

TOWN OF NEW DURHAM
Budget Committee
November 9, 2022, 6:30PM
New Durham Community Room , New Durham, NH 03855

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87598405955?pwd=ZmhkUmJhUzYzR0NBTS93ODJWamo4QT09> Meeting ID:
875 9840 5955 Passcode: 011104 One tap mobile +13017158592,,87598405955#,,,,*011104# US
(Washington DC)

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DRAFT: These minutes are strictly a draft copy and are awaiting amendment or approval at a subsequent, duly noticed public meeting. Amendments to these minutes will be noted in the minutes of said meeting. The draft will be posted on the website as a draft copy for public informational use only.

PRESENT

Terry Jarvis, Budget Committee Chair
Kelly Bisson, Copple Crown Village District Representative to the Budget Committee
Dorothy Veisel, Select Board Representative to the Budget Committee
David Bickford, Budget Committee Member
Ellen Phillips, Budget Committee Member
David Swenson, Budget Committee Member via Zoom

ALSO PRESENT

Nicole Zoltko, Town Administrator
Kathleen Blaney, Finance Manager
Shawn Bernier, Police Chief
Fred Quimby, resident
Scott Drummey, resident
Cathy Orlowicz, resident
Scott Lacroix, Building Inspector
Celeste Chasse, Parks and Recreation Director

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Jarvis called the meeting of the Budget Committee to order at 6:34PM. Roll call was taken for Budget Committee members present.

AGENDA REVIEW

Chair Jarvis added discussion of requests for any addition budget issues; fuel and utilities discussion.

Mr. Swenson stated he reviewed all the accounts and calculated that there is an overall 13.34% increase which is about \$473,000, which to his knowledge is the largest single year increase in

the last decade. He stated he believes the Budget Committee needs to determine if the increase is appropriate, noting it is higher than inflation.

Account 4200 – 321 Grant; Account 4199 – Water Quality

The committee reviewed the proposed budget. Chair Jarvis stated the budget request is \$6,812.

Mr. Quimby stated they are asking for the same amount for 2023 for testing the waters in Town; he stated they also asked for funds last year to establish a septic system inventory and they were prepared to return the funds since the inventory was not done due to the State of NH introducing legislation that would not allow for that project to happen however the law was tabled to the next session. Mr. Quimby stated CIPC recommended holding the funds and plan to do the inventory in the future; the Board of Selectmen agreed. He stated the Building Inspector is also supportive of the project. Mr. Quimby explained the inventory will include septic systems within 250' of surface water.

Ms. Veisel stated she supports the inventory project and asked what the projected complications are with the State. Mr. Quimby stated the legislation only affected homes within 250' of surface water and were going to be sold; testing of the system would be required, and possible replacement required. He stated an inventory isn't needed for that, but it would be useful to know how many homes around a water body don't have approved septic system and would apply to homes over 30 years old. Ms. Veisel stated she is in support of leaving the funds in the account for this project. Mr. Quimby stated he did a survey in 2018 and found that 19% of the homes around Merrymeeting Lake had no record of the septic systems. Mr. Bickford stated he doesn't see how the legislative bill would impede having a system inventory. Chair Jarvis stated she is also in favor of the inventory project; she questioned if perhaps the funds should fall under the account of the Health Officer. Mr. Lacroix stated either way he is still going to be taking the information and working with it as the Health Officer. It was noted \$4200 is for the inventory project; it would cover all surface water in Town, over 10 acres in size. Mr. Quimby explained the testing process for toxins as well. It was noted there is a discrepancy between the amount requested and the amount approved by the Board of Selectmen.

Chair Jarvis motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget request for account 4199-10-500 line only, New Durham Water Quality, in the amount \$8,832. Ms. Phillips seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Veisel- aye; Ms. Phillips – aye; Mr. Bickford -aye; Mr. Swenson -aye; Chair Jarvis – aye; Ms. Bisson - aye. Motion passed, 6-0-0.

Account 4583 – Town Historian

Chair Jarvis stated the requested budget amount is \$732; the Board of Selectmen approved the same. The increases over last year budget is for patriotic materials and additional flags. Ms. Orlowicz explained she purchases flags in bulk as its significantly more cost effective; she stated they also have costs for taking care of materials in the vault.

Ms. Phillips motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget request for account 4153, Town Historian in the amount of \$732. Ms. Bisson seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Veisel- aye; Ms. Phillips – aye; Mr. Bickford -aye; Mr. Swenson -aye; Chair Jarvis – aye; Ms. Bisson - aye. Motion passed, 6-0-0.

