

**TOWN OF CHESTERFIELD  
BUDGET COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 29, 2008**

Present: Bill Bucknell, Anita Lewis, Steve Laskowski, John Koopman, Elliot Rowsey, Elaine Blake, CFR Representative; Gary Winn, Chairman; John Zannotti, Warren Porter, Rick Carrier; Town Administrator, Dan Cotter (arrived at 7:15 PM), Selectmen's Representative; and Amy LaFontaine, Secretary.

Absent: Dave Thomas, Spofford Fire Precinct Representative and Fred Szmit.

**Housekeeping** - Steve moved to approve January 15<sup>th</sup> minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Bill and passed unanimously. Rick presented the Debt Schedule from New Hampshire Municipal Bond Bank (NHMBB) for the Town Office Building. Gary stated that the Committee had some questions about the Spofford Fire Station Bond, because the principal and interest were lower in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. Typically, the principal payment remains fixed through the life of the bond. Gary stated that he believed Dave was the only person who could answer this question and he may be at the meeting later.

**Discussion** – John K asked about the impact on the Town with the budget presented. Anita stated that the school gives an effect on taxes. Rick stated that the Town was a little bit more complicated. He stated that based on the # presented at this time the increase would be 30% to 40%. At tax the time the tax rate is set it is usually level funded due to a number of different factors, ie: property valuations and varying revenues. Meals & Rooms isn't revealed released until Late September and MV Permits. John asked if there were any indication that the State would be paying less money. Rick stated that he has not seen evidence of that. John Z. asked if you could get an estimate by taking Estimated Revenue and subtract it from the Operating Budget, then compare this data to last years identical data. Take \$3,345,053 subtract \$1,531,600 divide it by tax rate impact chart. Rick stated that the Tax Rate would be roughly \$4.35. John Z stated that he wanted to compare the 2007 budget compared to the 2008 budget. The 2008 budget is \$200,000 higher. He also looked at revenues from last year 1.7 million. The 2008 revenues is 1.5 million. There is \$400,000 shortfall of 14% on the proposed budget. Steve stated that he and Fred have been comparing expenses to appropriations. Gary stated that revenues are estimated conservatively.

Gary stated that if the Committee is going to cut individual budgets they should provide direction as to where the funds should come from. Dan stated that if money is cut he would want to know what the Committee thought was inaccurate that he should be cutting. John K stated that he was concerned about what was happening in the economy at this time. He also stated that feedback from department heads is that the Committee is providing too much micromanagement. John K suggested asking each department head to cut their budget by 2%. Dan stated that the first question that should be asked is what services don't you want provided? Cutting this budget is going to cut services. Anita stated that the Committee had typically asked for true budget numbers asking for 2% reduction would be punishing them for doing what was asked. If the Committee cuts 2% out of the budget it will encourage 2- 4%

padding in a couple of years. Steve stated that he would vote for the operating budget right now exactly as it stands.

John Z stated that if the tax increase is 6% or 7% and COLA is 2.4% all of the people that live in Town on a fixed income would be struggling to raise 2.5X their raise. Dan stated that the TO Building was 3% of the increase. John K stated that the TO would be more efficient and better service would be provided. The Town voted to pay for this new building. Steve stated that the cost to offset the new TO building is not going to come out of the operating budget. Steve also stated that if you delay a contribution to Heavy Equipment and ask departments to get another year out of a truck, the truck may break down and cost tens of thousands of dollars to repair. He asks if the Town can afford to keep 2 separate fire departments. There are \$300,000 worth of expenses in the 2 departments and duplicate positions. Dan stated that there can be a conversation about reducing fuel by 50 cents, but if the Committee says you're over by 2%, cut your budget by 2%, it's almost an accusation.

