

**TOWN OF CHESTERFIELD
BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
May 29, 2007**

Present: Chairman Gary Winn, Vice-Chair Fred Szmit, Steve Laskowski, Dan Cotter, Selectmen's Representative; Rick Carrier, Town Administrator; Anita Barber, Bill Bucknell, John Koopman, Elliot Rowsey, Warren Porter, Judy Idelkope, School Board Representative, Elaine Blake, Chesterfield Fire Precinct Representative and Carol Ross, Acting Secretary.

Absent: Dave Thomas, Spofford Fire Precinct. It was noted that there is a vacant seat on the Budget Committee when Bob Brockmann resigned to serve on the Select Board.

Guests: Jon McKeon and Bob Brockmann, Selectmen.

Gary called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm. The vacancy was discussed and Linda Lord and Sue Newcomer were mentioned as possible replacements. The position will be advertised in the paper and posted around Town. A 30-day deadline was suggested.

Officers:

Anita moved to nominate Gary as the Chairman. John seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Steve moved to nominate Fred as the Vice-Chair. Anita seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

CIP

Gary advised that he had e-mailed all members regarding representation to the CIP committee. Steve had volunteered and is on the committee. Elaine is the Chair of the CIP Committee. She advised each department has submitted what they see as capital expenditures for the next 6 – 7 years. The committee members will review these.

SAU Study Committee

Gary advised that a School study committee has been formed to review involvement with the SAU. Sue Scuito, Sue Newcomer, Mike Robarge and Ruth Van Houten are on the committee. Anita will be the Budget Comm. representative. They will meet Thursday evening for their organizational meeting. Kristin McKeon will attend from the School Board.

School Board spending

Judy advised that in 2 weeks the School Board would be meeting. She advised that there is a surplus of \$250,000 this year partially from \$154,000 high school tuition and \$90,000 from Special Ed placements. They have overspent the maintenance line by \$12,000 due to the boiler repairs. She advised that the Facilities Comm. see the need to replace the primary wing doors, as they are not secure; there are leaks in the hallway that would require capping the chimney, putting air into the tele-data room to protect the phone equipment and a missing bathroom stall door in the women's bathroom. She doesn't have

any estimates available at this time. She asks for the Budget Comm. input and if they are willing to support the use up to \$12,000 from surplus to make these repairs.

Fred asked if there were a limit to overspending a line. Gary stated there wasn't and these items are all maintenance line issues. The School Board should do what they have to do. A motion was made to authorize the spending however; Fred stated that it is not up to the Budget Comm. to tell them how to spend their money. Steve stated he thinks the School Board should stop seeing the \$250,000 surplus as theirs. Gary stated he doesn't think that a motion is necessary but would like to have a consensus vote if the committee were in agreement on the spending. He called the vote and the committee unanimously agreed on spending funds on these items.

Transfer Station

Rick advised that Leon Dunbar had rolled the roll-off truck and it has been totaled. The insurance has reimbursed \$17,000 for the truck and will cover the damage done to the Public Service lines and Allard lumber time lost. The EPA cleanup will not be covered for an approximate cost of \$9,000. Leon has projected the cost to haul trash, C&D and recyclables for the rest of the year at \$18,000 to \$20,000. It was noted that this would give several months to get accurate numbers for hauling. Jon stated they are looking at privatization as well as lots of options.

Fred advised he was very involved with buying the truck and rebuilding the Transfer Station. He is convinced the Town needs a truck, not a new one. He would like to see someone put together hard numbers and a valid plan for presentation at Town Meeting.

Bill suggested that other options be looked at such as residents with trucks help out with hauling. It was also suggested that Chesterfield combine with Westmoreland for hauling. Fred stated he was concerned with having 3 people on duty Saturdays and this should be reviewed. Steve stated that if just moving the containers when they are full we could just get a \$20,000 truck to move them out and replace them. Gary suggested a sub-committee to study the need for a truck.

Gary stated the Budget Comm. has the feeling that the budgets are not coming from the Selectmen with a yes or no but just go to the Budget Comm. to make the decisions on the budgets. Dan stated that the Selectmen do look at each budget and they are not just handed through.

Fred stated that if a business had a proposal they would have a group of experts put together a plan for the presentation. It was noted that the Selectmen and the Budget Committee should be working together. Fred stated that they were in agreement 99% of the time.

CIP

Steve stated that was involved with the CIP in the 1980's and it has been updated once. They have received input from departments and he thinks these are similar to the budgets presented with not a lot of creative thinking. We will either have to raise taxes or figure out how work faster and more effectively.

He advised that in order to have impact fees for development a Master Plan and CIP must be in place. It was noted that the CIP is a guiding document for the Budget Comm. Rick stated it is on the Town's web site and the projections are very close to where we are now.

Jon stated that the Selectmen, when putting budgets through put explanations with the line items but does not see getting input back from the Budget Comm. Fred stated that the Selectmen's rep and Rick should be relaying this information back to the Selectmen. Rick stated that there are times when he does not understand the reasoning for the cuts made by the Budget Comm. He mentioned the Parks & Rec cut to the bottom line.

It was noted that if the Selectmen and Rick cannot understand the Budget Comm's reasoning then they should contact Gary and if he can't explain it he would send out e-mail to the other committee members.

Fred stated that we should not compare budget to budget but compare spending to help with the new budget. Zero base budgeting was discussed. Warren suggested hiring consultants to see how to cut budgets and running departments more efficiently.

Jon invited the Budget Comm to attend the Selectmen's meeting during the budget reviews. John suggested having a Budget Comm liaison to the Select Board. Bob stated that Linda Lord had recommended that he attend one department meeting each month to get an idea of what is happening.

Adjournment

Fred moved to adjourn at 9:02 p.m. Bill seconded the motions, which carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Ross
Secretary