



Enfield Budget Committee
Public Works Facility, 74 Lockehaven Rd, Enfield, NH
Meeting Minutes January 30, 2018 6:30 PM (Approved)

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: none

I. Administrative

Sam called the meeting to order at 6:38 PM.

Approval of Minutes

Dominic motioned to approve the minutes of the January 23rd meeting; James seconded.

Discussion:

Shirley noted on page 4, in the last paragraph, that “don’t” should be removed.

Eric noted that in discussion of the Shedd St. building on page 5, “in put in” after “16K” should be changed to “put in.”

Eric asked if the answer to his question, about where the money allotted for Strategic Governance planning would go if the town chose not to use the program, was addressed accurately. Ryan said that he may have suggested that the town could possibly reprogram that money to put toward master planning; he confirmed the money would essentially be unspent, and added that it could be held in capital reserves.

Eric asked regarding page 3 in the 5th paragraph, if Sam had asked “if it might be good to increase the fleet by one vehicle.” Sam confirmed and added that he had posed it as a question and not a proposal.

Holly noted that on page 2, she was referring to Belmont Mass, and this was the same town that had offered the pilot cardboard drop-off program (not pick-up).

Holly added that on page 5 in the last paragraph about Whitney Hall, the wording should be clarified to reflect concerns about the town spending considerable money on the building without having a full understanding of the scope of work that could be involved.

The minutes were approved with the changes.

II. New Business

Ryan told the committee that he received an estimate from an engineering firm— which the town has not committed to using— looking for an approximation of costs for a municipal buildings study. Ryan said this firm estimated \$35-45K for a study.

Dominic asked if the CIP committee still wanted to pursue the study. Ryan confirmed, and added that the CIP committee voted to fund it. Ryan noted that in light of concerns shared by Sam and Holly, financing of the study was removed from consideration. Ryan said the most recent plan was to combine financing for the Crystal Lake Rd. engineering with a number of smaller projects including the Whitney Hall paving and basketball court improvements.

Dominic said he was comfortable with the water and sewer studies, but not comfortable with the municipal buildings study being done on top of the first two. He explained that he approved of the municipal buildings study being done, but had concerns about the timing of it running concurrently with the water and sewer studies.

Ryan shared with the committee an additional past error with budget drafting. He said that every year for several years, the budget had included everything including CIP-funded capital items (such as the fire station roof and Whitney Hall improvements). Ryan said that if those items were being offset by CIP funds, he wondered why they were being rolled into the operating budget as if the town was raising the money for those purchases through taxation. Ryan said that following further review, it's been found that for years the town has been rolling items into the operating budget that it shouldn't have been. There was a question posed regarding the possibility that the tax rate may have been based erroneously on items that should not have been included in the operating budget.

Holly noted that one year, non-property tax revenues (NPTR) had exceeded projections but the town still ended up with a deficit, which added more confusion to the situation.

Ryan said that it's unclear why DRA was approving of this; he added that since it is legal to fund capital items using an operating budget, it may have appeared to the state that these items were appropriations.

Ryan said the status of the general/undesignated fund (UDF) is still unclear. He said that a small surplus is expected.

Ryan addressed the committee on their role regarding votes to recommend; he clarified that the committee has no “yay or nay” on anything that is not on the budget line.

Narrative Discussion

Sam opened up discussion to discuss suggestions from the committee for the narrative to be presented in the town report. He suggested that the motor vehicle registrations be highlighted, along with NPTR numbers and property tax collected.

Ryan suggested recreation revenue and participation.

Shirley suggested that the committee include “achieving a responsible budget” in the summary rather than “achieving a sensible budget.”

Mike noted that there has been some public concern about the town’s financial status. He asked if the committee should provide a statement. Sam said this could be included in the budget slides. Holly said that the committee could make a statement explaining that they are keeping watch.

The committee discussed removing CIP items and plans from the budget committee narrative, as the CIP committee writes their own narrative.

It was asked if the committee will offer supplements regarding the overall CIP plan or some supporting documents. Ryan suggested a cover shot of the plan, signaling that it exists. Holly explained that the CIP committee has individual documents available but they are not currently fully cohesive; the CIP committee is in the process of compiling these.

Holly said a draft may be feasible for the CIP committee; Mike said this could be useful along with a statement that acknowledges a public need for this document.

Sam asked if the committee wanted to include a general fund update. Ryan noted that there has been no audit for 2017 yet; he said that it may be okay to use language about starting in the past with a negative balance and although the official audit is not complete, indications suggest

starting 2017 with a positive balance. Holly said if we can't show upward trend, we can discuss how w&s has played a role and how BC saw this, brought it to manager, who has addressed it.

Holly suggested a sentence regarding looking ahead to 2018 explaining that the committee is looking forward to close collaborations with other town committees to work strategically in order to align the goals of town.

The committee discussed inclusion of a sentence to acknowledge the town's aging infrastructure and that there are plans to address those issues.

In discussion of the Strategic Governance planning process and its cost, Eric asked what the town gets for the money. Ryan said there is a list of deliverables and recalled a combination of meeting with department heads, written products, and training. Nancy noted that she had envisioned work plans on paper, more than just documents.

Holly said that a good example where strategic governance could be useful was with the Lakeview sewer project. She said this project ran many months behind the given schedule, and there were aspects of strategic governance planning that could make projects like that run more smoothly.

Nancy asked when the warrant could be seen. Ryan said it's currently going through state portal and that he was optimistic that the warrant would be ready for DRA tomorrow or thursday.

III. Public Comment:

none

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, February 7th, 6:30 PM

Sam closed the meeting at 7:52 PM.