

**DRAFT**  
TOWN OF PELHAM  
BUDGET COMMITTEE – MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023

1 **CALL TO ORDER** – Ms. Meg Bressette opened the meeting at approximately 6:32 PM.

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4 **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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7 Ms. Bressette called attendance:

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9 **PRESENT:** Chair Meg Bressette  
10 Vice Chair Greg Smith  
11 Secretary Deborah Ryan  
12 Bob Sherman  
13 Ellen Cormier  
14 Garrett Abare – *not present at the time of roll-call; arrived at 6:52 PM*  
15 Paul Grant  
16 David Silva  
17 Selectmen Representative Jason Croteau  
18 Recording Secretary Heidi Zagorski

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20 **ABSENT:** School Board Representative David Wilkerson - *excused*

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23 **BUSINESS**

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25 **MINUTES REVIEW: September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023**

26 September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023 Meeting Minutes

27 Ms. Bressette asked to remove the Selectmen’s alternate Ms. Charlene Takesian from the absent line because  
28 Selectmen Representative Mr. Jason Croteau was present.

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30 **MOTION:** (Sherman/Smith) To place the September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023 Budget Committee Meeting minutes on  
31 file as amended.

32 **VOTE:** (8-0-0) The motion passed.

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35 **OLD/TABLED BUSINESS: Bylaw Review – Language related to numeric tallies RSA 32:5, V-a**

36 Ms. Bressette said she did put some proposed language together for the Committee members to review. Ms. Bressette  
37 read the language as “unless the legislative body has voted otherwise the Budget Committee adopted under RSA 32:14  
38 may on its own initiative require that the tallies of votes be printed in the town and school district warrants next to the  
39 affected article.” Under section RSA 32:5, section V-a “if the Budget Committee votes not to include the tallies, the  
40 warrant article should contain a notation of whether or not the appropriation is recommended by the Budget  
41 Committee. The Budget Committee shall vote on whether to include tallies no later than reconsideration.” Mr. Bob  
42 Sherman added “in any budgetary year”

43  
44 Mr. Paul Grant asked if this means the decision needs to be renewed each year. Ms. Bressette confirmed yes adding  
45 that right now they have to include recommended or not recommended. Mr. Sherman said he does not think it has to  
46 be voted on every year adding that if everyone is happy with the procedure it could be automatic.

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Ms. Deborah Ryan asked for clarification. Mr. Sherman explained it would remain the same unless a new majority said they would like to do it a different way. Ms. Bressette said she would think every Budget Committee would vote each season. Mr. Greg Smith suggested pushing this to the end of the meeting. Ms. Bressette suggested that the Board members review the information and have a discussion next week.

**CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED: Vote upon applicant Mr. Phil Haberlen for the vacant seat.**

Ms. Bressette announced that one applicant came in for the vacant seat on the Budget Committee and this seat would end as of the Town meeting in March of 2024. Mr. Phil Haberlen stated that he served for three years previously on the Budget Committee. Mr. Haberlen said he would like to continue to contribute.

Mr. Sherman referenced Mr. Haberlen’s application regarding portions of the town and the school’s budgets becoming too bloated. Mr. Haberlen said he became aware recently not just in this district, but elsewhere as well, of how the school budget has grown over the past 20 years. Mr. Haberlen said the enrollment has been declining over the past years and that would be one area that needs to be examined.

Mr. Grant asked Mr. Haberlen his opinion on including vote tallies on the ballots. Mr. Haberlen said he thinks it adds transparency, and there isn’t a reason why the public shouldn’t know how each member voted.

**MOTION:** (Smith/Sherman) To those in favor of appointing Mr. Phil Haberlen to the open Budget Committee seat.

- ROLL-CALL VOTE:** Ms. Cormier – Yes
- Mr. Grant – Yes
- Ms. Ryan – Yes
- Mr. Sherman – Yes
- Mr. Silva – Yes
- Mr. Smith – Yes
- Mr. Croteau – Yes
- Ms. Bressette - Yes

(8-0-0) The motion passed.

Ms. Bressette stated that he would need to be sworn in at the Clerk’s Office before the next Budget Committee meeting.

**REVIEW TOWN BUDGETS**

**CIP – Capital Improvement Plan**

Mr. Sam Thomas introduced himself as the Chair of the CIP and the Chair of the Master Plan, on the Planning Board as an alternate member, and also on the Water Commission.

