

ASHLAND BUDGET COMMITTEE

April 25, 2013

DRAFT MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: C. Austin, M. Badger, S. Coleman, I. Heidenreich, F. Newton, D. Ruell, M. Scarano, J. Stewart, D. Toth.

OTHERS PRESENT: Eli Badger, Paul Branscombe, Patsy Tucker, Alan Cilley, P. Heidenreich

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. in the Ashland Elementary School library.

D. Ruell, current vice chairman of the Budget Committee called the meeting to order to reorganize for the current year. F. Newton nominated M. Scarano to be chair of the committee and C. Austin seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved. C. Austin nominated D. Ruell to be vice-chair and F. Newton seconded the motion. I. Heidenreich nominated D. Toth to be vice chair, seconded by S. Coleman. D. Toth declined. I. Heidenreich nominated S. Coleman to be vice chair, seconded by C. Austin. D. Ruell was elected with a vote of six to two. F. Newton nominated C. Austin to be secretary, seconded by I. Heidenreich. C. Austin declined the nomination. C. Austin nominated F. Newton to be secretary, seconded by I. Heidenreich. M. Badger raised the issue that a secretary taking minutes has a difficult time actively participating in a discussion while trying to capture all relevant content. It was agreed that toward the end of the year when the budget process gets more involved, the committee would consider hiring a recording secretary and F. Newton would always be responsible for ensuring that minutes get posted in a timely way. S. Coleman will bring a recorder to assist in capturing discussion.

Information: M. Scarano provided a summary of towns in the Plymouth marketing area listing towns by population, median income, 2012 valuation, and tax rates. It was noted that of the 21 towns listed, Ashland has the lowest median income of all the towns while having the third highest tax rate.

Meeting Time and Schedule: It was agreed that all meetings would start at 6 PM and would end at 8 PM under normal circumstances. Meetings will be monthly until later in the year when the budgeting process becomes more intensive.

Roles and Responsibilities: M. Scarano reviewed RSA 32:16, outlining the budget committee duties and authority. He also provided a preliminary list of topics/activities that the committee will undertake over the next year including the following:

- Monitor cash flow, trial balances, expenses and encumbrances, balance sheet
- Review audit results when available
- Oversee expenditures, monthly and with a half-year review with department heads
- Integrate data from CIP Committee
- Conduct one or more financial forums
- Develop the 2014 budget
- Conduct public hearings for the town, school and utility budgets

- Attend the Town and School deliberative sessions

S. Coleman requested a bank reconciliation statement. A consensus of the committee was that this would not be needed.

Action: M. Scarano to write a letter to the Board of Selectmen listing the requested documents and schedules

J. Stewart informed the committee that the town audit, which was done in January and February, is not yet available for review. She agreed that when available, it will be presented to the public, who will be allowed to ask questions. She agreed that the committee will get the audit one week in advance of the presentation. F. Newton suggested that this session also be recorded by pbCam to ensure that all interested citizens have access. J. Stewart will look into this.

The committee agreed that printed documents should be supplied to the committee and also electronically in Excel format when available.

Action: M. Scarano will look into Dropbox or some other document repository so that members can access the electronic versions without using email.

Agreement: Department head mid-year reviews will not be requested until July at the earliest. To ensure that all departments get reviewed quickly, meetings may have to be more frequent during this time.

M. Scarano will develop a draft meeting schedule for the next year for discussion at the next meeting. M. Badger will supply information from LGC about SB2 town meeting requirements.

In the interest of full disclosure and transparency, M. Scarano asked the committee for ideas as to what should be posted on the website.

M. Scarano handed out a list of training opportunities, including a webinar on effectively working with the budget committee and a budget and finance workshop to be held in September.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 8 at 6 PM at the school library. D. Ruell to secure location. Members were asked to submit agenda items to M. Scarano in advance of the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:51

Fran Newton, Secretary