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**APPROVED**  
TOWN OF PELHAM  
BUDGET COMMITTEE - MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, September 24, 2020

**CALL TO ORDER** – at approximately 7:00pm

Chairman David Cronin opened the meeting and read aloud “A Checklist To Ensure Meetings Are Compliant With The Right-to-Know Law During The State Of Emergency” (*regarding access to the meeting*)

Mr. Cronin asked Committee members, when their name is called, to please confirm their presence and to please identify as the right to know law requires, who, if anyone, was in the room.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**PRESENT:** David Cronin – Present in person  
Bob Sherman – Present in person  
Meg Bressette – Present in person  
Eduardo Martony – Present in person  
Philip Haberlen – Present in person  
Jason Croteau – Present in person  
Jas Moorjani – Present via Zoom (no one in the room)  
Kannan Sasi – Present via Zoom (no one in the room)  
School Board Representative Deb Ryan – Present in person  
Board of Selectmen Representative Bob Haverty – Present in person

**ABSENT:** Amber Capone - excused

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**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**INFORMATION**

Mr. Cronin stated Mr. Martony had a question regarding the compressor. The Cemetery uses the compressor to run the necessary machinery to cut into the earth to have winter burials.

Mr. Cronin understood those who attended the budget training session found it very productive.

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**MINUTES REVIEW:**

**September 17, 2020:**

**MOTION:** (Sherman/Ryan) To approve the September 17, 2020 meeting minutes as amended.

**ROLL CALL VOTE:** David Cronin – Yes  
Bob Sherman – Yes  
Meg Bressette – Yes  
Eduardo Martony – Yes  
Philip Haberlen – Yes

Jason Croteau – Yes  
Jas Moorjani – Abstained  
Kannan Sasi – Yes  
School Representative Deb Ryan – Yes  
Board of Selectmen Representative Bob Haverty – Yes

(9-0-1) The motion carried. Mr. Moorjani abstained

30

31 **2021 BUDGET REVIEW**

32

33 Town Finance Director Jean Olson and IT Administrator Brian Demers were present for budget  
34 presentation.

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36

37 Fire Department – Fire Chief James Midgley presenting  
38 2021 Selectmen approved budget - \$2,647,234

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40 Chief Midgley stated with the passing of the Firefighter’s contract at Town Meeting all salary  
41 increases were contractual; those increases affect other line items involving salary (i.e. earned  
42 time off, overtime for training). In addition, they brought in a part-time (two days per week)  
43 Assistant Office Manager.

44

45 Mr. Sherman inquired if the department was fully staffed. Chief Midgley replied they had a  
46 resignation during the last week. That employee had been with the department for several years.  
47 Currently they have two long-term injuries; one person may not be returning until the beginning  
48 of 2021.

49

50 Mr. Cronin wanted to know how many call firefighters the department had. Chief Midgley  
51 replied they had eight (one lieutenant and seven firefighters). He stated when accepting the  
52 SAFER Grant, the Fire Department made a deal with the Selectmen to not take any new call  
53 members on.

54

55 Chief Midgley provided a summary of the budget. He noted there was a contractual increase for  
56 cell phones and access fee increases from Verizon. The figure for the ambulance fuel oil is set by  
57 the Town; the figure will be inserted when received (November). Vehicle maintenance was  
58 basically level funded. They will be getting a new engine which will be in at the end of next  
59 year; it was supposed to be a 12-month build, but because of Covid they had extreme difficulties  
60 getting components for the vehicles. Equipment maintenance was level funded. Chief Midgley  
61 noted they had some issues with their radio system. He said the Police equipment was from 2003  
62 and the Fire Department equipment was from 2006. The equipment runs 24/7 and would start  
63 showing its age; Motorola has deemed it non-serviceable beginning December 31, 2020. This has  
64 been included on the Capital Improvement Plan (‘CIP’) broken into two projects (to minimize  
65 cost impacts). The project is for Police, Fire, and infrastructure, the first project costing  
66 approximately \$180,000-\$190,000 and the second project costing approximately \$320,000.

67

68 Chief Midgley noted there was a big increase for rentals; Pennichuck had done a significant  
69 expansion of their water system. Mr. Sherman questioned if there was any possibility of bringing  
70 water down Route 38. Mr. McCarthy replied it was being investigated. They were waiting for a  
71 meeting with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. He said they had  
72 applied for a water grant and understood it had been referred to a special subcommittee; however,  
73 due to Covid, virtual meetings were being arranged. Once that meeting is held the Town will

74 have a better idea of the status of the grant and if the project will come to fruition. He added even  
75 with a grant the Town would have to come up with funding. The project total is approximately  
76 \$5.2 million; the grant is for \$2.5 million. The Town would need to come up with the remaining  
77 \$2.5 million.

78  
79 Ms. Bressette asked if the increased hydrant fee (\$16,000) was per year or a one-time fee for the  
80 new hydrants in the area. Chief Midgley replied every year with have that increase in addition to  
81 contractual increases from the public utilities commission. He described how the costs were  
82 assessed. Ms. Bressette wanted to know when the Town's water rights were sold. Mr. Haverty  
83 replied the Town's water rights were not sold; they had been given away by a board a long time  
84 ago because the Town did not want to be in the business of operating a water system. Mr.  
85 McCarthy noted that was done in the 1970s. Chief Midgley noted every time a development puts  
86 in a private system, if Pennichuck assumes that system that is not run by a homeowner's  
87 association, the Town has an assessment.