Ms. Danielle Masse-Quinn introduced herself and stated she sits on the CIP, the Master Plan Subcommittee, the Planning Board, the Board of Adjustment, and the Agricultural Commission.

95

96 Mr. Thomas said the CIP is an advisory subcommittee that sits under the Planning Board. He said it is under the  
97 regulations of the New Hampshire RSA 674:5-8. Mr. Thomas said as a subcommittee they report back to the Planning  
98 Board. Mr. Thomas said the definition under the CIP for a capital request is it has to be \$75,000 and over seven years.  
99 He said a request form goes out to each department, then they come back to the CIP and as a committee, they review  
100 the requests. Mr. Thomas said the Budget Committee has before them two documents; one is from the NRPC (Nashua  
101 Regional Planning Commission) and the other which they will be working off of is an Excel spreadsheet that will take  
102 you department to department and project to project. He said the year is stated for each project and also a ranking.  
103 The ranking was determined by the CIP. Mr. Thomas said this document has been approved by the Planning Board  
104 and presented to the Board of Selectmen and this is the last step of the CIP process.

105 Mr. Thomas said they did meet with the Board of Selectmen which approved the CIP plan with a couple of suggested  
106 changes, but the CIP does not make those changes because this is approved by the Planning Board. Mr. Thomas  
107 reiterated that the Board of Selectmen did make some changes to the CIP, however, those changes are not reflected in  
108 the CIP document.

109

110 Ms. Masse-Quinn said the first item is under Admin and General Government and it is the Main Street sidewalk  
111 expansion for \$247,000 with the starting year of 2024 and the priority for that is 'Committed' because there is an  
112 existing contractual agreement. Ms. Masse-Quinn said the Main Street expansion will also be offset by the New  
113 Hampshire ARPA Funds which is the American Rescue Plan Act in the full amount.

114

115 Ms. Masse-Quinn said the next items under the Police Department begin with the Animal Control Shelter for \$274,709  
116 for the year 2024 and is allocated as 'Urgent' meaning cannot be delayed; needed for health or safety.

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118 Ms. Masse-Quinn said the next item is the Expansion and Remodel in the amount of \$92,850 for the year 2024 and is  
119 allocated as 'Necessary'.

120

121 Ms. Masse-Quinn said the next item is the Record Management System for \$117,239 over a three-year term beginning  
122 in 2025 and is recommended as 'Urgent'.

123

124 Ms. Masse-Quinn said under the Fire Department, there is a four-bay Garage for \$350,000 with the starting year of  
125 2027 and a priority recommendation of 'Desirable'.

126

127 Ms. Masse-Quinn said the next item under the Fire Department is to replace Ambulance 2 in the amount of \$330,000  
128 also 2025 and a priority recommendation of 'Committed' meaning there is a contractual agreement for that item.

129

130 Ms. Masse-Quinn said the next item under the Fire Department is to replace Engine 3 in the amount of \$475,000 over  
131 2025 and 2026 and the priority is 'Necessary'.

132

133 Ms. Tammy Penny introduced herself as the Finance Director. Ms. Penny said the Fire Department did ask for \$20,000  
134 for engineering fees in their 2024 request but the Board of Selectmen cut that to zero.

135

136 Ms. Cormier said in both the Records Management System and the Replacement Engine 3, there is an amount of  
137 \$475,000 in multiple years. Ms. Cormier asked if it was accumulative. Mr. Thomas said it is accumulative and the  
138 total is \$950,000 split over two years.

139

140 Ms. Bressette said under the Animal Control Center and the Expansion and Remodel for the Police, the Selectmen are  
141 going to review to see if it would be included in the ARPA Funds. Mr. Croteau confirmed they will be discussing this  
142 at a meeting next week.

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Ms. Bressette announced for the record that Mr. Garrett Abare arrived at 6:52 PM.

Ms. Masse-Quinn said under the Highway Department to replace the 2010 Dump Truck for \$186,563 for 2024 and the priority recommendation is “Necessary”.

Ms. Masse-Quinn said the next item under the Highway Department is to replace the 2012 Backhoe for \$159,109 with the starting year of 2025 for one year, with a “Necessary” recommendation.

