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Town of Grantham Board of Selectmen – Budget Work Session Minutes November 14, 2016

The budget work session started at 8:30am on Wednesday, November 14, 2016. The meeting was held in the Grantham Town Building, Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room at 300 Route 10 South, Grantham, NH.

Present: Chairman Warren Kimball; Selectman Sheridan Brown; Selectman Constance Jones; Town Administrator Melissa White; and others

2017-18 Budget

Highway:

The budget for the Highway Department was reviewed. Road Agent Hastings reported that things are going well and that he was able to get a lot of work done this summer. Selectman Jones asked what items would be coming up in the near future. Hastings said that for new paving next year, he would like to pave New Aldrich Road and a portion of Smith Hastings Road.

Hastings also said that 700 feet of guardrails need to be replaced on Miller Pond Road. Chairman Kimball asked if the road would need improvements as well. Hastings said that he has completed those improvements already which include 900 feet of underdrain.

Selectman Brown felt the guardrails on Olde Farms Road (near the "S" curves) and the bridge should be replaced and asked if it made sense to do both projects together. Hastings said that bridge is red-listed and would be the next one to be replaced/repared and depending on how much excavation is needed for the project, the guardrails might be in the way.

Brown asked about the benefits of paving New Aldrich Road now. Hastings said that road receives a lot of traffic and with the hill and shade, he has to spend a lot of time on it during mud season.

Other areas of the budget were discussed, including outside services which covers engineering costs, tree companies etc., vehicle fuel and equipment maintenance. The Board felt that separating expenses for equipment maintenance and small equipment purchases would be more beneficial to them and add more clarity for budgeting purposes.

Hastings reported that he would like to replace the 2006 1-Ton truck and explained that it is currently broken down now with expected costs to be around \$2,000. Current mileage is 86,000.

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Town Clerk/Tax Collector:

Town Clerk/Tax Collector Ken Story expressed his thanks to Administrator White for her help in anticipating costs for the next budget year.

Chairman Kimball commented how well the General Election went.

Selectman Brown asked if there were any wish list items that were left out because of frugality. Story said no, not this year and explained that since he is still new to the position he wanted to wait until he has a better sense of what is needed.

White stated that Primex offers a lot of training workshops that he and Penny (Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector) could attend and recommended he take a look at what has previously been offered and then adjust the travel line based on that, if needed.

Buildings:

The Building budget was reviewed. White explained the need for a full-time custodian/maintenance person and stated that currently the buildings are maintained by a sporadic, part-time custodian and contracted cleaning people. White said that a significant amount of her time is spent ensuring maintenance of town hall and Archives is done on a regular basis. White said that most of the salary is currently already budgeted; that the additional monies needed would be to cover benefits.

The Board asked if this person would maintain all the town buildings including the library. White said yes.

Dunbar Free Library:

The Library budget was reviewed. Director Huston explained the increase for expenses were for training and general repairs and maintenance.

Police Department:

Chief Madore said salary increases requested were 2% for the Chief, 3% for the Patrol Officers and Secretary. Madore said he was requesting restoration of monies for the fifth Officer that had been approved in 2008.

Madore reviewed the rest of the budget and stated he also included \$10,000 for a records storage system. Madore explained that their current system of utilizing filing cabinets takes up too much space and that the new system would alleviate the space issue for the records and serve the department well into the future.

Brown asked if there are other needs not reflected in the proposed budget. Sergeant Parsons said the department needs more storage and had explored the possibility of adding onto the Sally Port. Parsons explained that currently the evidence room is being used for other items such as duty equipment etc. and that an addition onto the Sally Port would help reduce the comingling of Department owned property and police evidence.

Parsons said the evidence refrigerator has needed repairs this summer and that a new one will cost roughly \$10,000. Brown asked if there is an opportunity to secure a better price if this was bought at the same time as the records storage system. Parsons said he didn't know.

White said the proposed budget also includes monies for the replacement of the 2011 Crown Victoria cruiser. Madore said he used the numbers from last year because the State has not

APPROVED

awarded the contracts yet. He went on to say that he hoped it could be put out to bid because it was the last year Ford made them and are in pretty high demand by taxi companies.

Parsons said that if the cruiser replacement is approved, he would propose having Cruiser 2 (2013) go to the new Chief and have the new cruiser be one of the three front-line vehicles for the department.

There was discussion regarding ways to improve radio coverage for the department. Parsons suggested having a meeting with Burlington Communication and the Communications division of State Police to see what our possibilities are.

The retirement date for Chief Madore is July 1, 2017.

Transfer Station Administration:

The Transfer Station budget was reviewed with an overall increase of 1%.

Transfer Station – Disposal:

Transfer Station Supervisor Chris Scott said he increased the recycling disposal line because costs have increased. Scott emphasized that it is still cheaper for the town to recycle than to toss those items in the waste stream.

Brown asked if hiring a company to haul the refuse had been looked at. Scott said yes, that it would cost approximately \$2,000 per week (\$104,000/year) plus the tonnage fees for disposal. Scott said the current mileage on the Roll-Off truck is around 86,000 and that he averages about 10,000 miles per year.

FAST Squad:

The FAST Squad budget was reviewed. Increases were for vehicle repairs, radios and the maintenance contract for the defibrillator.

Fire Department:

The Fire budget was reviewed. Brown asked if prices had been obtained for a fire cistern. Chief Fountain said yes; the concrete version, 30,000 gallon tank would be approximately \$48,000 not including excavation.

The monies to replace the flags on Route 10 were discussed. The Board felt this should be moved to the building, town beautification line. White stated she had received calls this summer about tattered flags and asked if she could budget to replace them all each year.

The next budget work session will be on December 14, 2016 at 11am.

The meeting ended at 4:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa M. White

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Town Administrator