

1 **APPROVED**
2 TOWN OF PELHAM
3 BUDGET COMMITTEE - MEETING MINUTES
4 Monday, October 5, 2015
5 APPROVED – October 8, 2015

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7 **CALL TO ORDER** – at approximately 7:30pm
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PRESENT: Mr. Daniel Guimond, Mr. David Cate, Mr. Bob Sherman, Mr. Leo Rush,
Mr. Michael Bilby, Ms. Daryle Hillsgrove, Ms. Donna Dube,
Selectmen Representative Doug Viger

EXCUSED: School Board Representative Megan Larson

10 Also present: Town Administrator Brian McCarthy and Department Representatives
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13 **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
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16 **MEETING MINUTES**
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18 **September 28, 2015**

MOTION: (Cate/Bilby) To approve the September 28, 2015 meeting minutes as amended.

VOTE: (7-0-1) The motion carried. Mr. Sherman abstained.

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20 **October 1, 2015**

MOTION: (Cate/Bilby) To approve the October 1, 2015 meeting minutes as amended.

VOTE: (7-0-1) The motion carried. Mr. Sherman abstained.

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22 **2016 TOWN BUDGET REVIEW**
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24 ***Assessing - \$164,874 proposed.***
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26 ***Budget Committee - \$4,180 proposed.***
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28 ***Cable - \$112,573 proposed.***

29 Mr. Sherman questioned if the mileage reimbursement figure of \$.44/mile would be increased to
30 the IRS rate. Mr. McCarthy replied it would be discussed during reconsideration. Mr. Viger
31 believed mileage reimbursement would be covered in the new Town's Employee Policy Manual.
32 Mr. Sherman asked that each budget with mileage reimbursement be amended for consistency.
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34 ***Cemetery - \$144,520 proposed.***
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36 ***Conservation Commission - \$3,747 proposed.***

37 Mr. Rush questioned why the 2015 budget had approximately \$2,700 remaining in the salary line.
38 Mr. Guimond believed the committee didn't conduct many meetings in the summer months and

39 would spend from that line before the year ended. Mr. Rush said he would like to reduce the line.
40 Mr. Guimond made note that a possible reduction would come forward during budget vote. Mr.
41 Viger noted the bulk of the budget was the salary line. Mr. Cate confirmed with Mr. McCarthy if
42 the budget wasn't spent it would be returned to the General Fund. Mr. McCarthy replied that was
43 correct. Mr. Rush was concerned with budget increases. Mr. Guimond replied most of the Town
44 budgets were consistent with last year. Mr. Viger pointed out that the Conservation Commission
45 budget was level funded from last year.

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47 **Debt Service Interest - \$133,490 proposed.**

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49 **Debt Service Principal - \$615,510 proposed.**

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51 **Elections - \$23,227 proposed.**

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53 **Emergency Management - \$8,296 proposed.**

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55 **Fire Department - \$2,021,002 proposed.**

56 Mr. Cate noted that the operating budget portion showed a decrease of approximately \$34,000.
57 Mr. Rush questioned the figure for gas and oil. Mr. Guimond replied the budget figure was a
58 placeholder until the State figure was received. They will adjust the gas and oil line during
59 reconsideration.

60 -----
61 **Health Officer - \$43,766 proposed.**

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63 **Health Services - \$60,180 proposed.**

64 -----
65 **Highway - \$1,415,572 proposed.**

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67 **Human Services - \$88,040 proposed.**

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69 **Insurance - \$2,102,981 proposed.**

70 -----
71 **Legal - \$95,000 proposed.**

72 Mr. McCarthy explained there had been a Motion for Reconsideration of the Fin-Lyn v. Town of
73 Pelham case. He believed it may be a precursor for an appeal, which Town Counsel advises may
74 cost in the area of \$12,000 to cover legal expenses. Mr. Guimond suggested having further
75 discussion during reconsideration, since at present it was unknown whether an appeal would be
76 filed.