Ms. Bressette asked if the Highway Dump Truck was decided to come out of the Highway Grant money. Ms. Penny said yes that it is coming out of the Highway Block Grant money.

Ms. Penny stated that these are recommendations by the CIP and the Board of Selectmen has not voted to allocate ARPA Funds for the sidewalks adding that this will probably be discussed at the next meeting. Ms. Penny added that the Transfer Station item was cut from the budget by the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Sherman asked if when the Highway Department gets a new dump truck then it would be passed onto the Transfer Station. Town Administrator, Mr. Joe Roark, stated that the truck would be traded in with the purchase of a new truck being paid with block funds adding that therefore there wouldn't be a truck to be handed down. Ms. Penny said the block grant funds are outside of the operating budget and it is an allowable use.

Mr. David Silva asked for clarification as to why the block grant funds are not reflected on the CIP plan. Mr. Thomas explained that once the CIP plan was presented to the Planning Board it got approved. He said they cannot make any changes that the Board of Selectmen or the Budget Committee want to make.

Mr. Roark explained that every year the Federal government provides Highway Block Funds. He said in this particular instance the Board of Selectmen knew this truck needed to be replaced sooner than later. Mr. Roark said an effort to reduce the tax impact they decided to take the money out of Block Funds.

Ms. Bressette further explained that just because they see it listed on the CIP doesn't mean it is acted upon; it is more of an outlook. Ms. Penny said the CIP is a recommendation that the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee do not have to act on. She said the CIP contains items that would either be funded if it's small enough as a threshold or a replacement in the operating budget or if it's large enough it might be a special article.

Mr. Thomas said under the Transfer Station is the F-600 Dump Truck for 2024 and it is recommended as ‘Necessary’.

Mr. Thomas said the next item is the Skid Steer for 2025 for 57,400 and it is recommended as ‘Necessary’.

Mr. Thomas said the next items are the 75-yard trailer and the 100-yard trailer both for \$140,000 for 2030 and allocate them under a capital reserve. Mr. Thomas said at the Board of Selectmen meeting, they noted instead of allocating the money in the capital reserve, the money should just be allocated in 2029 to purchase in 2030.

Ms. Bressette noted the dump truck was taken out by the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Thomas said under Parks and Recreation is the Muldoon Park renovation for 2024 for \$122,561 and is considered ‘Urgent’ because it did not pass State inspections for safety issues.

Mr. Thomas said the next item is the Restroom Storage – Snack area at Raymond Field. He said it is allocated out for

191 2025 at \$200,000 and recommended as ‘Desired’.

192  
193 Mr. Thomas said the Library had no CIP requests.

194  
195 Mr. Thomas said under Cemeteries for the Gibson Cemetery Columbarium is \$96,000 for 2024 however there is a trust  
196 fund of \$44,000 and the net effect to the town would be \$51,740. Ms. Penny replied that the tax impact is about  
197 \$44,000 and they would withdraw almost \$52,000 from the expendable trust fund.

198  
199 Mr. Thomas said the Hobbs Center request to replace the bus is in 2026 for \$120,000 and recommended as  
200 ‘Necessary’. Mr. Thomas said under the Hobbs Center, the next item is the Community Center expansion and Garden  
201 Park in the amount of \$247,998 and was allocated over three years as a capital reserve with a recommendation of  
202 ‘Necessary’ and ‘Desirable’ but also required more research. Mr. Thomas said the Board of Selectmen did recommend  
203 that the project start in 2027, not in 2025.

204  
205 Ms. Ryan asked if there was currently a capital reserve fund or would one be created as a warrant article. Mr. Thomas  
206 replied that they would be creating one.

207  
208 Mr. Thomas said under the Planning Board there is an MS4 structural plan for 2024 with a recommendation of  
209 ‘Urgent’ and ‘Critical’ with a cost of \$100,000 for remediation. Mr. Thomas said that the CIP Committee is aware that  
210 there could be fines if the town does not do immediate remediation.

211  
212 Ms. Ryan asked Mr. Thomas to explain to the public how the CIP works. Mr. Thomas said the CIP committee is a  
213 subcommittee of the Planning Board and they are to review any department requests over \$75,000 over seven years.  
214 We would go through that justification and the committee votes on every item and makes recommendations. The CIP  
215 presents the document to the Planning Board, they endorse it, then they go to the Board of Selectmen, and they endorse  
216 it. Mr. Thomas said when the Budget Committee makes a change, it would be helpful to be notified.