Account 4589 – The Boodey Farmstead and 1772 Meetinghouse

Chair Jarvis stated she would like to request the Board of Selectmen to separate these lines into separate accounts. The committee agreed.

Chair Jarvis motioned to request the Board of Selectmen separate Account 4589 into separate accounts, one for the Boodey Farmstead and one for the 1772 Meetinghouse. Mr. Bickford seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Veisel- aye; Ms. Phillips – aye; Mr. Bickford -aye; Mr. Swenson -aye; Chair Jarvis – aye; Ms. Bisson - aye. Motion passed, 6-0-0.

Ms. Orlowicz, Chair of the Boodey Farmstead committee, stated they requested to retitle the line item for 50-330 to Contracted Services and this was approved by the Board of Selectmen. She stated they are requesting \$2,000 for the purposes of defraying the cost of removal of trees on the site in preparing for installing a septic system in the future. She stated the advertising line is level funded. Chair Jarvis noted the overall request is a reduction by \$2,000.

Chair Jarvis motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget request for Account 4589, for the Boodey Farmstead, in the amount of \$2,915. Ms. Veisel seconded the motion. Discussion:

Mr. Bickford stated he doesn't believe they should do the funding; he stated the project was brought forward as something that would not be of any cost to the Town; he stated there was land purchased at one time for this as well; this expense is for contracted services and the Town didn't plan to spend money when the project was accepted by the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Orlowicz explained the project was accepted as a gift by the Board of Selectmen, with the authority to accept being granted by voters. She stated the land Mr. Bickford referred to is not in the same area as the Boodey Farmstead. Mr. Drummey stated the committee has gone forward since the barn was gifted to the Town, including a site plan, approved by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Bickford stated a request for a capital reserve fund was turned down by voters and doesn't think money should be funded toward the project. Ms. Orlowicz stated the CRF doesn't indicate lack of support. Ms. Veisel asked how many trees would be removed. Ms. Orlowicz stated she isn't sure yet but the letter of intent will allow her to get more information; she explained Iron Will Contracting has offered in kind services for installation of the septic system; she stated it's a substantial donation value toward different aspects of the project; she stated permission has been given by the Board of Selectmen to pursue the installation of the septic system and funds are in place for that work. Mr. Bickford suggested the costs for the trees be a warrant article. **Roll Call Vote: Ms. Veisel- aye; Ms. Phillips – aye; Mr. Bickford -no; Mr. Swenson -aye; Chair Jarvis – aye; Ms. Bisson - aye. Motion passed, 5-1-0.**

Account 4411 – Health Officer

Chair Jarvis stated the 2022 Budget was \$2,391; the FY 2023 request was \$3,358. She asked how many miles the Health Officer averages per week. Mr. Lacroix stated it's probably about 20 to 30 miles. Chair Jarvis stated the breakdown would indicate 46 miles per week. Ms. Blaney explained the calculation included the possibility of taking in septic inspections. Mr. Lacroix stated it also includes inspections for BMPs and checking plans.

Chair Jarvis motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget request for account 4411, Health Officer, in the amount of \$3,558. Ms. Bisson seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Veisel- aye; Ms. Phillips – aye; Mr. Bickford -aye; Mr. Swenson -aye; Chair Jarvis – aye; Ms. Bisson - aye. Motion passed, 6-0-0.

Account 4240 – Building Inspector/ Code Enforcement

Chair Jarvis stated the FY 2022 budget was \$63,838; the requested amount for FY 2023 is \$107,399; the Board of Selectmen approved the same. She noted the largest increase is a result of making the position full time and increasing the hours. She questioned the clerical line. Mr. Lacroix explained the Land Use Assistant will be doing file work. Mr. Swenson noted line 10-820 for mileage, is miscalculated and should be \$4500; line 95-211 for dental insurance doesn't include the cost increase. Ms. Blaney confirmed the 10% increase needs to be added.

Chair Jarvis motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget request for account 4240, Building Inspector/Code Enforcement in the amount of \$107,399. Ms. Phillips seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Veisel- aye; Ms. Phillips – aye; Mr. Bickford -aye; Mr. Swenson -aye; Chair Jarvis – aye; Ms. Bisson - aye. Motion passed, 6-0-0.

Account 4210 – Police Department

Chair Jarvis stated the FY 2022 budget was \$687,071; the FY 2023 request was \$743,307 and the Board of Selectmen approved \$741,491.

Chair Jarvis asked if the lieutenant pay raise is calculated in this request. Chief Bernier stated he has not discussed this with the Board of Selectmen but the funds in the wage adjustment line should cover it.

