

# ASHLAND BUDGET COMMITTEE

## AUGUST 31, 2016

Members Present: Ruell, Coleman, Hoerter, Badger, Lamos, Downing  
Lyford (alternate)

[Ryan had previously sent an e-mail to the Committee members announcing her intention to resign from the Committee. She did not attend the meeting or ask to be excused.]

The meeting began at about 6:36 p.m. in the Ashland School Library.

The Water & Sewer Commissioners had informed the Budget Committee that they declined to meet with the Committee for the mid year budget review, but would answer questions in writing on the mid year budget materials and an “Overview” that they had submitted to the Committee.

The members discussed whether or not to submit questions to the Water & Sewer Commissioners. Some did not want to do that, while others wanted answers to their questions. Those opposed to the procedure were willing to let those who wanted answers to submit their questions. A motion was made by Coleman, seconded by Downing, that the requests to the Water & Sewer Commission be made under RSA 91-A, the Right To Know Law. An amendment was made by Ruell, seconded by Coleman, that the requests also be made under RSA 32, the Municipal Budget Act. The amendment was adopted on a vote of 6 to 0, then the amended motion was approved on a vote of 5 to 1.

The questions to be submitted to the Water & Sewer Commissioners were approved by consensus. Ruell and Lyford had sent e-mails to the Committee members with suggested questions prior to the meeting. All of their questions were approved, save for one of Ruell's questions which was answered in the Water and Sewer Commissioners' Overview and one of Lyford's questions that was figured out before the meeting. Other questions were added, including:

Why are the budget totals not the same as the Town appropriations?

Explain how the expenditures “will be within the 2016 revenues... by the end of the year.”

Why are funds co-mingled between the Water and Sewer Departments?

Is there a difference between co-mingling funds and transferring funds?

Where are pool water revenues shown in income?

Explain the differences on the amount shown for the MVSBS Septage Receiving Account in three different reports. Where did the money go?

How is the septage receiving grant to be matched with \$450K from the Capital Reserve Fund, when only \$426K is shown in the account?

The overview mentions \$200K as the revenue for septage receiving, but then states that that revenue will grow by 30% to \$325K to \$350K, which would be more than 30%. One report shows only \$192K in the septage account. So, an explanation if these apparent discrepancies was needed.

How much is estimated for septage receiving income in 2016?

Explain the apparent discrepancy between the statement that there was \$50K increase in unanticipated costs including the Winona Road project, with another statement that the cost of the project had grown by \$75K.

The Committee also wanted the latest available detailed income report.

The Committee agreed that the Water and Sewer Commissioners should provide an e-mail copy of their response and a paper copy for each Committee member. The Committee will review the Commissioners' response at the September 21 meeting, following the School Budget review.

It was voted, on a motion by Downing, seconded by Coleman, to adjourn at about 7:57 p.m.

David Ruell, Chairman