217  
218 Ms. Ryan asked if this could be a working document so that when presented it is actual. Mr. Thomas said the  
219 document should include how each project will be funded.

220  
221 Ms. Cormier asked if they are committed to paying for an item once they approve it. Ms. Penny said they could not  
222 repurpose a capital reserve fund. Ms. Penny said there is a process including voting on it at a town meeting. Ms.  
223 Penny said they could vote to close a capital reserve fund and it would fall to fund balance and then open a new capital  
224 reserve fund with no tax impact with the same dollars if something were to come up. Ms. Ryan added, provided it  
225 came from a capital reserve fund. Ms. Ryan said some would be included in the budget or a warrant article. Ms. Penny  
226 said if something is approved as part of the budget, the Board of Selectmen has the authority as the governing body to  
227 transfer from well 9 to another but they can’t transfer out of special articles.

228  
229 Mr. Grant asked if there were items that were submitted and were not on the list. Ms. Masse-Quinn and Mr. Thomas  
230 said they accepted everything and put it into a timetable. Mr. Thomas gave an example that the Hobbs Center  
231 requested 2024 for the Garden expansion and the CIP Committee suggested 2027. Mr. Garrett Abare said he was on  
232 the CIP Committee and said they are not necessarily denying items but deferring items. Mr. Sherman said the idea is  
233 to even out the budget instead of having major spikes from year to year.

234  
235 Mr. Thomas said that under the Pelham Elementary School (PES) to asphalt the parking lot and roadways is for  
236 \$250,320 for 2024 and recommended as ‘Necessary’.

237  
238 Mr. Thomas said under PES the Air Conditioning System Phase II for 2025 as “Desirable”. Mr. Thomas said the PES

239 Air Conditioning Phase III for the gym and all remaining parts of the school for \$600,132 and recommended as  
240 “Desirable”.

241  
242 Mr. Thomas said that under the Pelham High School (PHS) parking lot is the student parking lot in 2027 and is  
243 recommended as “Necessary” in the amount of \$295,830.

244  
245 Mr. Thomas announced that The Master Plan draft will be ready on October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023 with a final report on  
246 December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and will be presented to the Planning Board, the Board of Selectmen, and anyone else who would  
247 like to attend.

248  
249 Mr. Thomas said he is part of Wreaths Across America and The Gibson Cemetery has been approved. He said they  
250 have 57 volunteers to place the wreaths on the veterans' headstones and they have 286 sponsors. He said they have  
251 550 veterans, so they are still accepting contributions. Mr. Thomas said the ceremony will be December 16<sup>th</sup> for the  
252 wreath laying.

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255 **SENIOR CENTER**

256 Ms. Sara Landry introduced herself.

257 Ms. Bressette said the 2023 operating budget for the Senior Center was \$193,338, the 2024 request was \$211,030 and  
258 the Selectmen approved the \$211,030 which was an increase of 9.2%.

259  
260 Ms. Landry said the bulk of the increases came through the salary line items. Ms. Landry said a lot of those are  
261 contractual. She said they have two staff members who will be in the union and had to add in funding there for earned  
262 buyback time, longevity, and overtime.

263  
264 Ms. Landry said the next item is supplies which has been tight in the past years, so she has increased this by \$200  
265 mostly because the cost of paper has gone up significantly.

266  
267 Ms. Landry said the telephone budget is stable.

268  
269 Ms. Landry said the gas and oil went down related to the bus usage and the cost of the gas going down.

270  
271 Ms. Landry said under repairs and projects, this has remained stable.

272  
273 Ms. Landry said the rental budget went up a little because the contractual costs have gone up for the copier and the  
274 dumpster.

275  
276 Ms. Landry said under expenses there is a one-time expense creating an increase for a laptop.

277  
278 Mr. Sherman asked what the spring event was. Ms. Landry said it is usually a volunteer event, sometimes an outdoor  
279 event, a live music luncheon, or a movie night. Ms. Landry explained this changes year to year depending on what the  
280 schedule looks like.

