

Town of Seymour
Board of Finance

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TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Minutes

Budget Deliberations
Wednesday, March 14, 2018 at 7:00pm
Norma Drummer Room, Seymour Town Hall

Members Present: Jim Cretella, Richard Demko, Kristyn Hanewicz, Beverly Kennedy, Gary Popielasz (alternate), Bill Sawicki, and John Stelma

Members Absent: Heather McDaniel

Others Present: Kurt Miller, Bill Paecht, Tony Caserta, Jean Sosnovich, and Doug Thomas

Item #1 – Call Meeting to order

Chairman Bill Sawicki called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Item #2 – Pledge of Allegiance

Everyone saluted the Flag and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item #3 – Public Comment

None

Item #4 – Deliberation & Discussion of 2018/2019 Budget

Discussion of Planning & Zoning budget by Chairperson Bill Paecht:

- Salary – had regular union increase
- Otherwise everything else is the same – no increase

Discussion of Parks Department budget by Department Head Bill Paecht:

- Same budget – no increase
- New equipment needed this year – SanPro for doing the fields

Discussion of First Selectman's Budget (including Town Buildings & Operations) and Revenues budget by First Selectman Kurt Miller:

- Looks like the total additional the town will have to pay this year to the state is \$2 million.
- We were not expecting this much additional needed but all but \$200,000 has been raised due to the following: \$500,000 from cuts in expenditures, \$600,000 from debt restructuring, \$400,000 from Mill Rate Stabilization Fund, \$200,000 from Chatfield/LoPresti project closeout
- We had planned to pay for new purchases in cash which may not be possible
- There will be NO mill rate decreases in 2019 and 2020 as previously planned
- We are financially strong; much better shape than many towns. We will move around some money as needed. New 5-year plan is coming out.
- **1. CASH RESERVES:** Fund Balance – we have a strong cash position. Future years' increases will be slow. 12.81% for 2019. S&P usually look for 13%. May not reach that due to the state's cuts.

- The First Selectman will recommend to the Board of Selectmen to lock in the Cash Reserves at \$6,727,738.00 (12%) leaving us a \$452,571 cushion.
- **2. DEBT SERVICE:** has dropped dramatically over the past few years; 6-8% is best. We are at low 6%.
- 60% of debt to be retired in 10 years is the ideal goal; we are at 58%.
- 2019 – 2025 – Debt payment will go from \$3,305,000 this year to \$3,232,000
- 2026 will go down \$400,000 to \$2,800,000
- 2027 will go down \$500,000 to \$2,500,000
- We have good financial advisors; should avoid using debt over the next few years; currently we are holding our AA+ rating
- Budget Summary: will keep @ 36mills; Town and Board of Education budget is: \$56,069,488. We would have dropped a mil if not for the state; we have done an excellent job controlling expenses.
- **3. REVENUES:** First Selectman recommends the tax collection rate be increased from 98.4% to 98.5%; get more aggressive with collections. Tax collector has done an excellent job with collections!
- Education Block Grant - \$9,525,000 is number recommended by First Selectman
- Circuit Breaker Project – (Renters Rebate) – money to be put back in by the state - \$100,000
- Town Road Aid – put back in (but possible that \$150,000 could be cut again) - \$296,588
- Building Inspector – recommended increase of \$150,000 due to projected building fees for some large projects expected
- Sanitation – small increases due to better management in Public Works Department
- Police – increased admin fees due to road work projects
- Interest in General Fund – increased
- Capital Project Fund Reimbursement - \$300,000 (maybe more) – retainage from Chatfield/LoPresti School project closeout
- **4. EXPENSES – DEPARTMENT DETAIL:**
- Selectman's Office: \$60,000 Salary for HR person; this person could work 3 days @ Town Hall as a floater between Tax Collector, Town Clerk & Assessor's Office and the other 2 days would be "rented out" to another town. There is another town already interested. There will be an HR study done soon. Regular Employees line should be \$92,873. Goal is that each department will have 2 regular people; 3rd will be a floater. Lianna McMurray will be temporary acting Town Clerk, Veronica Hoffman will be Assistant Town Clerk until July 2nd. There is a corresponding decrease in the Town Clerk Salary line item.
- Economic Development: Kurt Miller will meet with them next week. The \$79,850 is a place holder. Currently Mr. Miller has been speaking directly with the investors/developers. There is a new project at the Industrial Park this summer that will be very good for Seymour.
- Town Operations/Buildings: Correct salary number is \$136,062. The new custodian will come in at a lower rate than listed originally.
- Town Contributions – Recreation: Boy Scouts of America is asking for a donation this year \$3,500; TEAM leave at \$5,000
- Police Department: New Chief (increase) and Deputy Chief (decrease) salary numbers are tentative – will negotiate final number when hired. Overtime – will keep at \$150,000 – will have 3 new people in August from the academy. 2 or 3 cars are expected to be purchased within the budget.
- Regarding Security Officer in Schools: would like to have 3 SRO's (which means we will have to hire one police officer) – cost about \$100,000 which the town and the board of education will share the cost. The town's portion is currently in Contingency. This person will be a police officer and when school not in session will be on the police force. This person would start September 1st. These SRO's (and Richard Kearns, School Security Office – who is a retired police officer) would be allowed to carry guns. NOT the teachers.

