

**BOARD OF FINANCE
BUDGET DELIBERATION MEETING – APRIL 2, 2013
MEETING ROOM B
WILTON TOWN HALL**

PRESENT: Warren Serenbetz, Lynn Vanderslice, James Meinhold, Al Alper, Jeff Rutishauser, Andy Pforzheimer

ALSO PRESENT: William Brennan, Hal Clark, Richard Dubow, Ted Hoffstatter (late), Dr. Gary Richards, Bruce Likly, Ken Post, Karen Birck, Christine Finkelstein, Tom Thirkettle, Sarah Taffel, Rich McArdle, John Savarese

Chairman Warren Serenbetz called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Deliberations FY 2014 Budget

Mr. Serenbetz advised that tonight is for deliberations. Because there is time this year due to the date of the Annual Town Meeting and because the Grand list model will be farther along the mill rate resolutions will be voted on at the 4/16/13 meeting.

In addition to the BoE and BoS budgets Mr. Serenbetz reviewed the items that must be set by resolution, including estimated revenue, debt service, the charter authority, the ending fund balance, tax relief, the collection rate and finally the mil rate. He asked if anyone wanted to discuss these items. There was some discussion regarding estimated revenues but ultimately no changes were made to any of the non-BoS and BoE budget items. Mr. Pforzheimer asked if there could be a discussion on whether or not we could weigh –in on the excess pension contribution (set at 15% for FY14) and asked that the issue be put on the table.

Board of Education – Mr. Serenbetz suggested using \$350,000 of unspent funds from completed bonded projects to apply to non-recurring site work, which would not reduce the BOE operating budget, but would reduce the impact on the mill rate. This assumes that the Board of Education approves the proposal at their next meeting.

Several ideas were discussed for savings in the BOE budget:

- Extracurricular activity fees - estimating \$400,000 in revenue.
- No headcount increases – estimated savings \$350,000
- Fewer Smart Boards – estimated savings \$50,000
- Push out wi-fi installation at Middlebrook – estimated savings \$30,000
- Remove new reading program – estimated savings \$250,000

Board of Selectmen – It was agreed to use \$300,000 of unspent funds from completed bonded projects to apply to capital purchases, i.e. dump trucks and excavator and plows.

Ideas discussed for savings in the BOS budget:

- Eliminate hiring of 44th Police Officer
- Eliminate hiring of Facilities and Energy Management Director
- Reduce Library - \$10,000
- Reduce utilities estimate - \$50,000
- Re-negotiate legal rates

Some members felt that the Facilities and Energy Management Director position is important and would produce savings. Mr. Rutishauser suggested using local resources for a volunteer committee to perform those tasks and volunteered his services.

Discussion followed about a \$900,000 reduction in the Board of Education budget and a \$500,000 reduction in the Board of Selectmen budget for a total of \$1.4 million. This would result in a 1.6% increase in the mill rate as opposed to the recommended 1.75%. A vote was taken to add \$150,000 back to the Board of Education Budget (for a total reduction of \$750,000). The vote passed 5 YES to 1 NO (Alper)

Mr. Serenbetz moved to set the FY 2013-14 Board of Education Budget at \$76,140,105 and the Board of Selectmen Budget at \$30,947,323, with the stipulation that the non-recurring site work in the schools budget and the bondable items in the Selectmen's capital budget not be reduced to reach those numbers. Motion seconded.

Mr. Alper moved to amend the motion to a Board of Education Budget in the amount of \$76,090,105 and a Board of Selectmen Budget in the amount of \$30,897,323. Motion seconded and failed with a tie: 3 NO (Vanderslice, Pforzheimer, Meinhold) – 3 YES (Alper, Serenbetz, Rutishauser)

MAIN MOTION THEN CARRIED: 5 YES – 1 NO (Alper).

The members agreed to ask Ms. Dennies to ask Hooker and Holcum how much it would cost and what the timing would be to value the pension fund as of March 31, 2013.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Jan Andras
Recording Secretary
(taken from video)