281  
282 Mr. Smith asked about Comcast cable at \$180/month. Ms. Landry said it is the television service connected to the  
283 overhead projector and the internet service.

284  
285 Mr. Silva asked if any events bring in funds. Ms. Landry said right now they have trips that help offset the costs of  
286 other trips. Ms. Landry said the money goes into a revolving account and has to be used for programming.

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Mr. Abare asked Ms. Landry to explain how the Senior Center received funding for programs. Ms. Landry said the Hobbs Community Center does not have any membership fees so anyone from any location can come in and participate in the programs. Ms. Landry said the Council on Aging is a private non-profit organization that they partner with. She said the Council on Aging does have an annual fee. Ms. Landry said they support and assist the Senior Center with programming. Ms. Landry said certain programs, people will pay a donation and that money will go towards RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program) or back towards the Council on Aging. Ms. Landry explained that the town does not make any money on the programs that are run. Mr. Abare asked if any programs are 100% free. Ms. Landry said yes. She further explained everything is donation-based only. Mr. Abare said the funding for programs is under \$10,000 and Ms. Landry replied it is less than the \$10,000 noted on the expense line because some of those expenses cover postage, background checks, and driver record checks. Mr. Abare said it is essentially self-funded. Ms. Bressette said she wanted to clarify that it is not self-funded because there is no revenue stream.

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

Ms. Jen Beauregard introduced herself as the Planning Director. Ms. Dena Hoffman introduced herself as the Environmental Regulation Compliance Specialist.

Ms. Bressette stated that the operation budget for 2023 was \$571,215, the 2024 department request was \$671,296, and the Selectmen approved \$609,296 which is an increase of 6.7%.

Ms. Beauregard said the salary increases are contractual. Ms. Beauregard said one change is the Planning Clerk was promoted to Office Manager in April and the Planning Clerk position was not filled showing an increase in one position and a decrease in the other position.

Ms. Beauregard said there was no need to increase the supplies budget.

Ms. Beauregard said any telephone increases are contractual.

Ms. Beauregard said under gas and oil, the Planning Department inherited two vehicles from the Police Department explaining one is used for the full-time Building Inspector and the other is shared between the Code Enforcement Officer and the Environmental Compliance Specialist. Ms. Beauregard said she decreased the gas by 400 gallons based on previous usage.

Ms. Beauregard said under expenses, the mileage reimbursement has decreased, and some funds were left there in case they need to use their personal vehicle.

Ms. Beauregard said the NRPC (National Region Planning Commission) local dues contract increased by \$543 so the overall expense budget decreased by \$18,298 and a big part of this was due to the implementation of the Civic Gov computer system that was asked for last year. She explained they were able to get a five-year contract at \$17,000 per year.

Ms. Beauregard said under specials there is an increase of \$5,000 for the National Region Planning Commission to review all of the local ordinances and work together. She said they would also help in rewriting the ordinances

Ms. Beauregard said under specials there is the MS4 budget. Ms. Beauregard said they currently use Verdantas services to consult with the MS4 requirements. Ms. Beauregard said they were able to reduce what they would normally spend on the consulting services since hiring Ms. Hoffman as the Environmental Compliance Specialist.

335 Ms. Beauregard said when they started with them in 2020, the contract was \$60,000, last year they were able to  
336 decrease them by \$34,000 and this year the contract is \$26,500 which is up \$6,000 from last year which is due to costs  
337 going up not in terms of more work they are doing.

338  
339 Ms. Beauregard said they decreased the line item for MS4 supplies, expenses, and training. Ms. Beauregard said some  
340 funds are kept here for Ms. Hoffman to do training, testing for water bodies, and potential funds for any clean-up that  
341 may need to happen. Ms. Beauregard said Ms. Hoffman is currently training to become a Wetland and Soil Certified.

342  
343 Ms. Beauregard said under the BMP (Best Management Practice) structure for the Pelham Memorial Veterans Park this  
344 is an EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) mandate that must be installed by June of 2024. The quote is \$38,000  
345 for the entire installation, all the site work, and putting in a new culvert.

346  
347 Ms. Hoffman introduced herself as the Environmental Compliance Specialist for the town. Ms. Hoffman said the MS4  
348 permit is the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Permit for the MS4. She said the MS4 is a Federally mandated  
349 permit where towns that have specific population sizes of urban density are required to follow set EPA requirements to  
350 improve water quality in our water bodies.

