



**BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 27, 2019**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Chairman Bill Sawyer at 9:00 am.

2. ROLL CALL

Members present: Bill Sawyer, Carole Aaron, Fred Lynk, Mark MacLeod, Lindsey Perry and alternates Elaine Cooper and Peter Kahn.

3. OLD BUSINESS

Review and approve minutes from February 20, 2019 meeting.
Lynk 1st; Aaron 2nd; Vote 5-0 with amendments.

4. NEW BUSINESS

Began initial review of the 2019-2020 Operating Budgets for Land Use and Fire Departments.

The review of the Land Use Department budget requests represented by Code Enforcement Officer Scott Heyland generated the following points:

- 1) There is a significant requested increase for copier lease and monthly usage. This generated further discussion later as to who should be paying for items like copying costs.
- 2) A 57% increase is requested for contracting services for the Assessor Agent in order to conduct regular cyclical evaluations rather than waiting for extended periods between evaluations.
- 3) No money is being budgeted for support of the Comprehensive Plan Committee should that group reform. Scott indicated he would like to utilize a CIP request for that if necessary. The BRC suggested that he check to see if that is an appropriate use of CIP.
- 4) A healthy discussion was held around Land Use revenues with a suggestion that many Planning Board activities (e.g. printing costs, contracted services, etc.) could be converted to user fees paid for by the applicant rather than the taxpayer. The BRC recommended that this be studied for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.
- 5) The requested new Operating Budget for Land Use represents a 2.6% increase over the current fiscal year.

Interim Fire Chief Ed Smith led a discussion of the budget requests for the Fire Department with the following points raised:

- 1) The Union Contract for the Firefighters expires on June 30, 2019.
- 2) Fire Department calls continue to increase. The BRC requested to see a graph showing call increases for the past several years.
- 3) An additional \$55,000 is being requested to increase staffing to support a third crew member from 8:00 pm to 8:00 am during the months of May to October. Current funding supports the third crew member during these months from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm only.
- 4) The Chief reported that at some point in the future staffing would be required to support a 3 person crew all year meaning the need for 4 additional firefighters.
- 5) An increase in contracted services is being requested to include among other things hose testing currently done in-house.
- 6) The requested new Operating Budget for the Fire Department represents a 7.2% increase over the current fiscal year.
- 7) The BRC stated that without seeing all the budget requests from all departments and committees, it was not possible to conclude that the new budget could sustain such large increases to both the Police and Fire Departments, the two largest department budgets.

The BRC requested to participate in or be represented in upcoming union negotiations. That request was denied by the Town Manager on the basis that she felt it would be in the best interest of the Town to utilize the BRC as a consultative body outside of the negotiations.

The Treasurer led a discussion on responsibility for following up on Management Letters received during annual financial audits. John Quartararo stated that Management Letters need to be requested and paid for as part of the audit which had not been past practice in prior years. A draft Management Letter has been received from the recent audit and the responsibility for follow up for that is with the Town Manager. The Treasurer recommended that a Finance Committee should be appointed by the Select Board to review Town Finances on a monthly basis.

5. FUTURE MEETINGS

The next BRC meeting will be on March 6, 2019 at 9:00 am. Initial reviews of the Public Works Department and Lifeguard Operating Budget requests will be held.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 11:15 am:

MacLeod 1st, Aaron 2nd, vote 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Bill Sawyer