

**Ashland Budget Committee
Draft Minutes
November 13, 2013**

Budget Committee Members – Present

Mardean Badger	Christine Cilley	Sandra Coleman
Ingrid Heidenreich	Renee Liebert, Alternate	Fran Newton
David Ruell	Mark Scarano, Chairman	Jeanette Stewart, BOS
David Toth		

Members of the Public

Eli Badger, Steve Felton, Normand DeWolfe, Selectman

Budget Committee meeting was called to order by Mark Scarano, Chair, at 1803.

Short discussion of Warrant Articles. Selectmen have reviewed warrant articles and, if time permits, will be reviewed by the Budget Committee this evening.

Budget Committee minutes of November 7, 2013 were reviewed. Motion made by Renee Liebert, 2nd Sandra Coleman. No discussion, voted, passed.

Budget Updates: Received from Paul Branscombe, Town Administrator:

01-4150-20-120 Financial Office Assistant (Pat Crowell): \$36,473.00 increased to \$38,000.00, based on merit increases and Chairman Stewart stated her duties have increased, assuming more of the duties of Paul Branscombe, TA. Office retirement will be checked by Paul Branscombe, TA.

01-4220-10-110 FD Salaries \$95,000.00 increased to \$107,900.00. Reflects Chief Heath's 32 hour position. FICA changed to \$6,690.00, Medicare \$1,564.55. Jeanette Stewart will ask Paul Branscombe, TA to check on the FD FICA and Medicare figures.

01-4220-10-390 Ambulance Contract \$47,500.00

01-4220-10-390 FD Contracted services \$4805.00

01-4220-20-392 Mutual Aid Dues increased from \$18,530.00 to \$19,502.00

01-4441-10-110 Welfare Director: Salary increased from \$4,250.00 to \$5,250.00 per request of new employee and approval of Board of Selectmen.

01-4150-20-230 Increased from \$9,404.00 to \$11,173.00. Paul Branscombe will check on figures.

01-4150-20-217 Discussion: Fin. Health Insurance September, 2013 was \$50,190.00 and revised by Paul Branscombe, TA and BOS to \$54,100.00. Narrative states: 'for 3 staff members plus a 10% increase'. Town Administrator will check on figures per Jeanette Stewart.

01-4240-10-110 Building Inspector: increased from \$5,646.00 to \$11,440.00 (TA revised) and \$8,000.00 (Board of Selectmen revised)

01-4290-10-610 Emergency Management increased from \$1,000.00 to \$2,055.00.

Warrant Articles:

Discussion took place among members of the Budget Committee, Steve Felton (Chairman of CIP) and Jeannette Stewart, Board of Selectmen.

Article 1 Recommended by the Selectmen 3-0

Article 2 Recommended by the Selectmen 3-0

Article 3 Deleted. Chairman Stewart has discussed this Article with Chief Heath. Chief Heath does not want this article to be placed on the warrant this year. Further discussion; suggestion was made to place \$25,000.00/\$50,000.00 in a Capital Reserve Fund for repair/replacement of department vehicles.

Article 4 Recommended by the Selectmen 3-0

Article 5 Recommended by the Selectmen 3-0

Article 5 Recommended by the Selectmen 3-0

Article 6 Recommended by the Selectmen 3-0

Article 7 Recommended by the Selectmen 3-0

Article 8 Recommended by the Selectmen 2-1

Mark Scarano discussed how the committee wants to go forward re: property tax, warrant articles, revenues.

Fran Newton asked if the property tax has been set, Jeannette Stewart replied 'no' waiting to hear from Department of Education.

December, 2013 meetings: 5th, 12, and the 19th at 1800, December 11th alternate for the 12th.

December 12, 2013 SAU meeting

February 1, 2013 SB2 meeting at 1300.

Water and Sewer Department:

Commissioners: Acting Chairman Alan Cilley, Robert Boyle, John Hughes.

Alan Cilley submitted new water and sewer work sheets he compiled. Totals for each department has changed.

-**6230** Utility Partners Contract expense

Water - \$85,877.00

Sewer - \$220,826.00

All future income is based on new rate increases:

-Water increased 10%

-Sewer increased 20%

Shortfall of \$60, 00.00.

Sewer budget does not reflect septic receiving. Money received from septic receiving is allocated building a new septic receiving station.

2014: Water \$101,000.00

Sewer \$1,000,000.00

Equipment: \$300,000.00

Building: \$700,000.00

Rates today are less than in 2000/2001, no rate increase until two years ago.

Starting in 2004, budget was being subsidized from septic receiving until two years ago, \$740,000.00.

Fran Newton asked what the average bill will increase monthly. **Answer:** \$10.00 to \$12.00.

Mark Scarano expressed a concern General Obligation Bonds might be assumed by the tax payers if some Capital Expenses cannot be paid for by the rate payers. Mark Scarano also asked about water and sewer reserve accounts. Alan Cilley stated 'there are no reserve accounts presently to deal with CIP

projects'. There are two older accounts, \$71,000.00 (water) and \$22,000.00 (sewer); a septic receiving account of \$447,000.00, total amount \$540,000.00.

Question: How are these capital costs being addressed in the budget?

Answer: Alan Cilley stated: 'not addressed'. Fees from septic receiving will pay bills in future.

Following statements from Alan Cilley:

Revenue from new Septic Receiving Station: \$250,000.00 to \$300,000.00 s allocated for the new septic receiving station.

Grant Application has been written by Woodard and Curren for \$30,000.00. If qualified, matching is from \$350,000.00 to \$500,000.00. Presently, there is a signed contract with Woodard and Curren, payment to them for \$70,000.00.

Time for completion of the new septic system is 2015.

Lagoons: at present, no money to clean lagoons: time frame to clean lagoons, approx. 17 years.

Sandra Coleman asked: When was the design submitted to DES and rejected?

Answer: two months ago. It has been resubmitted.

Robert Boyle brought forward the 91A RightTo Know Law. He states he cannot hear and a phone has not been provided for him to hear. Mark Scarano addressed the need and thanked Mr. Boyle.

Alan Cilley stated he is now Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, Water and Sewer.

Future dates: November 19th, 21st and 26th.

Minutes to be taken by David Ruell at next meeting.

Motion to adjourn by Fran Newton, 2nd by David Toth. Motion carried, adjourned at 7:34pm

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Coleman