Gary stated that under Executive budget the new line item for Technical Assistance is \$4,000 offset by revenue. He also pointed out that expenses for the Supervisors of the Checklist are up because there are 4 elections this year and the Town Clerk's budget is also up significantly because of the election cycle. John Z stated that if the new TO building is 3% of the increase and the voters were notified of the cost, the additional 3% increase for a total of 6% is acceptable and he would agree with Steve. The effect on taxes was disclosed at the Meeting last year. Steve stated that the impact of this budget does not take effect until December. There is a year's opportunity for Department Heads to try and reduce expenses. Warren stated that Selectmen can determine how much is withdrawn from the General Fund to reduce taxes. He stated that the 2007 operating budget was underspent by 12.8%. The operating budget for 2006 was underspent by 9.1%. Warren stated that anything less than 5% is cutting it close, because a catastrophe could cause you to overspend your budget. Steve moved to accept the operating budget \$2,808,731 as presented. Elaine seconded the motion. The bonus paid in 2007 by the library was \$1,113. The Committee cut the bonus last year. Elliot asked about the Solid Waste budget. \$113,000 is budgeted for tipping. Only \$95,349 was spent in 2007 and \$99,792 was spent in 2006. Dan stated that \$113,000 is calculated on handout 18(B). Gary stated that he would hope that the tonnage used in the calculation was based on an average. Anita moved to amend the operating budget to \$2,806,418. The motion was seconded by Steve. The amendment removes \$2,313 from the library bonus for last year and this year. When the director was given a raise the Trustees voluntarily reduced the bonus from \$2,000 to \$1,200. In the salary comparables it was revealed that the PT hourly staff was among the best paid in the state, which is why the Committee removed the remainder from the Budget last year. Warren and John K abstained. Dan, Gary, Steve and Elliot voted No on the amendment. Bill, Anita, Elaine, John Z and Judy voted Yes. The motion was approved 5-4. The Committee moved to vote on the entire operating budget as amended for \$2,806,418. Elaine asked if she could vote on the entire operating budget as she is PT Planning Board Secretary. John Z stated that he was a member of Parks & Rec. Dan stated that he was a Selectmen. Rick stated as long as everyone disclosed a potential conflict and the Committee agreed there would not be a problem. The library had not expended the bonus before they met with the Committee. Warren abstained. Steve and Gary were opposed. The motion passed by majority vote.

**ARTICLE 5:**To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$215,385 for the purpose of resurfacing Town roads, or act in any way related thereto. Steve moved to recommend Article 5. The motion was seconded by Anita and passed unanimously.

**ARTICLE 6:**To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 to be added to the already established Roadways Construction and Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund. Steve moved to recommend Article 6. The motion was seconded by Judy. The balance in the fund is \$157,000. Steve asked for the top 3 priorities for this fund. There isn't one. The Committee felt that the scope of the project on Pond Brook Road is too large for this fund. The motion failed by majority vote. Elaine, Dan and John Z voted in favor of the motion.

**ARTICLE 7:**To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$71,000 to be added to the already established Highway Heavy Equipment Capital Reserve Fund, or act in any way related thereto. Elaine moved to recommend Article 7. The motion was seconded by Steve and passed unanimously.

**ARTICLE 8:**To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$7,200 for the purpose of Purchasing Replacement Fuel Pumps at the Highway Garage, or act in any way related thereto. Elaine moved to recommend Article 8. The motion was seconded by Bill and passed unanimously.

**ARTICLE 9:**To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 for the purchase of Guard Rails, or act in any way related thereto. Steve moved to recommend Article 9. The motion was seconded by Elaine and passed unanimously.

**ARTICLE 10:**To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 to be added to the already established Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund, or act in any way related thereto. Anita moved to recommend Article 10. The motion was seconded by Steve. Rick stated that a computer generated revaluation was agreed to be expensed from this fund this year. He is planning a full reval in 2013. The motion passed unanimously.

**ARTICLE 11:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 for the purpose of Purchasing and Installing a Fire Cistern near the Center Fire Station. The Selectmen have applied and been approved for a Hazard Mitigation Grant in the amount of \$46,047 for this project. The balance of \$53,953 to be raised from general taxation, or act in any way related thereto. Bill moved to recommend Article 11. The motion was seconded by Judy. Anita asked why as a resident of Spofford, she would want this? Gary stated that as a resident of Spofford, she would have an interest in the School, the new TO Building, the Town Hall and the Historical Society. This is a 30,000 gallon tank. The grant from the Department of Homeland Security is left over funds from 2006. Steve stated that the grant paid for less than half of this project. Dan stated that the tank is very expensive as well as the excavation to get down 18 feet. The motion failed by majority vote. Gary, Dan and Judy voted affirmatively.