- Seymour Ambulance: \$67,000 for Professional Purchased Services is a placeholder until the actual contract is signed.
- Fire Department: \$30,000 this year and \$30,000 next year are REQUIRED
- Public Works: Salary \$1,032,257 is recommended by First Selectman; Seasonal Employees reduce to \$55,000 and Trees reduced to \$50,000 both recommended by First Selectman.
- Street Lighting: Add \$10,000 to make the total \$130,000 needed per First Selectman
- Sanitation – Transfer Station: Added \$10,000 for purchase of Wood Grinding services; if we don't do that, the pile up of debris would cause a fire hazard as the current equipment does not function.
- Dog Warden: the \$80,864 number is correct. If the Woodbridge people decide to purchase a vehicle, we will need to contribute about \$10,000 – can get this money from Capital
- Community Services: additional staffing costs needed; this is required to continue with the additional new programs. Mary McNelis has done an outstanding job bringing this department back to life and adding so many new people taking advantage of the programs.
- Parks Department: Will be able to purchase one new piece of equipment per year.
- Public Works Department: is now maintaining Seymour Middle School property; it looks SO MUCH BETTER! We need to make sure that they have the equipment they need.
- Library: we are not increasing their hours at this time; no need for the part time employee requested
- VCOG: increase in dues
- Health Insurance: 5% increase is listed; may come in at MUCH lower. 1% = about \$60,000. Would be some built-in savings if it does come in lower.
- Retirement: a little over \$1 million
- Longevity: will come down as people retire or leave
- Town Insurance: Retiree Health Insurance – will increase as more retire; Other insurance quotes that Bill Sawicki requested from the carrier were reviewed but not feasible at this time. Doug will show Bill the report.
- **5. CAPITAL**: \$150,000 for Roads; \$260,00 for Mill Rate Stabilization Fund; \$50,000 for OPEB Trust; \$100,000 for Building Repair Fund. Town Hall, Police Department and the Library buildings will be done this year. Citizens Engine Department roof needs to be done, \$80,000. Roads – crack sealing will be done.
- Contingency: Salary for Police Officer (new SRO) and may need another Public Works employee \$102,000; Additional labor for Community Services Department \$20,000.
- Board of Education: will leave as is with a 1.23% increase. Budget is \$33,378,752. New Superintendent is committed to saving money and combining services.
- **TOTAL BUDGET**: \$56,075,500 – decrease of 0.3%

Questions/Comments/Discussion:

- Police Department – Heating Fuel increase of \$4,000 due to HVAC system not working right
- Recycling Program – revenue is based on the commodity market; contract will be up next year
- Public Works invoices are now being reviewed and checked for accuracy with tickets before paying.
- Capital – Long-Term: Projected 17/18 not yet approved by Board of Selectmen
- Fire Department – at least \$60,000 is needed by next August to complete the replacement of the air canisters. This is a requirement.
- Public Works – need to purchase a Hot Box & Reclaimer – the current method of cold patching does not work efficiently (and costs about the same as purchasing the Hot Box). \$32,000 for 2017/2018 and \$32,000 for 2018/2019; more permanent pot hole repair

Item #5– Adjournment

Motion to adjourn

Motion: John Stelma

Yes: 7

Second: Gary Popielasz

No: 0

Abstain: 0

Meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm.

Submitted by:

Monica Dimon

Recording Secretary