351  
352 Ms. Hoffman presented the following slideshow:  
353 [BMP Presentation for Memorial Veterans Park.pdf](#)

354  
355 Mr. Grant asked about the potential fines if inspections were random. Ms. Hoffman said the audits are completely  
356 random and you are only notified two weeks in advance.

357  
358 Mr. Silva said considering that in Massachusetts, both Dracut and Tyngsboro contribute to the pollution of Long Pond,  
359 if Pelham were to do everything they were supposed to do and was to be compliant, could they get fined? Mr. Silvas  
360 asked if the other towns would need to work together. Ms. Hoffman said yes both Dracut and Tyngsboro are subject to  
361 the MS4. Ms. Hoffman said Tyngsboro already has two structural BMPs on the pond and Dracut put catch basin hoods  
362 around the pond. Ms. Hoffman said Dracut agreed to work together to offer a public education program for the  
363 residents. Ms. Beauregard said they will need to monitor and test the amount of phosphorus coming out of the  
364 retention pond.

365  
366 Ms. Ryan asked who does the testing of the phosphorus and if there is an expense. Ms. Hoffmann said NH DES tests  
367 and the Long Pond Clean Waters Committee also do their own testing. Ms. Hoffman said she tests the outfalls around  
368 the pond and that is a good way to track what is going in the pond.

369  
370 Mr. Sherman asked about the residents that live on the pond. Ms. Beauregard said through education they hope to  
371 encourage residents and they hope to lead by example as well. Ms. Hoffman said there are residential rain gardens  
372 available and hopes to be a leader for the residents. They are looking to apply for the Clean Water State Revolving  
373 Fund to offer an education campaign that will accompany this structure along with Tyngsboro and Dracut.

374  
375 Ms. Hoffman explained that the town would be fulfilling the EPA requirement by putting the BMP Structure. Ms.  
376 Hoffman stated the structure would be at Veterans Park and since the town owns the parcel, they are looking to capture  
377 the runoff from the gravel driveway and the road that leads down to the pond. Ms. Beauregard added as well as the  
378 runoff from the rooftops of the buildings that are there. Ms. Beauregard said they would all be directed to the catch  
379 basin and that is going to redirect to the retention pond.

380  
381 Mr. Smith asked if the EPA fines were annual or one-off. Ms. Hoffman said this requirement date has not passed. Ms.  
382 Hoffman said she looked at other violations of other parts of the MS4 permit for other towns and found the fees range



383 from \$12,000-\$130,000.

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386 **TOWN INSURANCES**

387 Ms. Bressette said the 2023 operating budget was \$3,170,326, and the 2024 budget request is \$3,380,115 which is a  
388 6.6% increase. Ms. Tammy Penny, the Finance Director, introduced herself. Ms. Penny said they received news a  
389 couple of days ago with preliminary estimates for the Health Insurance. She said in the past three years Health  
390 Insurance was trending at 5.4% and through verbal communication, they received for the coming year a 10.5%  
391 increase.

392  
393 Ms. Penny said that Healthtrust stated a 4.7% increase in dental insurance. Ms. Penny said they are looking at an  
394 increase of \$125,000 across all lines due to the unfortunate news they received from Healthtrust a few days ago.

395  
396 Ms. Penny said under Property Liability and Workers Comp, there is a contribution assurance plan which is a cap on  
397 the rates, and they are near year two of this plan. She said the Property Liability is trending positively and the Workers  
398 Comp is trending negatively. She added we will see where these numbers land, but they will not be above the 8 or 7%  
399 that she included.

400  
401 Ms. Bressette confirmed with Ms. Penny that they would wait to update the budgets until the final numbers come in.

402  
403 Mr. Sherman asked how many towns are included in the Healthtrust. Ms. Penny said that there are hundreds of towns.

404  
405 Mr. Silva asked if anyone has looked to change companies to lower the increase. Mr. Silva said if the town is being  
406 pushed with a 10% increase, other items must be put off until the rate comes down. Ms. Penny noted that some of the  
407 Union contracts may specifically mention Healthtrust. Ms. Penny said she would reach out and find out what other  
408 communities are using and what percentages they are seeing as increases, then report back to Ms. Bressette. Mr. Roark  
409 said the insurance policies are specified in collective bargaining agreements and to move off of that it would need to be  
410 collectively negotiated.

