

**Town of Brentwood
Budget Committee**
Minutes of November 27, 2017

Meeting: Budget committee meeting held at the Brentwood Town Office

Present: Krista Steger (Chair), Malcolm Allison, Michelle Siudut, Jeff Bryan, Jessie Hollister, Keith Levitsky and Bill Faria

Visitors: Wayne Robinson, Donna Vadeboncoeur, Bill Campbell, Kim Woods, Lisa Swasey, Melissa Litchfield

Krista called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. She distributed proposed department budgets approved by the selectmen for Police, Highway, ACO, Finance, Street Lighting, Mosquito Control, Health Officer, Fire; and the selectmen's meeting minutes.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Krista identified several revisions to the draft minutes of the Budcomm meeting of November 13, 2017. Keith identified that Toby was spelled wrong. Motion to approve the revised minutes Jeff/Jessie carried 5-0-2.

Updates from the Selectman & School Board Representatives

Jessie reported that the school board has not had a meeting since our last Budcomm meeting. The Swasey school budget is still in progress and she invited the Budcomm members to attend the next school board meeting which will be held in the school library at 6:30pm on Monday Dec 4, 2017. They are still on track to deliver the school budget to the Budcomm on Dec 18, 2017. She also indicated that the teacher contract is still in process.

Jeff reported that the selectmen are continuing to approve department budgets and we will review many of them at this meeting.

Budgets for Consideration

The Police budget is up 11.7% at \$825,791. Krista noted, according to the selectmen's minutes, that the proposed salaries of full time officers be adjusted up in order to get them in line with other towns of comparable size so that Brentwood retains its currently trained police staff. The largest increase in the budget is due to the Chief's salary which will be spread into two increments in 2018. The Administrative assistant salary line is up approx. \$8K as the number of working hours is up as is the retirement amount. Support documents with salary increase details were presented for reference by Wayne.

Jeff noted that there had been little if any increase in police salaries in the past, and salary adjustments are long overdue. He also stated that in the past Wayne took only a small salary as Police Chief, and now he is retiring that budget line is up in order to pay the new Chief, which is a 32 hour position. The selectmen are in process of selecting a new Police Chief, which should

be completed by the end of December. Discussion followed. Motion to approve Jeff/Keith carried 6-0-1. Bill abstained as he is Animal Control Officer, which reports to the police department.

Health Officer budget is flat at \$1. Motion to discuss Mal/Jessie carried 7-0. Discussion followed. Motion to approve Mal/Jessie carried 5-0.

Fire Budget is up \$55,733 from last year at \$489,353. Krista read the selectmen's minutes which showed the line increases and referred the committee to the supporting material. Jeff stated that the Chief Bill Campbell offered four budget options. Chief Campbell explained the options with their respective coverage, personnel and salary impacts. He recommended the option he thought offered optimal coverage with his staff and per diem hires with the least budget impact. Jeff stated that the salary line was also up significantly due to the new chiefs salary while the administration line was down since the old chief's stipend ended. Retirement and FICA were up accordingly. Discussion followed. Keith asked if there were any additional vehicles needed. Bill Campbell responded that a command vehicle would be needed in the future, as he is using his personal vehicle at this time. The previous chief had his own vehicle. That would be a warrant article. Keith asked to review the prior year's increases in the Fire budget. Krista responded that last year it was up 16% over the previous year due to salary increases. Training line is not going up, Campbell indicated, as he expects that any per diem firefighters are required to be certified prior to hiring. More discussion followed with questions about coverage. Campbell reviewed the number of calls that could not be responded to due to staffing (not including responses for mutual aid, but including EMS calls). Krista noted that 33 calls this year were missed and explained how they broke down. Motion to approve Jeff/Jessie, carried 7-0.

Animal Control Budget is down \$2771 from last year at \$7152. Krista moved that this budget be tabled as Bill Faria respectfully asked. Jeff explained that the budget was submitted by Christine Belanger who is the manager of this department and it was approved by the selectmen. Bill Faria stated he had not had an adequate chance to fully discuss the budget with Christine, as he is the Animal Control Officer. Jeff reiterated that the budget was submitted and approved by the selectmen in due course, and should be considered. Krista withdrew the motion to table. Motion to discuss Jeff/Jessie carried 7-0. Krista noted that the budget reduction was based on a reduction in working hours. Discussion followed. Motion to approve Jeff/Keith, carried 6-0-1. Bill abstained as he is the Animal Control Officer.

Highway Budget is down \$687 at \$380,444. Krista stated that Budcomm votes separately on Highway and Snow & Ice budgets. Krista reviewed the selectmen's minutes and the supporting documents. Motion to discuss Jeff/Mal carried 7-0. Krista noted that there is a line item for \$30K which was added for road construction. Jeff pointed out that this work is done by a vendor, and it was basically moved from the salary line. Motion to approve Jeff/Michelle, carried 7-0.

Snow & Ice Control Budget is up \$31,127 from last year at \$136,557. Motion to discuss Jeff/Mal, carried 7-0. Jeff pointed out that the increase is in the cost of salt of \$2 a ton. Wayne stated that this year we are budgeting for 1500 tons, rather than 1000 tons. Motion to approve Jeff/Jessie, carried 7-0.

EMS Budget is up \$4027 from last year at \$113,509. Motion to discuss Jeff/Jessie carried 6-0. Jeff explained the increase is due to a need for new updated equipment, replacing old equipment, and this entire budget is "in and out" funded by ambulance fees. Mal asked if there was an income statement and Donna Vadeboncoeur stated that Karen Clement has it. She also indicated that this entire budget as well as saving \$30K per year for a new ambulance comes out of the income. Mal observed that this is just an "authorization to spend" in essence. Motion to approve Jeff/Keith, carried 7-0.

Financial, Tax & Assessing Budget is up \$14,616 from last year at \$76,967. Motion to discuss Jessie/Michelle carried 7-0. Krista read the selectmen's minutes where Karen Clement requested a new hire at 32hrs to fill the bookkeeper/clerk's position at a lower hourly rate. Discussion followed. Jeff indicated that we are creating a new full time position that is needed, due to retirement of the existing bookkeeper. It is not possible to find anyone who will fill the position at less than 32hrs with no benefits. Bill noted that there is no line item for retirement which is probably needed, so this budget may not be sufficient. Krista moved to table this budget pending more information from Karen Clement. Mal seconded. Carried 7-0

Street Lighting Budget is flat at \$250. Motion to approve Mal/Jeff carried 7-0.

Mosquito Control is flat at \$30,500 Jeff stated that this budget was a warrant article and is now part of the Town Budget as of 2016. Motion to approve Jeff/Jessie carried 7-0.

Other Business

Krista stated that we have Library budget left to do as well as revisiting the General Government and Financial Budgets next time. She is considering cancelling the December 11 Budcomm meeting. Discussion followed. The committee was in favor of handling these items at the December 18 meeting.

Visitor Comments

Melissa said she thought the Budget Committee should handle only the school budget on Dec 18. Krista responded that the school budget will be a draft and the Budcomm will vote on the final one in January 2018; therefore the town budgets can be handled on Dec 18 with the school budget.

Next Meeting

December 18, 2017 at 7pm

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Motion to adjourn at 8:33 Michelle/Mal, carried 7-0.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Malcolm Allison