

**TOWN OF ATKINSON  
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING  
Tuesday, January 5, 2016**

**Members Present:**

Bill Smith, Chair  
Wendy Barker, Vice Chair  
Sue Carroll  
Committee  
Peter Torosian  
Kay Galloway  
Selectman Ex-Officio Harold Morse

**Others Present:**

Alan Phair, Town Administrator  
Mr. Leon Artus  
Mr. Raymond Fournier, Chair, Conflict of Interest

Chair Bill Smith called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm.

**Agenda:** Review minutes, review budget

**General Discussion:**

**Budget Committee - Account Number 41509:** Chair Smith reported that it was noted by the Selectmen that the budget committee lines for training and budget committee clerk were overspent. Chair Smith stated that \$860 was budgeted for the budget committee clerk, Line 41509.110.00. The bookkeeper shows that the expended data shows that \$1,793.00 was spent. In addition, the class for new members which was attended by three new members was not budgeted. The Budget Committee was overspent by \$1,171.50 for 2015. Chair Smith recommended that Line Number 41509.110.00 for the Budget Committee Clerk be increased to \$1,881.

**Chair Smith made a motion to recommend \$1,881 for the Budget Committee Clerk, line number 41509.110.00. Member Carroll seconded the motion. Discussion:** The line was overspent last year, too but less than \$500.00. **All members of the Atkinson Budget Committee present voted in favor. Vote: 6/0/0.**

The other line overspent was education and conferences, line number 41509.850.00, by \$239.00. \$1.00 was allocated and \$240 was spent. Three members went to the class for new members in 2015. The question is who will be elected in March. Two members are running for 2016. Mr. Mealey recommended \$80.00 for the education and conferences line in case a Budget Committee member wants to go to class in 2016.

**Member Mealey made a motion to recommend \$80.00 for Line Number 41509.850.00, Education and Conferences. Ms. Galloway seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Vote: 6/0/0.**

**Minutes: December 15, 2015**

Page 3 on November 19, 2013 Jean LoPizzo needs to be changed

Page 1 – Selectmen voted not to fund the line

**Member Kay Galloway made a motion to accept the minutes of the December 15, 2015 meeting as corrected. Chair Smith seconded the motion. All members voted in favor. Vote: 6/0/0.**

**Rockingham County Planning Commission:** Ms. Galloway asked what line the money for the Rockingham Planning Commission is in.

**Conflict of Interest:** The Committee discussed the issue of having a legal line for one part of Town Government to fight another and if it is necessary. Member Torosian state that he would like a mechanism to enforce an action against a Town official. The Committee continued to discuss if a legal

line is needed for the Conflict of Interest Committee. Mr. Artus stated that he checked with the NHMA and that body informed him that it is perfectly legal for any body of Town government to have a legal line.

Mr. Fournier stated that the Conflict of Interest Committee recommended to remove a Selectman and in that case the Board of Selectmen should have taken the issue to Superior Court. The letter from Mr. Grosky did not answer the questions raised by the Committee.

The Committee continued to discuss the legality of a legal line for the Conflict of Interest Committee. Chair Smith stated that he did not think it appropriate for the Budget Committee to decide that the Conflict of Interest Committee should have a legal line separate from the Town legal line and to fund two Town bodies fighting at taxpayers' expense. Vice Chair Barker stated that she did not have enough information to provide funding for a legal line for the Conflict of Interest Committee. Mr. Artus stated that the Selectmen have a legal line of \$28,000 which is used as a retainer. Mr. Phair stated that he has had considerable conversations with the Town Attorney and the retainer is well spent. Chair Smith stated that he is not prepared to vote on a legal line for the Conflict of Interest Committee and polled the rest of the Committee. The Committee agreed that it would be better to wait for more information for a vote. There was no vote.

Mr. Artus stated that the line for the Town Attorney retainer should be taken to \$1 and should be put out to bid. Chair Smith stated that the Budget Committee was not prepared to make that decision at this meeting. Also, due to unexpected expenses from storm damage and other issues, the budget increase for 2016 would have to be approximately 2.7%.

Mr. Fournier informed the Committee that the Conflict of Interest Committee received four petitions in 2015.

One Time Expenditures: Chair Smith pointed out that the 2016 Town budget will be approximately 2.7% higher than the 2015 budget. The default budget will be approximately the same as the 2015 budget. The difference will be one time expenses, subtracting one time expenses will make the default budget lower than the 2015 actual budget. Chair Smith requested that the Committee members go through the budget to find one time expenses. Mr. Phair stated he would get the Committee information on storm damage. The Committee discussed possible one time expenses. One expense could be the Family Mediation Building. Another could be the truck for the Highway Department.

Review Warrants: Warrants are not ready yet. There have been no citizen petitions. Chair Smith requested that the Town Administrator email the Committee with information on the warrants to look at before the next meeting.

Vote on 2016 Town Budget: \$1,019 were added to the total for the changes in the Budget Committee lines making \$4,442,656 the total proposed amount for the 2016 Atkinson Town Budget. Last year, the total budget was \$4,326,343. There is a 2.69% increase from 2015 to 2016.

**Chair Smith made a motion to propose \$4,442,656 as the Budget Committee recommendation for the total Town of Atkinson 2016 operating budget. Vice Chair Barker seconded the motion. Three in favor, three opposed. Motion failed. Vote: 3/3/0.**

Discussion: Selectman Liaison can break the tie. The Budget Committee needs to propose a budget.

The Committee recessed for 10 minutes.

Chair Smith called the meeting back to order at 8:45 pm. Selectman Harold Morse appeared at the meeting.

Chair Smith explained that he called Selectman Morse in to vote on the proposed budget. Chair Smith asked if the Committee wanted to propose the same motion or to try to cut other expenses. Selectman Morse pointed out that if some areas such as materials of trade in the Library budget were cut, they would come back in the deliberative session. Chair Smith pointed out that \$29,000 would have to be cut out of the proposed budget if the Committee were to reach its goal of a 2% increase for the 2016 Atkinson budget.

The Committee discussed revenue.

**Chair Smith made a motion to propose \$4,442,656 as the Budget Committee recommendation for the total Town of Atkinson 2016 budget. Vice Chair Barker seconded the motion. Vote: 4 in favor, 3 opposed with Selectman Liaison Morse voting. Motion passed. Vote: 4/3/0.**

**Member Galloway made a motion to adjourn the January 5, 2016 meeting of the Atkinson Budget Committee at 9:00 pm. Vice Chair Barker seconded the motion. All members of the Atkinson Budget Committee present voted in favor. Vote: 7/0/0.**

The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 12, 2015.