

Town of Atkinson
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2009

Attending: Jim Blackadar – Chairman, Dave Paquette Vice Chairman, Steve Giangregorio, Fred Thompson, Harold Morse, Mari Anne Princiotta, and Bill Friel ex-officio

Jim called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM. Jim stated that the plan for the evening is to review the warrant articles presented and review some requested changes to the budget. The first order of business was to review the minutes from the January 6, 2009 meeting.

Dave motioned to accept the minutes as presented/Seconded by Steve G./Unanimous 4-0 (Harold and Mari Anne abstained).

Jim informed the Board that the cash register in the Town Clerks office is broken, and not worth repairing since it is over 20 years old. The Town Clerk estimated that a new one with the features required by the Town would be \$1,500. The Board determined that the budgeted amount in the Town Clerk's equipment line was for a folding machine and date stamp.

Fred motioned to increase the equipment line in the Town Clerk's budget by \$1,500/Seconded by Dave/Unanimous 6-0.

The new Elections & Registration amount is \$145,018.

Jim also informed the Board that the Selectmen have requested that \$7,500 be added to the Fire station maintenance line to repair the roof that is leaking. The original proposal was to re-roof the entire building at a cost of \$50,000, but the Selectmen determined that with the age of the building the balance of the roof should be fine.

Mari Anne motioned to increase the Fire Station Maintenance line within the General Government Buildings budget to \$11,000/Seconded by Fred/Unanimous 6-0.

The new total for General Government Buildings is \$124,613.

The Board also noted an error on the summary page of the budget. The calculation omitted the \$1,000 for Flags. In corrected the error and adding in the above adjustments, the revised final budget is \$4,129,669, which is up \$41,177 from 2008 and represents a 1% increase.

The Board reviewed the Selectmen’s warrant articles and petition warrant articles to determine which ones need our recommendation and then either recommend or not recommend the warrant. The warrant articles are as follows:

Article 2009-7 Multiple-Year Collective Bargaining Agreement

To see if the Town of Atkinson will vote to approve the cost item included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Board of Selectmen and the International Brotherhood of Police Officers Local #563 which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level:

Year	Est. Increase	Year	Est. Increase	Year	Est. Increase
2009	\$6,978	2010	\$15,679	2011	\$18,993,

and further, to raise and appropriate the sum of Six Thousand Nine Hundred Seventy-eight Dollars (\$6,978) for the current fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at the current staffing level paid in the prior fiscal year? The selectmen and the budget committee recommended this appropriation.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen

The Board tabled this warrant article.

Article 2009-8 Authorization for Special Meeting on Defeated Collective Bargaining Agreement

If Article 2009-5 is defeated, shall the Town of Atkinson authorize the governing body to call one Special Meeting, at its option, to address article 2009-5 cost items only?’ (Majority vote)

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen

This article does not require a recommendation by the Budget Committee.

Article 2009-9 Operating Budget

“Shall the Town of Atkinson raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by Special Warrant Articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote for the first session, for the purpose set forth therein, totaling _____ Dollars (\$_____)? Should this article be defeated, the **Default Budget** shall be Three Million, Nine Hundred Ninety-two Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty-three Dollars (\$3,992,853) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Atkinson or by law; or the governing body may hold one Special Meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. (Majority vote required)

The Board tabled this warrant article.

Article 2009-10 Shim and Overlay Roads

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate up to the sum of Two Hundred Fifty-seven Thousand Four Hundred Dollars (\$257,400) to shim and overlay the following: 1.1 miles of Upper Maple Avenue (Academy Avenue to the Hempstead Town Line); 0.3 mile of Jasmine Drive; 0.15 mile of Mosher Drive; 0.55 mile of Stage Road; 0.3 mile of Rockingchair Lane; 0.2 mile of Cottontail Lane; 0.2 mile of Pebblebrook Road? This article is in addition to Article 2009-____, the Operating Budget.

This warrant article was tabled.