77 -----
78 **Library - \$291,178 proposed.**

79 Mr. Guimond stated the budget line for adult programs under Expenses was proposed with an
80 increase of \$1,000. He said a Board member suggested a \$500 reduction. Library Director Irja
81 Finn came forward to discuss the proposed reduction. She explained most good programs cost
82 \$500; they could attempt to fund raise and ask Friends of the Library for support. She understood
83 the Board was concerned with attendance and would see what they could do. Mr. Cate stated if
84 the Board had numbers next year, they may be able to justify an increase. Ms. Finn believed their
85 numbers for 2015 were skewed because of unforeseen cancellations due to weather. Mr. Bilby
86 questioned if the Library had attendance numbers for previous years. Ms. Finn replied she would
87 forward them to the Board. Mr. Bilby commented he felt the increase was large based on the low
88 attendance, but if the numbers showed higher attendance in previous years, the Board would take
89 it into consideration. Ms. Finn noted they were previously receiving 3-4 State grants from the

90 New Hampshire Humanities Council; however, the program has been cut back to a maximum of
91 two per community. She said they were able to apply for other grants and would continue to
92 aggressively go after other funds and see if the Friends of the Library could increase what they
93 provided. Ms. Hillsgrove asked for a listing of grants that had been received to show how
94 diligent the Library was at seeking revenue sources.
95

96 Mr. Guimond wanted to know what the balance of the Library Trust to date. Ms. Finn replied
97 they were actively spending the trusts and believed this year they withdrew approximately
98 \$7,500. She will forward the Board the latest figures.
99

100 ***Parks & Recreation - \$204,333 proposed.***

101 Mr. Guimond stated a Board member proposed a reduction of \$1,000 to the disc golf course
102 maintenance line under Expenses. Parks & Recreation Director Brian Johnson came forward. He
103 told the Board if the reduction was made they would adjust the scheduled maintenance. Mr.
104 Viger recalled a Board member questioning if the maintenance could be withdrawn from the
105 revolving fund. Mr. Johnson explained that the revolving fund was supposed to be used by the
106 programs it served (i.e. soccer, basketball, summer camp). He went on to explain that disc golf
107 wasn't a 'program', therefore money couldn't be taken from the revolving account to fund it. In
108 the past, Mr. Cate was the Chairman of the Recreation Advisory Committee (the committee is no
109 longer active). He told the board that he was one of the originators (with the then Parks &
110 Recreation Advisory committee) for the warrant article concerning the self-funding or 80's fund.
111 The disc golf course was fully funded by a grant applied for & granted to, the then Parks &
112 Recreation Director, Darrin McCarthy. The grant stipulated the course was to provide access to
113 residents & non-residents. Because of this, he felt it should be considered a program. The grant
114 stipulated the course was to provide access to residents and non-residents. Because of this, he felt
115 it could be considered a program.
116

117 With regard the four baskets proposed for replacement, Mr. Bilby questioned how in need of
118 replacement they were. Mr. Johnson replied they were ten years old and needed replacement, but
119 would try to get another year out of them if they had to. Mr. Cate understood that the people
120 using the course helped with maintenance. Mr. Johnson stated they put hundreds of hours into
121 maintenance. He told them based on all the work they did, he would try to get money in the
122 budget for the course.
123

124 Mr. Sherman wanted to know the age of the department's vehicle and how many miles it had.
125 Mr. Johnson was unsure of the age, but knew it had slightly less than 100,000 miles. Mr.
126 Sherman questioned how soon the truck would need to be replaced. Mr. Johnson couldn't foresee
127 replacing it anytime soon since they only put approximately 12,000 miles on it per year. Mr. Cate
128 asked if they share the truck with the Highway Department. Mr. Johnson answered no, it was
129 only used by Parks & Recreation.
130

131 ***Planning Department - \$302,870 proposed.***

132 Mr. Sherman noted that the mileage reimbursement would need to be adjusted at reconsideration.
133 Mr. McCarthy replied he would ensure the mileage was adjusted in each budget where
134 appropriate.
135

136 ***Police - \$2,575,854 proposed.***

137 Mr. Rush questioned if the Police had a line for the Cooper's Test, similar to the Fire Department.
138 Mr. Cate answered yes. He noted the budget line for the Cooper's Test had already been
139 decreased. Police Chief Joseph Roark came forward to address the line item. He explained in
140 their original budget they listed nineteen, which was the number of employees eligible to take the

141 fitness test. When reviewing historical data, they believed fourteen would take the test; therefore,
142 the budget line was reduced by \$3,200 to cover fourteen employees.