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413 **RETIREMENT**

414 Ms. Bressette said the 2023 operating budget was \$2,449,993, the 2024 budget is \$2,564,906 which is an increase of  
415 \$114,913. Ms. Bressette said the Selectmen approved \$2,559,197 which is a 4.5% increase.

416  
417 Ms. Penny explained that every two years, the New Hampshire Retirement System sets the rates. She said the rates  
418 they have now are good until June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Ms. Penny said the rates went down slightly, however, when wages tend  
419 to go up and you apply that percentage, there is an increase. Ms. Penny said under Group One, the employees are  
420 13.53%, the Police are 31.28%, and the Fire Department is 30.35%.

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423 **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

424 Ms. Bressette said the 2023 operating budget was \$3,788,639, the 2024 budget is \$3,899,690, and the Selectmen  
425 approved \$3,896,330 which is a 2.8% increase.

426  
427 Chief Anne Perriello said contractually they were at a 3.8% increase when they started looking at this. Chief Perriello  
428 said what they have before them is a 2.8% increase. Chief Perriello said they took what the taxpayers have already  
429 agreed upon and rearranged some things to see different ways they could get things covered to do the best for the  
430 taxpayers.

431

432 Chief Perriello said one item that is not contractual is the part-time police officers. She said she increased the hourly  
433 rate up to \$25/hour.

434

435 Chief Perriello said she is looking to do the same for the part-time dispatcher position which remains open. Chief  
436 Perriello said the number listed covers the full training of a part-time dispatcher adding that once they hire a part-time  
437 dispatcher and they are trained, this number would disappear.

438

439 Chief Perriello said under Records, there is a decrease. They had a 35-year employee retire. This spot was filled and is  
440 not at the same top rate as the previous Record's Clerk was at.

441

442 Chief Perriello said there is an enormous decrease in roll call overtime by \$27,303. Chief Perriello explained the roll  
443 call had been paid at straight time for years instead of overtime, anything above and beyond their forty hours per week.

444

445 Chief Perriello said for training, the baton training and OC pepper spray training are alternated each year. Chief  
446 Perriello said some of this training is based on CALEA (The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement  
447 Agencies) requirements, but some is also the NH police academy continuing to increase the mandated number of hours  
448 that officers have to do in-service. Chief Perriello said the Police Academy has mandated to offer mental wellness  
449 training for dispatchers.

450

451 Ms. Ryan asked what the 800-hour max payout was under overtime. Chief Perriello said the union contract used to  
452 have an 800-hour cap that the employees that are in the union, the employees could build on vacation (earned) time.  
453 She said some officers have accrued more than 800 hours. She said the new contract that was voted on last year had  
454 the cap put back in. Chief Perriello said by April 1st, they have to be at that 800-hour mark, and anything that is over,  
455 they have to pay out. Mr. Roark added that it is imperative to get the officers paid off and under the 800-hour cap. Mr.  
456 Roark said if they are over the 800-hour cap and they carry it to their retirement, their money may be worth 25-30%  
457 more than when they earned that earned time.

458

459 Ms. Bressette asked about the Education Incentive. Chief Perriello said that is contractual, so if someone has a  
460 Master's degree, they are paid \$1500, if they have a Bachelor's degree, they are paid \$1000, and \$750 if they have an  
461 Associate's degree. Ms. Bressette confirmed they are paid out every year for this.

462

463 Ms. Bressette asked if the Military cover is every year. Chief Perriello said yes. She said when military officers get  
464 deployed or have weekend commitments, they need to backfill the shifts.

465

466 Mr. Smith confirmed with Chief Perriello that cell phones have decreased. Chief Perriello said there is one phone in  
467 every marked cruiser. Chief Perriello said it includes 28 different devices including cell phones for specialty positions,  
468 computers, and modems.

469

470 Chief Perriello said there is a comfortable gas decrease of 3,000 gallons at this point. Chief Perriello said the hybrids  
471 are the best investments allowing officers to go up to 3 shifts before refueling. Chief Perriello added the gas price is set  
472 by the town.