Article 2009-11 Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$60,000) to be added to the Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund previously established for the purpose of acquiring fire equipment and vehicles as determined by the Board of Engineer's Capital Improvement Plan? This article is in addition to Article 2009-____, the Operating Budget.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen

Fred motioned to Recommend this warrant article/Seconded by Dave/Unanimous 6-0

Article 2009-12 Recreation Capital Reserve Fund

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) to be added to the Recreation Capital Reserve Fund? The purpose of this fund is the acquisition, design, renovation, and development of recreation areas, to include but not limited to fields and playgrounds. This article is in addition to Article 2009-____, the Operating Budget.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen

Dave motioned to Not Recommend this warrant article/Seconded by Steve G./Motion passes 5-1

Article 2009-13 East Road Recreation Area

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000) to continue construction of the new East Road Recreation Area (Map 15 Lot 27), and to authorize the withdrawal of Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000) from the Recreation Capital Reserve Fund created for this purpose? No additional tax dollars need to be raised for this Warrant Article. This article is in addition to Article 2009-____, the Operating Budget.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen

Mari Anne motioned to Recommend this warrant article/Seconded by Dave/Unanimous 6-0

Article 2009-14 Mosquito Control Expendable Trust Fund

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty-six Thousand Four Hundred Ninety-six and 75/100 Dollars (\$46,496.75) to be added to the Mosquito Control Expendable Trust Fund. This article is in addition to Article 2009-____, the Operating Budget.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen

Fred motioned to Recommend this warrant article/Seconded by Dave/Unanimous 6-0

Article 2009-15 Cable Television Capital Reserve Fund

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate Twenty-one Thousand Dollars (\$21,000) to purchase remote recording and editing equipment for off-site broadcasting and other minor equipment needs, and to authorize the withdrawal of Twenty-one Thousand Dollars (\$21,000) from the Cable Television Capital Reserve Fund established for this purpose. No new tax dollars are needed for this article. This article is in addition to Article 2009-_____, the Operating Budget.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen

Fred motioned to Recommend this warrant article/Seconded by Dave/Unanimous 6-0

Article 2009-16 Police Station Generator

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate up to the sum of Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) to purchase and install a stand-by, self-starting, propane electric generator which will provide enough electricity to power the Police Station in an emergency situation, thus allowing the Police Department to remain operational during a power outage? The installation of said generator will be under the supervision of the Town's Building Maintenance Supervisor. This article is in addition to Article 2009-_____, the Operating Budget.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen

Fred motioned to Recommend this warrant article/Seconded by Dave/Unanimous 6-0

Article 2009-17 American Red Cross

Shall the Town vote to support the Great Bay Chapter of the American Red Cross in the amount of Three Hundred Dollars (\$300)? This article is in addition to Article 2009-_____, the Operating Budget.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen

Harold motioned to Recommend this warrant article/Seconded by Fred/Motion passes 5-1

Article 2009-18 Modify Elderly Exemption

Shall we modify the elderly exemptions under the provisions of RSA 72:37-a and RSA 72:39-b from property tax in the Town of Atkinson, based upon assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65 years of age up to 75: \$100,000.00; for a person 75 years of age up to 80: \$150,000.00; for a person 80 years of age or older: \$200,000.00? To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least **three (3)** consecutive years, own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such a person's spouse, they must have been married and living together for at least five (5) years. In addition, the individual taxpayer must have a net income of not more than **\$34,700.00**, or, if married, a combined net income of not more than **\$43,500.00**; and own net assets not in excess of \$100,000, excluding the value of the taxpayer's residence. New exemption qualifications become effective for the 2010 property tax year.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen

unanticipated money from a state federal or other governmental unit or a private source which becomes available during the fiscal year?

This article does not require a recommendation by the Budget Committee.

Article 2009-25 Library's Authority to Accept Gifts of Personal Property

Shall the town authorize the public library trustees to accept gifts of personal property, other than money, which may be offered to the library for any public purpose under RSA 202-A:4-d, and such authorization shall remain in effect until rescinded by a vote of town meeting? Prior to the acceptance of any gift valued at over Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000), the public library trustees shall hold a public hearing on the proposed acceptance.

This article does not require a recommendation by the Budget Committee.

Article 2009-26 Petition: Rockingham Nutrition & Meals-on-Wheels

By Petition: "See if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the amount of \$2,000 to support Rockingham Nutrition & Meals On Wheels Program's service providing meals for older, homebound and disabled Atkinson residents in the Town's 2009 Budget."

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen

Mari Anne motioned to Not Recommend this warrant article/Seconded by Dave/Unanimous 6-0

Article 2009-27 Petition: Increase Veterans' Tax Credit

By Petition: Shall the Town increase the Veterans' Tax Credit to Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) as allowed by the State of New Hampshire?

