest Maintenance Fund

Conservation Chairman/Forestry Committee member Paul Gagnon came forward.

Mr. Cronin wanted to know the definition of 'special warrant article'. Mr. Viger replied a special warrant article meant that they had a period of time to spend the funds. If the funds are not spent in the period of time they are returned to the general fund.

Mr. Sherman questioned if there was an opportunity to have passage from Veteran's Park to other Town parcels along Sherburne Road. Mr. Gagnon answered yes; there was a trail on the map that went from Veteran's to Sherburne Road, directly across to the parking area of the Merriam-Cutter parking area. He noted that the Forestry Committee would maintain the trails. He pointed out that the forestry maintenance was able to be done by funds from timber harvesting.

Article L – Safer Firefighter FEMA Grant

Fire Chief James Midgley and Deputy Fire Chief Paul Leischner came forward to discuss the proposed article. If awarded, the FEMA Safer grant would be used for the purpose of hiring 4 fulltime Firefighters. The cost spread out over three years: In year one and two the grant covers 75% of the usual annual cost, in year three it covers 35% of the usual annual cost. At the completion of the grant the Town will be responsible for the cost of retaining the firefighters. Chief Midgley explained that the grant opens in December and an application process follows. If the Town votes against allowing them to accept the grant, the Fire Department will have time to revoke the application.

Mr. Cate read the proposed article aloud.

Deputy Leischner provided the Board with an information package that outlined the department's staffing, the challenges they face, and some of the solutions they've gone through. He took time

to discuss the information in the package and discuss the safety aspects of having the additional personnel.

Mr. Baliey was in favor of having additional firefighters and receiving federal money. He questioned the portion of the article that committed the Town to paying in future years. Mr. Viger replied the first three years would be paid for by a grant, after which the Town would roll the money into the operating budget which would be approved from that point forward.

Mr. Sherman questioned the term 'firefighter' in the article and questioned if it should indicate 'firefighter/EMT' instead. He wanted to make sure they had as many EMTs available as possible. Chief Midgley replied when they put the numbers together they did it for firefighter/paramedics, because that was their goal. He noted they were difficult to get as there was a shortage within the State. He hoped to attract paramedics, and then backfill with advanced EMT which are currently the lowest level they hire. Mr. Sherman felt the wording of the article should reflect the position. Mr. Viger asked if the wording of the article would affect the grant. Chief Midgley will review.

Ms. Hillsgrove suggested that the voter's guide explain that the cost would be for salary and benefits. Mr. Bailey felt it would be beneficial to inform voters of the amount of money that would be saved by the grant.

The Board thanked the Chief and Deputy Chief for the presentation.

Article B – Raise \$300,000 to be placed into the Highway Department Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund.

Ms. Hillsgrove asked if there was already a capital reserve started. Mr. McCarthy replied they currently had \$150,000 in the account.

Mr. Sherman questioned who was designing the building. Mr. McCarthy replied they were working with Roland Soucy, who had provided preliminary drawings that were presented to the Selectmen. They made recommended changes. There will be additional meetings with Mr. Soucy so they can have a more in-depth design (internally and structurally) and put together an associated cost. Mr. McCarthy spoke about the timeframe in which they would like to construct/complete the building. He said the Selectmen had decided that the building would house both the Highway Department and Transfer Station. He believed at some point they would discuss restructuring to create one public works department with two divisions. The building will have office space and vehicle bays (heated to 55 degrees) to house the trucks during winter months so they can be preloaded and ready to maintain the roads. Mr. Sherman understood if the trucks were going to be cleaned off there would be an underground tank to store the runoff. Mr. McCarthy replied that type of structure was planned to be incorporated in the building.

Mr. Cronin questioned if they had an estimate for the final total cost. Mr. McCarthy replied they hoped to be within the \$800,000 range, but realistically believed it would be between \$800,000-\$900,000. He said when they came back with a number it would include everything.

Mr. Sherman asked about the status of the Transfer Station building. Mr. McCarthy discussed the problems had occurred and told the Board they hoped to have it up and running in a couple weeks.

Article C – Five year Police Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Mr. Viger told the Board that the proposed numbers were real. He said there would be some 'tweaking' of the language that the Selectmen would be reviewing that would be forwarded to the Board.