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144 **Retirement - \$1,452,133 proposed.**

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146 **Selectmen - \$492,733 proposed.**

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148 **Senior Center - \$111,602 proposed.**

149 There was a brief discussion regarding the salary line for Travel Assistant and whether to keep in
150 the budget or put it into a warrant article. Mr. Viger noted it was an existing position, previously
151 funded through a grant, that coordinated all off-site trips. He said the position had been in the
152 budget for many years. Mr. Sherman questioned if the Town contributed toward health care or
153 other benefits. Mr. Viger replied it was a part-time 18/hr per week position. Mr. McCarthy
154 recalled the Senior Center Director mentioning (during budget presentation) that prior to
155 receiving the grant, the position was previously held by the former Director and originally in the
156 budget. When the former Director left, the Senior Center was able to fund the position through a
157 grant. He said now that the grant ended, they were looking to return the position to the budget.
158 To further clarify, Mr. Viger explained that the former Director did many functions, not just
159 handled all the travel arrangements, but was also the Nutritionist, when they cooked all the meals
160 at the Center. When the Director retired, a lot of those tasks were spread out through volunteers.
161 He said now the volunteers were retiring, and they didn't have enough people in place to handle
162 the positions. Given the explanation, there was a consensus of the Board to keep the position in
163 the budget.

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165 **Town Buildings - \$655,988 proposed.**

166 Mr. Guimond stated he would like to level fund the New Equipment line for computers, etc. Mr.
167 Viger believed there may be some items moved from other areas in the budget into that line. Mr.
168 McCarthy said the line for required computer accessories was moved from Expenses so computer
169 items would all be listed in one area. Mr. Guimond's suggestion related to another line in New
170 Equipment. Mr. McCarthy replied the increase in computers, etc. line were for software upgrades
171 to maintain the level of IT service in the Town. He noted they received an unexpected bill from
172 Rockport for anti-malware protection. He said the Town had always been receiving the
173 protection, but through a billing oversight by Rockport they hadn't been charging the Town for
174 those services. He noted any department with IT services were covered under the line item.

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176 Mr. Sherman questioned if the Town was reviewing alternative energy. Mr. McCarthy answered
177 yes; they were looking at possibly changing over to natural gas for heating the municipal
178 building. They've upgraded lights to LED at both the Highway and Transfer Department through
179 a grant with Liberty Utilities. He said they were continuing to review programs for cost savings.
180 Mr. Rush wanted to know if the schools were being converted or set up to receive natural gas if a
181 pumping station was constructed. Mr. McCarthy understood that the school was set up to convert
182 if natural gas became available.

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184 **Town Celebrations - \$9,452 proposed.**

185 Mr. Bilby questioned why there was an increase for fireworks. Mr. McCarthy believed the cost
186 of fireworks was increasing across the country. He said they always try to get the best rate. Mr.
187 Guimond summarized what had been spent on fireworks during the past three years.

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189 **Town Clerk / Tax Collector - \$228,024 proposed.**

190 Town Clerk Dorothy Marsden came forward to discuss the increase for postage. She stated the
191 Post Office increased both the first class and certified mail.

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Transfer Station - \$668,958 proposed.

Mr. Sherman confirmed that the Director's salary was contractual. Transfer Station Director Stan Walczak came forward and answered yes. There was a brief discussion regarding the proposed new compactor. Mr. Viger asked Mr. Walczak to provide the Board with a comparison budget to show the figures if the compactor was included. Mr. Walczak replied he would forward the information.

Treasurer - \$11,113 proposed.

Mr. Guimond asked for a listing of what the bank fees had been for the past 3-4 years. Mr. McCarthy will forward information to the Board.

Trust Funds - \$70 proposed.

Mr. Rush wanted to know if it was possible to have a straight 2% decrease across the budget. Mr. Guimond replied a motion could be made during budget vote October 8th.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Guimond reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule.

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Charity A. Landry
Recording Secretary