88  
89 Mr. Cronin wanted to know what the dispatch contract was. Chief Midgley replied  
90 approximately three years ago the Town's communication/dispatching was outsourced and now  
91 controlled by a regional dispatch center in Londonderry.

92  
93 Ms. Bressette wanted to the know if the figure (on line 380) for the thermal imaging camera was  
94 for a replacement or a new purchase. Chief Midgley explained thermal imaging technology and  
95 equipment changes yearly. The department's cameras range in age from twelve year to four  
96 years. They need to have one on all apparatus that leaves the station. They will be rotating out  
97 the equipment beginning with the oldest first. Ms. Bressette saw the FLSA was increasing by  
98 \$4,000 and inquired how much was spent in the previous year. Chief Midgley replied last year it  
99 was the total amount. He said that was a line they had to try to guess at; currently they have  
100 people out on injury which will drive up overtime costs, which drives up the FLSA. He said if  
101 they had no people out during the year the FLSA number would drop. Ms. Bressette saw that line  
102 99 (paramedic refresher) had \$1 and wanted to know if it was a placeholder. Chief Midgley  
103 replied they rotated the EMT refresher and paramedic refresher every other year instead of having  
104 a spike every other year.

105  
106 Emergency Management – Fire Chief James Midgley presenting  
107 2021 Selectmen approved budget – \$8,913

108  
109 Chief Midgley noted there was a slight increase (\$269) in salaries because the calculation  
110 changed. He said the budget was basically a placeholder. They have found it useful to funnel  
111 FEMA money in and out of the budget to cover costs. Mr. McCarthy noted this year the budget  
112 was overspent 203%. He said the budget has been used to track the Town's Covid expenses so  
113 they could be reimbursed by the CARES Act and/or FEMA.

114  
115 Town Buildings – Town Administrator Brian McCarthy presenting  
116 2021 Selectmen approved budget - \$625,337

117  
118 Mr. McCarthy noted there were increases for the maintenance worker's hours (11 hours to 20  
119 hours). He said the Town's buildings were essentially older buildings that needed to be  
120 addressed. He noted the contract had been moved to the 13/39 pay scale to have a better picture  
121 of expenses; also, there was an adjustment because last year there were 52 pay weeks and 2020  
122 has 53 pay weeks.

123

124 The remaining budget lines were level funded except Pennichuck Water, that showed an increase  
125 (\$2,641) as a 12% projected increase. Mr. McCarthy recalled the Town was hit with a 19%  
126 increase last year. He believed the proposed figure would increase and will address it during  
127 reconsideration. He told the committee that the roof over Sherburne Hall had been evaluated and  
128 seemed to be fine right now; the roof repair line had been cut in half. The Library heating project  
129 was in the process of being done. Mr. McCarthy pointed out he didn't put any projects in for  
130 2021; there were small things that needed to be done but felt they could accomplish them. If  
131 something changes, he'll bring it forward during reconsideration. He continued to review the  
132 budget.

133

134 Mr. Haberlen understood there were lines for oil, propane, and natural gas. He asked if this was  
135 because there were different buildings with different systems. Mr. McCarthy answered yes; some  
136 buildings use oil and some use propane. The municipal building was converted approximately  
137 three years ago from oil to natural gas through a program through Liberty Utilities (NH Saves).

138

139 Debt Service Principal- Town Administrator Brian McCarthy presenting  
140 2021 Selectmen approved budget - \$540,642

141

142 Mr. McCarthy noted the budget showed an overall decrease of \$108,395. He went through the  
143 items and noted what year they would be paid off.

144

145 Debt Service Interest - Town Administrator Brian McCarthy presenting  
146 2021 Selectmen approved budget - \$70,982

147

148 Mr. McCarthy noted the budget decreased \$26,017.

149

150 Legal – Town Administrator Brian McCarthy presenting  
151 2021 Selectmen approved budget - \$96,000

152

153 Mr. McCarthy explained how the Town had a set fee\ which saves the Town money.

154

155 Treasurer - Town Administrator Brian McCarthy presenting  
156 2021 Selectmen approved budget - \$15,249

157

158 The budget was level funded from the previous year.

159

160 Trust Funds – Town Administrator Brian McCarthy presenting  
161 2021 Selectmen approved budget - \$150

162

163 The budget was level funded from the previous year.

164

165

166 Selectmen - Town Administrator Brian McCarthy presenting  
167 2021 Selectmen approved budget - \$530,324

168

169 Mr. McCarthy reviewed the proposed budget noted the increases and decreases.

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171

172 **ADJOURNMENT**

173

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

**ROLL CALL** David Cronin – Yes  
**VOTE:** Bob Sherman – Yes  
Meg Bressette – Yes  
Eduardo Martony – Yes  
Philip Haberen – Yes  
Jason Croteau – Yes  
Kannan Sasi – Yes  
Jas Moorjani - Yes  
School Board Representative Deb Ryan - Yes  
Board of Selectmen Representative Bob Haverty – Yes  
(10-0-0) The motion carried.

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175 The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:00pm.

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Respectfully submitted,  
Charity Landry  
Recording Secretary