**ARTICLE 12:**To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,500 for Town Office Future Options Committee, or act in any way related thereto. Anita moved to recommend Article 12. The motion was seconded by Bill. Judy stated that when the new TO Complex was

proposed, the old Town Office building was considered unusable for any purpose. The Committee will answer to Selectmen and will consist of 9 members from the General Public. Rick guessed that the Committee would propose 3 options: Keep and Maintain, Buy and Move or Disappear/Disassemble with related costs for each option. The motion passed by majority vote. Anita, Steve, Judy and Warren were opposed.

**ARTICLE 13:**To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 to be added to the already established Transfer Station Heavy Vehicles and Equipment Capital Reserve Fund, or act in any way related thereto. Steve moved to recommend Article 13. The motion was seconded by Bill. This fund is primarily for the backhoe and the compactor. Elliot asked if the old backhoe could be traded from the highway department. Rick stated that Leon and Bart have been asked about that. The balance in the fund is \$41,000. The current backhoe was purchased used from insurance proceeds. Rick stated that the last backhoe was about \$25,000. The compactor is approximately \$9,000. Gary stated that both pieces of equipment could be purchased with the funds already in the account. \$30,000 was put in this account last year because of the purchase of a truck. Judy asked for a replacement schedule to justify expenses from this account. Warren moved to amend the amount recommended from \$10,000 to \$5,000. The amendment was seconded by Bill. The amendment failed by majority vote. Bill, Anita, Warren and Gary voted in favor of the amendment. Article 13 failed by unanimous vote.

**ARTICLE 14:**To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$23,000 to be added to the already established Police Cruiser Capital Reserve Fund, or act in any way related thereto. Steve moved to recommend Article 14. The motion was seconded by Bill. Anita was concerned that the balance after a purchase was too high. Steve stated that purchasing a cruiser for \$33,500 in 2011 may be optimistic and considering what could happen to a cruiser it would be good to have the price of ½ a cruiser in the fund at any given time. The motion passed by majority vote. Anita was opposed.

**ARTICLE 15:**To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$7,000 to be added to the already established Police Department Equipment Capital Reserve Fund, or act in any way related thereto. Steve moved to recommend Article 15. The motion was seconded by Elaine and passed unanimously.

**ARTICLE 16:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$32,000 for the purchase of a police cruiser and switchover costs, and authorize the withdrawal of up to \$32,000 from the Police Cruiser Capital Reserve Fund for that purpose, or act in any way related thereto. Anita moved to recommend Article 16. The motion was seconded by Elaine. John asked what happened to the cruiser that was replaced? The Selectmen have not determined if it will become the Town Car or be sold. It depends on its conditions. It may also be available for purchase. The motion passed unanimously.

**ARTICLE 17:**To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 to purchase a new Police Cruiser Mounted Video System, and authorize the withdrawal of up to \$5,000 from the Police Department Equipment Capital Reserve Fund for that purpose, or act in any way related thereto or act in any way related thereto. Anita moved to recommend Article 17. The motion was seconded by Elaine and passed unanimously.

**ARTICLE 18:**To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,500 for computer upgrades at the Police Department and authorize the withdrawal of up to \$1,500 from the Police Department Equipment Capital Reserve Fund for that purpose, or act in any way related thereto. Anita moved to recommend Article 18. The motion was seconded by Elaine. Steve stated that handout 22(C) was for the purchase of hardware. The motion passed unanimously.

**ARTICLE 19:**To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 to be added to the already established Library Building Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund, or act in any way related thereto. Steve moved to recommend Article 19. The motion was seconded by Elaine. The fund balance is \$15,000. The Committee recommended this article in 2005. The library will need to purchase a new roof shortly. Steve stated that this was another CRF that should go away if there was a reserve fund for all the Town buildings. The motion passed unanimously.

**ARTICLE 20:**To see if the Town will vote to create an expendable general fund trust fund under the provisions of RSA 31:19-a, to be known as the Library Technology Migration Expendable Trust Fund for the purpose of software conversions at the Library, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,000 to be placed in this fund. And further, to see if the Town will vote to appoint the Library Trustees as agents to expend from this fund, or act in any way related thereto. Bill moved to recommend Article 20. The motion was seconded Elaine and passed unanimously.

**ARTICLE 21:**To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$3,000 to the already established Wildland Fire Suppression Expendable Trust Fund, or act in any way related thereto. Elaine moved to recommend Article 21. The motion was seconded by Steve. The fire on Wantastiquet was paid for out of this Fund. Gary stated that Keene charged overtime to fight the fire, because they had already worked a full day. The Fire Warden is only looking for \$8,000. The balance in the fund is \$7,000. The motion passed unanimously.