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen

This article does not require a recommendation by the Budget Committee.

Article 2009-28 Petition: Mail Tax Cards

By Petition: "To see if the Town will vote to direct the Board of Selectmen/assessor to immediately mail a copy of any changes made to a taxpayer's property tax card, with the reason(s) as to why it was changed. (This would allow every taxpayer to have advanced notice to any changes that would effect their tax bill.). When passed, this warrant article will become effective immediately."

This article does not require a recommendation by the Budget Committee.

Article 2009-29 Petition: Posting Tax Information

By Petition: "To see if the voters will vote to direct the selectmen/assessor to post all property tax cards information on the town web site, so taxpayers will not have to take a day off from work when they need that information. When passed, this warrant article will become effective immediately."

This article does not require a recommendation by the Budget Committee.

Article 2009-30 **Petition: Restricting Legal Fees**

By Petition: “To see if the voters will vote to prohibit the selectmen from spending taxpayer money on the personal legal fees of public officials personal legal fees for which the taxpayers have no direct liability for and to prohibit the unwarranted payments for legal advice not pertaining to town business When passed, this warrant article will become effective immediately.”

This article does not require a recommendation by the Budget Committee.

Article 2009-31 **Petition: Improve Elderly Services**

By Petition: “To see if the voters of Atkinson will vote to expand Elderly Services to provide services to all residents at least 60 years of age; and to all residents with disabilities with no age restriction. To restrict the spending of the Elderly Services budget and Town managed donations, to services directed at the improvement of the health, well-being and protection of the qualified residents. Services are to include rides to medical appointments, and medical devices not already available through insurance or other welfare organizations. To further direct the Elderly Affairs Director to seek out other available State and Federal assistance, such as, but not limited to, NH Fuel Assistance and Meals on Wheels and to post such information at the Town Hall in a conspicuous location. To further direct the Director of Elderly Affairs to post instructions to qualified residents as to how to request and schedule services, in a conspicuous location at Town Hall. To further direct the Elderly Affairs Director to seek out and manage a staff of volunteers to assist the elderly with non-funded assistance such as, but not limited to, shoveling snow and well-being checks. When passed, this warrant article will become effective immediately.”

This article does not require a recommendation by the Budget Committee.

Article 2009-32 **Petition: Full Time Police Chief**

By Petition: “To See if the voters will direct the selectmen to Advertise; direct; screen and interview candidates using the State Police interview unit, to conduct the screening process, and hire the MOST QUALIFIED by objective standards of; education, and time in service (minimum qualifications are; a Bachelors degree in Criminal Justice, and at least 15 years of certified service on a civil police force) candidate for the position of full time police chief. Said position to encompass the duties of the current part-time chief, and the current full time administrative Lieutenant, with salary commensurate with experience and having benefits the same as the current Atkinson Police Lieutenant and will have a starting salary in the range of \$60,000, plus the commensurate benefits. The selectmen are to begin this process within 14 days of this article being passed by the voters, and this process MUST be completed within 60 days of the passage of this article. Advertisements for this position are to run in at least 3 newspapers of general circulation in the Town, for at least 14 days.”

This article does not require a recommendation by the Budget Committee.

Article 2009-33 **Petition: Elect the Planning Board**

By Petition: “To see if the voters of Atkinson will vote to restrict the staffing of the Planning Board to Elected members only. Elected members of the Planning Board will be prohibited from conducting business with the Town during their session in office. When passed, this warrant article will become effective at the next Town Meeting.”

This article does not require a recommendation by the Budget Committee.

Article 2009-34 New Powers

Shall the Town vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 36-A: 4-a, I(a) to authorize the Conservation Commission to expend funds to purchase interests in land outside the boundaries of our municipality, subject to the approval of the local governing body?

This article does not require a recommendation by the Budget Committee.

Article 2009-35 Town Forest

Shall the Town vote to designate the Sawyer 4-H parcel (Map 4 Lot 11) as an Atkinson Town Forest, to be managed by the Conservation Commission under the provisions of RSA 31:112?

This article does not require a recommendation by the Budget Committee.

Jim stated that next week, January 20, 2009 will be the Public Hearing on the 2009 Operating Budget, 7:00 PM at Town Hall.

Fred motioned to adjourn the meeting/Seconded by Dave/Unanimous 7-0. Jim adjourned the meeting at 9:02 PM.

Respectively submitted,
kjb