Chair Jarvis asked how many phone lines there are, noting there is a proposed 40% increase. Chief Bernier stated there are 8 lines. It was noted no lines are being added but the cost increase is based on calculations by the Board of Selectmen utilizing FY 2022 monthly averages. Ms. Blaney clarified the \$525 per month includes the cell phone stipends but not the 10% increase.

Chief Bernier stated advertising and hiring testing costs are added back into this account. He explained he is working with the Town Administrator to advertise in place other than the newspaper.

Chief Bernier noted car 4 has used more than half of his maintenance line and the new cruiser will be replacing it once the outfitting is complete.

There was discussion of how the gasoline costs were calculated, using an average of \$5.50 per gallon based on recommendations. Town Administrator Zoltko stated they tried putting out bids for fuel, there is also the option of utilizing a State shed but would require all department employees travel to the nearest location which it would save on average \$1.00 per gallon. She confirmed there is no fixed rate at this time. Chair Jarvis stated she would like to go forward with \$5.50 per gallon for all department gasoline costs but, in the meantime, look into utilizing state fueling stations or look into having an agreement with Citgo or Irving.

The committee reviewed calculations and made changes to lines 10-341, telephone, to a new total of \$6930; line 95-225 for a new total of \$6041; line 99-230 for a new total of \$122,286.

Ms. Phillips motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget request for account 4210, Police Department, in the amount of \$743,322. Ms. Veisel seconded the motion. Discussion: Mr. Bickford stated he is opposed to the budget as its getting too high; he stated they need to look at some alternatives. He stated four officers were used in the past but now it is five but the Town hasn't grown that much; he stated the Town voted in March 2006 to support the hiring of one full time officer but nowhere is it indicated that there would be a full officer department. Ms. Bisson asked how many officers there were at that time. It was noted there were already four full time. Ms. Veisel suggested putting it back to the voters to see if they support a department that has five officers; it was noted that would not be binding. Chair Jarvis suggested a survey to see what Town services voters want to maintain. Ms. Veisel agreed the budget is hefty and agreed it may be time to look closer. Mr. Swenson noted the overall budget increase is very close to the same rate as inflation so with that factored in, the budget is flat. Mr. Bickford explained the option of having the State Police taking over but ties have to be cut with a local department. It was noted the State Police is down officers as well and response times can be long. Ms. Orlowicz stated there is still a cost to it at \$75 per hour; same as the Sheriff's Office. **Roll Call Vote: Ms. Veisel- aye; Ms. Phillips – aye; Mr. Bickford -no; Mr. Swenson -aye; Chair Jarvis – aye; Ms. Bisson - aye. Motion passed, 5-1-0.**

Ms. Veisel stated she agrees its time to look at alternatives for the police services, if only to satisfy public concerns. Chair Jarvis stated she discussed coverage with the State Police troop that covers this area but was turned off by the costs. Ms. Bisson stated she is concerned about the low priority New Durham will have, especially in Copple Crown. Mr. Swenson agreed they need to look at options but being a distant location may make it a difficult area to ensure reasonable response times.

Account 4520- Parks and Recreation

Chair Jarvis stated the 2022 budget was \$69,377; the requested FY 2023 budget is \$88,592 and the Board of Selectmen approved \$87,892.

Chair Jarvis asked about line 110, noting last year all the part time help were budgeted at the same amount but there are variances this year. Ms. Chasse explained different positions are paid different rates and it reflects a differentiation in duties. She also explained the fence at the beach is needing to be replaced; the Board of Selectmen approved the vinyl fence quote. The cost was only a couple hundred dollars between the vinyl and wood fencing. The committee discussed having those costs come from a capital reserve fund instead of the operating budget. It was noted this is for the beach, not the ballfield so it can't be used. Mr. Swenson stated he would like to have the electricity looked at as the 40% increase seems unreasonable.

Chair Jarvis motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget request for account 4520, Parks and Recreation in the amount of \$87,972. Ms. Phillips seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Veisel- aye; Ms. Phillips – aye; Mr. Bickford -aye; Mr. Swenson -aye; Chair Jarvis – aye; Ms. Bisson - aye. Motion passed, 6-0-0.

Account 4589 – 1772 Meetinghouse

Ms. Phillips stated the committee was charged with the task of increasing fundraising efforts and they have done so; she stated advertising costs have increased as well as electricity. She stated they are expecting to use less utilities as there are going to be less events this year. Ms. Phillips stated last year the budget included funds to purchase tarps for the roof, but the Board of Selectmen decided to purchase two tarps for \$1200 this year. She stated the cost of printing newsletters has increased substantially; she clarified the line for advertising is only for the newsletters and any signage or banners have been donated. Ms. Phillips stated the postage line is increased as this is needed in order to continue the advertising and fundraising. She stated the balance in the donation's checking account has gone from \$2,000 at the beginning of the year to \$24,625 as of October 7, 2022.

