

**ENFIELD BUDGET COMMITTEE (EBC) MINUTES (Approved)**

**Thursday, November 14, 2013  
DPW BUILDING 6:00PM**

**Members Present:** Annabelle Bamforth, Sam Eaton (Vice Chair), Shirley Green, Gayle Hulva, Doug Pettibone (Chair), Lori Saladino, Janet Shepard, Dave Stewart

**Others Present:** Steve Schneider (Town Manager), Diane Heed (Director, Health and Human Services)

**Excused:** Fred Cummings, Paul Mirski

The meeting opened at 6:05PM

**Administrative:**

A motion to approve the November 6, 2013 minutes was made by Gayle Hulva and seconded by Janet Shepard. The minutes were approved as written.

**New Business:**

**Departmental Spending Plans Reviews**

Steve Schneider reviewed in detail for the committee the various administration budget requests. Shirley Green is the departmental liaison.

**Administration (4100s)**

4130 Executive Office (2013 Budgeted, \$192,797; 2014 Request, \$203,304, up 5.4%). Much of the increase over last year is due to a requested (up to a) 2% merit increase for employees, and longevity payments to employees of 10 years and longer. There will be 3 elections in 2014 (vs one in 2013) requiring more spending for the moderators' salaries. One line item 'Miscellaneous' (4130-690) is considerably overspent vs budgeted for 2013. The same thing happened in 2012 for this line item. Schneider will investigate how those funds were spent and report back to the committee. The printing of the calendar and annual report is a relatively large cost (requested, \$14,800).

4131 Technology (2013 Budgeted, \$26,700; 2014 Request, \$30,500, up 14%). The increase is largely due to computer hardware needs for several departments. It was noted that the Town has received several email 'blast' attacks recently that have temporarily shut down all computer activities and so an additional server for Whitney Hall dedicated for email only is needed to isolate these attacks. A new server for the Police Department was purchased in 2013 that was not anticipated last year during the budget preparation. It is anticipated that two new replacement desktops will be needed in 2014.

4140 Election and Registration (2013 Budgeted, \$74,813; 2014 Request, \$78,064, up 4.3%). Most of the increase is due to the administrative costs to run 3 elections next year vs one in 2013. There will be a primary next year as well as the 2014 national congressional election, along with the usual Town Meeting. The salaries of the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk are requested to rise 2.8%.

4150 Financial Administration (2013 Budgeted, \$204,867; 2014 Request, \$221,577, up 8.2%). The increase in this request is largely due to salary increases of financial personnel and the tax collector of about 12%. It was explained that these increases were due to merit increases (up to 2%) combined with longevity payments to long-term employees as incentives for retention. Other significant costs included tax mapping costs, postage and software licenses. In 2013, postage is overspent in 2013 by several thousand dollars due to more mailings related to the new trash and recycling program.

4152 Revaluation (2013 Budgeted, \$30,000; 2014 Request, \$52,000, up 73%). We will have a town-wide revaluation in 2014 costing about \$40,000. The remaining \$12,000 of the request is to support contracted services of an assessor to determine the property value of the utility poles sited within the Town. The valuation of these poles is on the order of \$3 million. The added cost for the assessment will be quickly paid for from tax revenues (about \$18,000/year) generated from utility companies. It was noted that FairPoint is suing NH towns who are trying to institute these taxes. The new pole valuation will not be conducted until the outcome of the lawsuit is known. There is about \$10,000 in a reappraisal capital reserve fund that could be used to defray these costs.

4153 Legal (2013 Budgeted, \$8,000; 2014 Request, \$9,000, up 12.5%). It is anticipated that more legal advice may be needed in 2014 for costs associated with the FairPoint litigation.

4155 Personnel Administration (2013 Budgeted, \$859,648; 2014 Request, \$984,377, up 14.5%). This department deals with employee benefits and is one of the largest cost centers for the Town. Virtually all areas are seeing projected increases including health insurance, FICA and medicare payments, retirement payments (the Town is now contributing 100% to the retirement fund with no longer any State contributions, about \$175,000 next year), and workers' compensation. Most of this increase (\$125,000) is due to rising costs of health insurance premiums (10.9%) and worker's compensation (83%). Some of these increases will be mitigated because our health insurance provider (formerly the NH Local Government Center) will be providing the Town with about \$16,000 in premium rebates and about \$16,000 in workers' comp rebates as a result of losing a lawsuit to the State for over-retention of premium contributions by the towns. The current medical insurance contract will be up in 2014 and new bids from providers will be received then.

4191 Planning (2013 Budgeted, \$49,250; 2014 Request, \$54,834, up 11.3%). The salary of the new town planner is projected to rise by about 13% after having successfully completed an introductory period on the job. It is anticipated that as a result of the completed Route 4 sewer and water improvement programs, more development projects will increase the workload of the planner. Therefore, more hours per week may be added to the current 25 hours per week schedule. However, it is not expected that the planner's position will become full-time.

4192 Zoning (2013 Budgeted, \$2,100; 2014 Request, \$15,941, up 760%). The salary of the zoning administrator is now reported in this cost center instead of in Building Inspection Department which will see a corresponding reduction in the salary line. It is being discussed whether the zoning and planning jobs will be combined.

4195 Cemeteries: This cost center's budget will be discussed at a later date

4196 Insurance (2012 Budgeted, \$69,000; 2013 Request, \$72,000, up 4.3%). The increased request for liability insurance is due to increases in premiums.

**Health and Human Services (HHS, 4400s)** Diane Heed reviewed the budget requests for HHS. Janet Shepard is the departmental liason.

4411 Health Department (2013 Budgeted, \$100; 2014 Request, \$210, up 210%). The increase in funds requested reflects increases in office and administrative costs.

4441 Human Services Administration (2013 Budgeted, \$15,666; 2014 Request, \$11,695, down 25%). The reduction is due to reduced salary costs for the director due to further reduced hours in this position over 2013. She continues to share a full-time equivalent position between HHS and DPW. The reduction in these costs will be offset by the increased salary costs in DPW.

4442 Human Services Direct (2013 Budgeted, \$17,350; 2014 Request, \$27,850, up 61%). It is anticipated that there will be an increased need for rental assistance (up \$2000 vs 2013) because of rising rental rates. A shortage of rental units in the area due to a need for more affordable housing is thought to be behind rising rents. The request for heating fuel is up \$6000 (to \$7000). It was requested that the funds spent in 2013 to date on fuel assistance be provided by Schneider. It was noted by Shepard that 32 families were assisted by HHS in 2013 compared to 27

families in 2012. In addition to HHS funds, there is also the Enfield Fuel Assistance fund which is maintained by private donations (current balance \$5920) that can pick up any shortfalls if needed. It was noted that the Enfield Food Pantry helped 568 families in 2012, about the same as 2011. All those who use the food pantry also receive federal food stamps. A major supporter of the food pantry is the Enfield Lion's Club.

**Old Business:** None

**Public Comment:** None

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25pm. The next meeting is on Thursday, November 21, 2013 (6:00 PM at the DPW building). The following departments' draft spending plans will be reviewed: 4500s: Parks, Library, etc; 4210: Police; 4600s: EVA, etc.