

Town of Atkinson
Budget Committee
October 11, 2005

Attending: Marc Acciard, Chairman, Dave Paquette, Marsha Bassi, Fred Thompson,
Paul Tracy, Jim Blackadar

Mr. Acciard opened the budget meeting of October 11, 2005 at 7:33 pm. Mr. Acciard informed the public that the meeting will be short and simple this evening. The scheduled department head cancelled and will be rescheduled later in the season.

In lieu of the change in scheduling, Mr. Acciard has suggested that the committee take a look at the over expended line items across the board. Marsha Bassi retrieved budget packets from the mailbox for each committee member. These packets contained a comparison of the last 5 years expenditures not budget. Mr. Paquette printed a 10 year summary of all the budgets and you can see overtime how they have increased. Mr. Acciard request that the committee, throughout the year, compare what was expended against what was actually budgeted. In an effort to level fund, if a budget historically has had a \$20 or \$30 thousand balance at the end of the year, then when a request comes in to this year to increase the budget, we seek to finance that increase from the extra \$20 or \$30 thousand float.

The following budgets were discussed with respect to being over expended:

- Town Moderator/Wheelchair access voting machine
- Town Hall/Heat Pump
- Accounting and Audit
- Computer Software
- Maintenance on the Old Police Department

The budget committee continued on to discuss Mr. McAllister's housekeeping issue to pull the Insurance lines out of each particular budget and place them in insurance for accounting purposes. Mr. Thompson mentioned that this issue was discussed last year. Another proposed change is the Planning and zoning clerk, who is currently under the Executive budget, he would like to move Planning and Zoning. Mr. Acciard points out that there are trade-offs in these changes and the committee will have to decide if these are changes we want to make. Some of them make sense and some are housekeeping issues. It is noted that Mr. McAllister is scheduled to meet with the budget committee on November 8, 2005 It is the consensus of the board that Mr. McAllister will address the budget committee prior to schedule if he has global changes he wants to make across the board. **At this time the members of the budget committee would like to request of the Selectmen to have Mr. McAllister to come in front of the budget committee to give a presentation of the town administration.** This appointment is exclusive of his budgets, however, he can also address these housekeeping issues and budget changes at this time. Mr. Acciard will speak with Mr. McAllister regarding a date.

The budget committee members continue to discuss general proposed changes in the presentation of the individual budgets. It is there concern that the town administrator's proposed changes coincide with the bookkeeper and ultimately with the state requirements regarding the MS7.

Mr. Acciard brought up the house bill that was passed for establishing funds for police details. Mr. McAllister has sample language for the warrant article, and will meet with the Selectmen within the week to set the tax rate and at that time he will give them a copy of the sample language and ask the Selectman to pass it onto the Budget committee. Mr. Acciard asks if it was possible to set it up in the actual language of the warrant article to set it up as a "revolving fund". Mr. McAllister confirmed that this is the ultimate aim of the bill. Mr. Acciard suggests that when wording a warrant article, it should read a revolving fund with a cap in order to retain the initial seed money cap for the next year. Mr. Thompson points out that the question of whether or not we make any money on details becomes rather obvious with this format. Mr. Blackadar informed the board that he has spoken with Chief Consentino regarding this new bill. The Chief is well informed and is expecting the budget committee to address it with him at their meeting. Mr. Thompson points out the bottom line of the operating budget will be affected pending the approval of this warrant article. Mr. Acciard believes that there would be two conditional warrant articles and if one passes then the other becomes null and void.

Mr. Tracy informed the committee that he has spoken with Linda Jette regarding the lack of security to protect the Town Hall. She suggested contacting Bill Bolton at the state house regarding a federal mandate to protect all vital records. Are there funds available under the federal mandate to change the locks in the file room and put a security system in town hall? Mr. Acciard agrees that this is a great idea; however, he informs Mr. Tracy that this would have to through the selectmen. It would be their decision whether or not to put a security system in this building and if it can be obtained through a federal grant of federal subsidy would be great. Another suggestion presented to Mr. Tracy by Linda Jette is the possibility of a four (4) day work week. This would enable to office building to be shut down with the intent to save utilities. The availability to the public was discussed again this issue must go before the selectmen. It was suggested that Linda Jette research this and take it to the Selectmen.

Marsha Bassi addresses a schedule change for cemetery. Marsha will invite Dale Childs on November 1 regarding the cemetery budget.

Mr. Blackadar has requested help in finding Mr. Chamberlain. Mr. Acciard directed Jim to Elaine Woodbury as a resource.

Marsha Bassi at this time addressed the board regarding the use of the Community Center. In an effort to cut expenses in the town, would it be a consideration to replace the community center by providing room in the proposed new library to accommodate the loss of the community center? This area would still be of use and value to the town as a park with trails and open fields, however, alleviating the maintenances of

an old building. Following an extended dissertation of the history of this location, the respectfully heard idea was put to rest; possibly to a later date.

Mr. Acciard made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Jim Blackadar seconded, and the vote was unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Daj