

Atkinson Budget Committee Workshop Minutes September 1, 2015

Attendees: Wendy Barker, Vice-Chair
Sue Carroll
Kay Galloway
Tom Mealey
Peter Torosian
Bill Smith, Chairman

Absent: Harold Morse – Selectmens' Liaison to Budget Committee

- Meeting opened approximately 7:17 PM. Previous 8/4/15 minutes were approved as corrected.

- Peter and Wendy would like know why no warrant is reportedly needed for raises this year, when needed last year; perhaps Harold can help answer at next meeting. Kay would like to know what officials make in other towns.

- Kay met with Ted Stewart who has completed a number of projects and updated a new master plan. She said the town's 250th anniversary celebration will cost something, and money is being raised.

- Wendy would like to know what are detailed expenses for contractors; details are not in the budget.

- Peter met with Sue on Building Inspections; increased budget request is expected due to new development of 100 units; to be covered by fees. He will meet w/ Fire Chief Murphy shortly. He made calls on fuel prices--waiting for calls back and will share results; he may prefer a card discount system. Sue asked how they track which vehicles get fueled and prevent abuse. Kay said Plaistow's system reportedly works well w/ Cumberland Farms. Peter said the State correlates its fuel use with drivers and vehicle mileage numbers off odometers.

- Wendy will meet w/ Diane Heer Friday before she presents; expect a small budget increase request. She talked with Bill Innes on buildings--he's still putting number together. She expects to hear from Noriko and is interested in revenues.

- Sue said Jean reported unanticipated Elder Services vehicle maintenance expenses, so that department will not have a flat budget after all. Some expenses will be offset by approx. \$3000 in fundraising revenue. Sue suggested they may need to limit rides. Wendy pointed out they are halfway through the year and have spent more than 2014, so they will overspend their big budget increase from last year. Peter asked about means testing; this was discussed in the past and is not done formally. Sue asked if it's fair to taxpayers to keep spending more and more; she feels it needs to be capped. Kay said it's a good thing gas prices are down, allowing significant savings on fuel.

- Peter asked about Legal revenue; Harold may be able to fill us in; Kay mentioned 3 major fines and cemetery plot sales revenue. Peter suggested some charities should go to warrant. Wendy said some, like Meals on Wheels, are clearly beneficial, while others are controversial; she found old warrants back to the 1960's about various open-ended charities--maybe we shouldn't have 20 or 30 charities. Bill passed around several letters from charities, updating on their activities and/or requesting money. Greater Salem caregivers will no longer serve Atkinson--Committee agreed they should not be funded--remove \$2000. Safe Place requesting \$1775, an increase. RSVP Friends asking for \$125 again. Wendy and Kay asked what do they do for Atkinson. CASA wants \$300. Southern NH Services (new) asking for money. Kay would like to know how many people the town Welfare Fund helps; Bill Innes should be able to tell us.

- Meeting adjourned approximately 8:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bill Smith