Chair Jarvis motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget request for account 4589, 1772 Meetinghouse, in the amount of \$2872. Ms. Veisel seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Veisel- aye; Ms. Phillips – abstain; Mr. Bickford -aye; Mr. Swenson -aye; Chair Jarvis – aye; Ms. Bisson - aye. Motion passed, 6-0-1.

Account 4550 – Library

Chair Jarvis stated this account is proposed as there was a scheduling conflict with the representative from the library.

Account 4199 – Other General Government

Chair Jarvis stated the 2022 budget was \$11,074; the requested FY 2023 budget is \$11,933 and the Board of Selectmen approved the same.

It was noted the main increase in the budget was in the water quality testing line; the dam monitoring is an annual contract and required by the State of NH.

Chair Jarvis motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget request for account 4199, Other General Government in the amount of \$11,933. Ms. Phillips seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Veisel- aye; Ms. Phillips – aye; Mr. Bickford -aye; Mr. Swenson -aye; Chair Jarvis – aye; Ms. Bisson - aye. Motion passed, 6-0-0.

Fuel Discussion

Chair Jarvis noted there is roughly a \$100,000 increase overall for the fuel costs; she explained if they don't budget properly, budgets could over expend. She proposed for FY 2023 only, to create an account that would contain all the gasoline, diesel, propane, oil and electricity account lines and explained the account the Board of Selectmen would be responsible for; if there were funds left over, it would be returned to the Unassigned Fund Balance.

Mr. Swenson stated he is not in favor of that proposal, as they need to keep each department and line accountable for the expenses. He stated he also wants to know where the information was obtained for the proposed increases in the fuel and utilities.

Ms. Veisel stated she believes the proposal has merit as they are dealing with an unknown; she

stated if they build in the inflation factor to all the budgets that would be good but this fund would be used only if there are inflationary increases and would only be used for those expenses and no other department expenses. Ms. Phillips agreed and stated it would be a good way to present the information to voters.

Chair Jarvis stated the increases for these items contribute 25% of the overall budget increase.

Ms. Bisson stated she understands both perspectives but breaking it down for voters would be good; she likes the idea of having the account in the event that the funds are needed.

Mr. Bickford asked who handles the inflation account. Chair Jarvis explained if the funds aren't needed for the inflation expenses, the funds are returned to the Unassigned Fund Balance and the individual departments can't use the funds for other items. He suggested a contingency fund.

Town Administrator Zoltko explained inflation is a known issue right now, so it's not considered an emergency or unanticipated expense. She stated there isn't a department head that would frivolously pay out of the fuel line; she stated the numbers they have checked are pretty consistent with the vehicles and they are going to need the fuel funds. She stated she expects the decision to come to either repairs to equipment or fuel in vehicles.

Ms. Veisel stated they have the responsibility to make sure the department vehicles and equipment are on the road as needed but would like to see left over funds go back to taxpayers. Town Administrator Zoltko stated a warrant article is needed for a non—lapsing contingency account which would have the risk of failing.

Chair Jarvis asked Ms. Blaney how difficult it would be to create a fuel account for this year only. Ms. Blaney explained it would be easier for the finance department to have gasoline, oil, etc., as separate accounts; she stated she believes it benefits department heads in the event there is over expenditure, the department budget isn't affected. She suggested only doing the separate fuels and not include utilities.

Mr. Swenson stated separating it out into different accounts doesn't have any benefits and he would rather have each department head responsible for managing their own costs. Chair Jarvis stated the department heads cannot manage these costs as these items are out of their control; she stated if funds are run out for oil, then funds have to be taken from another line and other expenses put off; it will also save the Board of Selectmen for having to transferring funds to cover expenses that are out of a department head's control.

Mr. Bickford stated he believes they should continue budgeting the department accounts the way they have been.

Ms. Phillips suggested tabling this discussion to allow them time to think on this issue and come to a decision at a later date.

Mr. Swenson motioned to adjourn. Ms. Bisson seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Veisel- aye; Ms. Phillips – aye; Mr. Bickford -aye; Mr. Swenson -aye; Chair Jarvis – aye;

Ms. Bisson - aye. Motion passed, 6-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:51PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Riel

Jennifer Riel, Recording Secretary

DRAFT