473

474 Chief Perriello said many items are contractual such as the IMC support contract increase, postage, cloud base server,  
475 and an increase in dues for the TIP411 service. Chief Perriello said intox went up because the DUI stats continue to  
476 increase.

477

478 Chief Perriello said last year she had spoken about decreasing the promotional and hiring expenses. Chief Perriello

479 explained the retirement system is trying to do a couple of things and shortly, you may see some retirements of  
480 officers. She said they also had a dispatcher leave for a police job and they had a police officer step out into the private  
481 sector. Chief Perriello further explained that with the recruitment and competitive hiring process, this was necessary to  
482 remain within the budget.

483  
484 Chief Perriello said the CALEA (The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies) increase is  
485 significant for next year. She stated that too would go down the year after. Chief Perriello said Pelham is nationally  
486 accredited meaning an outside entity gets to come in and look into the files to make sure they are doing the best  
487 practices, reducing liability for the town and the department, for the officers, and are doing the best practices to reduce  
488 liability with case laws. Chief Perriello said CALEA sets the standards for them and they have to follow the standards.  
489 Chief Perriello said next year they are up for reaccreditation and have to pay \$5,000 upfront to get the assessors to  
490 come to Pelham to review their files. She said they would tour places like the evidence room to ensure they are in  
491 order. Chief Perriello said CALEA has a \$5,000 annual fee. She said it is mandated that the accreditation manager  
492 attends an annual conference. This mandates that they pay the \$5,000 upfront to cover the cost of the assessor coming  
493 to Pelham. She explained once they assess and receive the blessing for the best practices, they have to pay upfront to  
494 attend the March 2025 conference to secure a spot to present in front of the Board of Commissioners of CALEA. Chief  
495 Perriello said because you are paying for an upfront cost, you see a large increase, but this will decrease afterward.  
496 Chief Perriello said that being accredited lowers your liability insurance by 2.5%. Mr. Roark stated it also drastically  
497 reduces litigation towards the Police Department.

498  
499  
500 **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

501 Ms. Bressette said the 2023 operating budget was \$354,401, the 2024 request is \$367,459, and the approved budget  
502 was \$367,459 which is a 1.9% decrease.

503  
504 Mr. Brian Demers introduced himself as the IT Administrator.

505  
506 Mr. Demers said supplies are level-funded.

507  
508 Mr. Demers said telephone and internet are yearly increases for \$1620.

509  
510 Mr. Demers said the equipment tech plan is decreased because of last year's project.

511  
512  
513 **NON-PUBLIC SESSION**

514 Ms. Bressette stated for reasons given that the RSA 91A:3, (i) Consideration of matters relating to the preparation for  
515 and the carrying out of emergency functions, including training to carry out such functions, developed by local and  
516 state safety officials that are directly intended to thwart a deliberate act that is intended to result in widespread or  
517 severe damage to property or widespread injury or loss of life.

518  
519  
520 **NON-PUBLIC SESSION MOTION:**

521  
522 **MOTION:** (Sherman/Silva) To request a non-public session per RSA 91-A:3, (i)

523 Ms. Bressette noted that when the Committee returned, after the non-public session, the Committee would not take any  
524 other action publicly, except to seal the minutes of the non-public session and to adjourn the meeting. The Budget  
525 Committee entered a non-public session at approximately 9:27 PM.

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023

527 **ROLL-CALL VOTE:** Mr. Smith - Yes  
528 Mr. Abare – Yes  
529 Mr. Croteau – Yes  
530 Ms. Cormier – Yes  
531 Mr. Grant – Yes  
532 Ms. Ryan – Yes  
533 Mr. Sherman – Yes  
534 Mr. Silva – Yes  
535 Ms. Bressette - Yes

536  
537 (9-0-0) The motion passed.

538  
539  
540 The Budget Committee returned from the non-public session at 10:11 PM.

541  
542  
543 **MOTION:** (Sherman/Ryan) To seal the minutes of the non-public session indefinitely.  
544 **VOTE:** (9-0-0) The motion carried.

545  
546  
547 **ADJOURNMENT**

548  
549 **MOTION:** (Sherman/Cormier) To adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:13 PM.  
550 **VOTE:** (9-0-0) The motion carried.

551  
552  
553 Respectively Submitted,  
554 Heidi Zagorski  
555 Recording Secretary