Mr. Sherman confirmed that everything the officers would need was included in the approved budget. Mr. McCarthy answered yes.

Mr. Cronin wanted to know the percent increase for each year. Mr. Viger explained that there wasn't a level increase across the board given that there are union steps; the average was 2%-3%. Mr. Cronin asked what salary range they would be at with the proposed contract. Mr. McCarthy believed the contract would put them conservatively in the 75%-85% range.

Mr. Bailey wanted know what would happen if the article failed. Mr. McCarthy replied they would continue to work off the contract currently in place; however there would be no raises.

Article D – Board of Selectmen to sell certain Town owned property (Map 22 Lot 8-146) off Greenwood Street. *(For Budget Committee information – no vote required)*

Mr. McCarthy explained the land was a small piece from the senior center that would be sold to the abutter. The abutter would use the area to replace their septic if needed in the future. The cost was determined by the assessor.

Article E – Highway Block Grant - \$321,583

There were no questions.

Article F – To appoint a Town Treasurer. *(For Budget Committee information – no vote required)*

Mr. McCarthy explained that the current position is elected and the concern is how critical the position is to the Town's financial accounting. He said the Town's accounting was essentially like running a business and they wanted to have the ability of choosing a qualified person conduct the job if at some point the current treasurer retire.

Mr. Cronin asked if the position would be included in the budget. Mr. Viger replied the position was currently in the budget. Mr. Bailey believed there would be an increase for the salary as he doubted anyone would take the position for the current pay.

Article G – Elderly Exemption. *(For Budget Committee information – no vote required)*

There was a brief discussion regarding how qualifying people would apply to receive the exemption. Mr. Bailey asked if there was a mechanism to recover lost funds in the event an owner passed away and the property went to a family member. Mr. Viger replied there was no lien against the house.

Mr. Cate asked if there was a rough estimate for how many would qualify. Mr. McCarthy answered no.

Mr. Cronin noted that the article affected revenue and questioned if the Budget Committee had any 'say' in its recommendation for the warrant. Mr. Viger said he would check.

Mr. Sherman wanted to know how the proposed numbers compared to the current exemption. Mr. McCarthy understood that the numbers in the article were higher.

Article H - Discontinuance of Capital Reserve Funds. *(For Budget Committee information – no vote required)*

Mr. McCarthy noted that the auditor has asked the Town to clean the books.

Article J – Keno Article. *(For Budget Committee information – no vote required)*

Article K – CMAQ Grant to construct two roundabouts at Sherburne Road/Mammoth Road and Mammoth Road/Marsh Road.

Mr. Bailey questioned why the article was for a roundabout and not a traffic light. Mr. McCarthy first noted if the Town didn't get approved for the grant, the article will be withdrawn. He discussed the grant and told the Board the Selectmen were working with the Nashua Regional Planning Commission to try and see if they could address the traffic situation at the proposed locations. A traffic survey was done to see how the traffic situation could be resolved at both intersections. The Selectmen felt a roundabout would be more aesthetically pleasing. They were in the process of doing engineering studies to see what would be needed for both a roundabout and traffic signals. Mr. McCarthy said they needed to submit the grant (which was done). The article was submitted for voters to decide if they want the Town to accept the grant. The Town will be notified in December if it is approved; if not, the article will be withdrawn.

Mr. Viger told the Board that the two roundabouts are included on the State's 10-year plan for 2027. He said they were trying to capture as much federal grant money as possible. Ms. Larson wanted to know if the Town didn't get the grant if traffic lights could be discussed at reconsideration. Mr. Viger said it could be, but then the Town would be 100% on the hook for the cost (approximately \$600,000). He noted in that case they would be raising money for something the State didn't approve.

Mr. Cate asked about the Willow Street Bridge project. Mr. McCarthy provided the Board with an update and noted they would start the project in the spring with the goal of completion prior to school starting in the fall.

GENERAL DISCUSSION / CLOSING COMMENTS

Mr. Cate noted the Board would vote on the School and Town articles at their next meeting. Mr. Sherman pointed out that the Board had to vote on Section 7 in the ByLaws. Mr. Cate said they would address it and vote at their next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

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

VOTE: (8-0-0) The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Charity A. Landry

450

Recording Secretary