



Town of Enfield
Budget Committee Minutes (Approved)
Tuesday, October 24th, 2017
DPW Building 6:30PM

Members present: Dominic Albanese, James Buffington, Eric Crate, Mike Diehn, Sam Eaton (Chair), Mark Eisener, Shirley Green (Vice Chair), Nancy Smith, Holly West

Excused: Fred Cummings

Absent:

Others Present: Ryan Aylesworth, Town Manager; Annabelle Bamforth (minutes)

Administrative

Sam called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Approval of Minutes:

James motioned to approve minutes of October 17th meeting, and Holly seconded.

Discussion:

James noted that there was one zero (0) missing from the sewer deficit discussion on page 2 and that number should read \$700,000 instead of \$700,00.

The minutes were approved with that change; Eric abstained from voting due to his absence from the previous meeting.

New Business

Ryan updated the committee on the status of the school surplus. He learned that the dollar amount is not returned to the town in cash, but is provided in the form of a credit, which is spread out over time and reduces subsequent bills until the credit is used up.

Ryan went on to discuss the town's curbside pickup contract and read the agreement terms within the contract between the town and Casella to the committee. The terms state that the curbside recycling & solid waste pickup contract began on July 1, 2013 and "shall automatically extend for an additional five years through June 30th, 2023 unless the Agreement is in Default" at the time of renewal, which is June 30th, 2018.

James asked if renegotiation would be possible and Ryan said it did not appear to be likely unless an agreement default is found. He said that a representative at Casella indicated interest in discontinuing the recycling pickup but additional details of the contract have not been discussed.

It was noted that recycling processing, when collected at curbside, costs \$36 per ton. Trash disposal costs \$69 per ton.

Ryan said he followed up with Fire Chief David Crate, who said the department would have their budget ready by the end of the week. Ryan said he learned that the roof at the Union Street station needs to be replaced; Ryan added that the department was asked to obtain three estimates. Holly asked if any estimates include a change to the pitch of the roof; Ryan said he has not looked at the estimates. He noted that the department is hoping to replace the roof by the end of year.

The committee discussed spending practices among various departments as well as use of town space and items, and talked about different ways to streamline budgeting and spending.

Shirley asked about the status of updating the town's master plan. Ryan said that the process is in early stages but has begun.

The committee discussed the DPW's request for two full-time employees at the transfer station. Ryan said it appeared that DPW Director Jim Taylor was under the impression that the transfer station would see higher traffic at the transfer station in the future upon the possibility of ending the curbside pickup program. Sam said the contract with Casella appeared to read clearly that it would automatically renew in 2018, which means there is a minimal likelihood of the town being able to move away from curbside pickup in the near future.

Members of the committee acknowledged the traditional practice of two employees working at the transfer station at the same time; Dominic said it made little sense to have two full-time employees at the transfer station while also continuing the curbside pickup program.

Dominic added that speaking for himself, he is reluctant to support adding employees, particularly before Ryan has had a chance to thoroughly review the circumstances of each department. Ryan noted that Dominic made a good point about reviewing department positions, and that some of this review has been taking place concurrently during this budget season.

Holly said there may be other alternative solutions to adding additional benefitted positions, such as the possibility of some employees being able to take on some overtime hours.

Dominic suggested that the town gain stronger footing before adding positions or growing the budget. It was noted by the committee that some areas in the budget should be further analyzed due to inaccurate information that had been given to the committee in the past. Sam said it's important to scrutinize areas where information was inaccurate in order to avoid further misunderstanding and ensure accuracy moving forward.

Holly noted that it would be a good idea for departments requesting significant expenses to provide data to explain why those expenses are necessary this particular year.

The committee discussed the Capital Improvement Program; the CIP committee recently held a meeting. Sam said there have not been any particularly large capital requests so far aside from some discussion of purchasing a new fire truck, but it's unclear if it will be officially requested this year. Ryan said that in addition to talking about year-to-year requests, there should be discussion about long-term planning. Sam noted that CIP has a 15-year plan.

Holly suggested the idea of the Budget Committee holding a joint meeting with the CIP Committee, the TIF Committee, and perhaps the trustees of the trust fund to discuss various items.

Ryan noted that the budget includes all costs, including leases, as if they would be paid with cash, and reflects a 4.5% total increase if the town received every request. He added that the budget contains employee insurance costs based on the continuation of current health plans.

Holly told the committee that she spoke with someone in town who was under the impression that the recreation department's cost is net zero because of the fees collected from its programs. James clarified that there is offsetting revenue, but it's not a wash. Ryan added there is no benefits package in the recreation department's budget. He also noted that the grant that has been paying for the director's position is ending.

The committee went on to schedule department budget presentations:

- November 21: library department, building inspection, health inspection, planning and zoning department
- December 9 (Saturday meeting): - fire department, ambulance/FAST Squad, police department, DPW department, executive/finance department
- December 19- regional organizations, health and human services, recreation department

Sam adjourned the meeting at 8:02 PM.