

**TOWN OF CHESTERFIELD  
BUDGET COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
JULY 15, 2008**

Present: Gary Winn, Chairman; Fred Szmit, Dan Cotter, Selectmen's Representative; Warren Porter, Elaine Levlocke, CF&R Precinct Precinct (departed 9:35); Steve Laskowski, John Koopman, Bill Bucknell (arrived at 7:15 PM), Bayard Tracy (arrived at 8 PM) and Amy LaFontaine, Secretary.

Absent: John Zannotti, Judy Idelkope, School Board Representative; and Dave Wiggin, Spofford Fire & Rescue Precinct

Gary called the meeting to order at 7:13 PM.

**Discussion** - This is a summer meeting to discuss goals for the 2009 budget season. Several letters were composed for discussion. The Committee does not agree if acceptable spending is 3% over last years budget or 5-6% below last years expenditures. Steve suggested having a working foreman at the Highway Garage and having all administrative duties completed at the Town Offices. Fred suggesting reducing staff at the Transfer Station to one full-time employee with the exception of possibly Saturday. Two Full-Time positions were created when a roll-off truck was utilized to transport our own waste. Safety is the primary reason to have 2 at this time. The Highway Department is looking for a new worker. This would be a good time for restructure. The Committee would like to look into sub-contracting for snow removal.

Fred stated that each department works has its own purchasing agent. Perhaps the function could be reduced to 2 or 3 centrally located people. Elaine suggested the Committee spend a day following Town employees, and reviewing job descriptions before reorganizing everyone's job. Warren stated that department heads should be included in this type of conversation. Steve stated that it is up to the Selectmen to communicate Committee desires to Town employees. Steve also stated that this Committee is requesting greater control over accountability. John stated that a PO system centrally located could centralize administrative costs. This year changes need to be made, services need to be cut or taxes have to be raised.

The current pay scale originated with the Budget Committee. No one is particularly happy with the current arrangement. The employees are only rewarded for 5 steps; then, only receive COLA raises for the remainder of their employment with the Town. Steve stated that there is a certain value to a job. If you stay for 50 years, you have to accept that there is a limit to the salary. If the employee wants to earn more, then they would need to seed a better job. John stated that the pay scale must be comparable with other Towns or the employees would be leaving for neighboring Towns.

Fred suggested getting a letter to the Selectmen quickly, because departments will start working on the budget next month. The Conservation Commission may be looking for \$1,000,000 to purchase land for hiking trails. Gary stated that the health insurance plan for the school is very good. His family plan costs \$2,000. It is a \$15,000 policy with a \$5 co-pay @ the Dr.'s and \$3.00 @ the pharmacy. There is no deductible at the

hospital. The teachers only work 190 days for 7 hours per day. The starting pay for support staff is approximately \$10 to \$11 per hour. There are 6 paid vacation days.

**Other** - Fred discussed the options for the Town Office Building. There is a strong contingent on the Town Office Building Committee that feels it should be saved for historical value. The cost to tear it down is around \$35,000 - \$40,000. Another Option is to loan it to a Co-op. Move it, sell it or rent it. Water from the new TO/Complex are within the footprint. It would cost around \$350,000 to \$400,000 to turn it into an early childhood education center. The building will need to be winterized until Town Meeting in March.

**Adjournment** - The next meeting will be August 12<sup>th</sup>. The meeting adjourned at 9:38 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy LaFontaine  
Secretary