**ARTICLE 22:**To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,500 to be added to the already established Cemetery Truck Replacement Expendable Trust Fund, or act in any way related thereto. Anita moved to recommend Article 22. The motion was seconded by Elaine. The balance in the fund is \$4,300. Steve asked if a truck from the highway department could be moved down to the Cemetery. The motion passed unanimously.

**ARTICLE 23:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,500 to be added to the already established Cemetery Mower Replacement Expendable Trust Fund, or act in any way related thereto. Elaine moved to recommend Article 23. The motion was seconded by Anita. The balance in the fund is \$5,600. The motion passed unanimously.

**ARTICLE 24:**To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$21,737 to support the following, or act in any way related thereto.

Chesterfield Senior Meals program	150
Home Health, Meals on Wheels and Age in Motion	8,068
Monadnock Family Services/Mental Health	4,729
Community Kitchen	6,000
Youth Services	140
Southwestern Community Services	1,700
Visiting Nurse Association & Hospice	500
Samaritans	250
Drop In Center	200
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21,737</b>

Elaine moved to recommend Article 24. The motion was seconded by Bill and passed by majority vote. Warren was opposed.

Anita moved to recommend the revised estimated revenues for \$1,531,600. The motion was seconded by Elaine. The revenue is lower this year because the interest on 2 million dollar investment has decreased. Motor Vehicle Revenue is hard to estimate. The motion passed unanimously. The next meeting will be February 7<sup>th</sup> @ 7PM to sign paperwork. Anita left @ 10:10 PM.

**Chesterfield Fire & Rescue Precinct** - Elaine moved to recommend \$96,895 for the operating budget. The motion was seconded by Steve and passed unanimously.

**Article 5:** To see if the Precinct will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$11,000 to be added to the already established CF&R Small Equipment CRF, or act in any way related thereto. Elaine moved to recommend Article 5. The motion was seconded by Bill and passed unanimously.

**Article 6:** To see if the Precinct will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$40,000 to be added to the already established CF&R Heavy Equipment CRF, or act in any way related thereto. Elaine moved to recommend Article 6. The motion was seconded by Dan. The balance in the fund is \$172,000. They are scheduled to expend \$100,000 in 2010. The motion passed unanimously.

**Article 7:** To see if the Precinct will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 to be added to the already established CF&R Building Maintenance Non-Capital Reserve Fund, or act in any way related thereto. Elaine moved to recommend Article 7. The motion was seconded by Bill. A non-capital reserve fund is for repairs. Dan stated that replacing a roof is a non-capital expenditure because it is replacing an existing roof. The roof was replaced last year. There is \$4,037 in the account. The motion passed unanimously.

**Article 8:** To see if the Precinct will vote to raise and appropriate up to \$17,283 for the installation of an additional overhead door on the north side of the Center Fire Station and to authorize the withdrawal of up to \$17,283 from the CF&R Building Maintenance Non-Capital Reserve Fund, or act in any way related thereto. Elaine moved to recommend Article 8. The

motion was seconded by Judy. Dan stated that installation of overhead doors is technically a capital expenditure. The motion passed unanimously.

**Article 9:** To see if the Precinct will vote to raise and appropriate up to \$21,825 for repair of the frost wall and foundation drainage at the West Station. Elaine moved to recommend Article 9. The motion was seconded by Bill. Steve stated that he did not think the building was worth \$21,825. Consolidation should have been discussed before the Chesterfield Precinct was formed 4 or 5 years ago. John asked if combining the precincts was discussed at Town Meeting. The Precincts have a separate meeting. The motion failed by majority. Elaine and Elliot voted in the affirmative.

**Spofford Fire Precinct** – Judy moved to postpone discussion until Thursday. The motion was seconded by Bill and passed unanimously.

**Other** – Judy stated if anyone was interested in the School Treasurer position Anita will be leaving at the end of the year. The filing position is open until Friday. Judy stated that the reason the SAU withdrawal Committee was formed was because in order to withdraw from the SAU based on SAU costs a withdrawal a study Committee would need to be formed. She presented minutes from the School Board meeting November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Gary stated that he knew one of the people on the withdrawal committee would not be returning next year, if the committee was re-formed.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy LaFontaine  
Secretary