



TOWN OF NORTHFIELD



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NORTHFIELD BUDGET COMMITTEE Minutes of the Meeting of February 4, 2010

Present: George Corliss, Linda Pardy, Jared Hebert, Ross Cunningham, Steve Bluhm, Lisa Swancott, Leif Martinson

Also Present: Kevin Waldron, Mike Summersett, John Raffaelly, Bill Wilder, Gretchen Wilder, Ron Seymour, George Flanders, Tom Beaulieu, Mary Algren, Eliza Conde, Ginny Timmons, Dennis Allen, Chief Adams, Geoff Ziminsky, Glenn Smith

Ginny Timmons, Kevin Waldron, Geoff Ziminsky, ___ Flynn, Roland Seymour, George Flanders, Tom Beaulieu, Gretchen Wilder, Bill Wilder, Deb Shepard.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm.

I. Public Hearing for 2010 budget

The Chair invited comments and questions from citizens in attendance. Residents inquired as to the budget recommendations for assessing services, wages, animal control contracts, use of special detail funds and capital purchases. Dennis Allen expressed his belief that revenues for a particular purpose, specifically special detail revenues and state highway grants, should be tied directly to associated expenditures in the budget. Kevin Waldron asked about the proposed salary for the Town Clerk/Tax Collector.

Ginny Timmons asked the Committee to include \$1,495 in the budget to resurrect the town newsletter. She outlined her proposal.

Roland Seymour asked that the Committee include \$53,000 in the town budget to cover the cost of paying Winnepesaukee River Basin Project capital costs. A lengthy discussion ensued concerning the proposal. Roland and Committee members discussed the fairness of distributing these costs among all taxpayers since only the residents of the Sewer District are serviced by this system and the history of the relationship between the WRBP, the town and the sewer district.

Given the lateness of the hour, the Chair recessed the meeting, to be reconvened on Thursday February 11th at 7:30 pm at Northfield Town Hall. Roland was asked to bring any documentation he had that supported his contentions concerning WRBP capital costs.

The Chair reconvened the meeting at 7:30 pm on February 11, 2010

The Chair recognized Ginny Timmons who reviewed her proposal to add funding for a newsletter to the 2010 budget at a revised cost of \$1,160. Committee members reviewed the proposal. **Pardy/Martinson** moved to continue the newsletter online with no associated appropriation and advised Ginny to present a proposal at the start of next year's budget process. **Motion passed.**

The Chair recognized Roland Seymour, who indicated he had nothing to add to the testimony he had presented earlier concerning payment of WRBP capital cost, except that these costs are too much for the users of the system to bear. Lisa Swancott stated that she felt it was inequitable for the town to cover these charges as those not connected to the Sewer District's system do not receive a subsidy to offset the cost of disposal of their sewerage. Glenn reviewed how WRBP charges have been handled in town meeting votes during the 1960's and 1970's and the creation of the sewer district to provide a mechanism for collecting fees from the users for this system. Leif Martinson agreed with Lisa concerning the inequity of asking persons not using the system to pay for it, noting that a system of user fees is what Tilton is using for the Lochmere project. George Corliss stated that he thought a token payment would be acceptable. Glenn recommended that if the Committee feels that the town should subsidize the sewer district it be done in a way such that the subsidy is not tied to the WRBP capital bill.

Gretchen Wilder noted that her research at DES shows that there is no agreement outlining responsibility for these costs, adding that capital costs are going to increase and we need to address it. She indicated that in her opinion the users should pay for the system.

Roland suggested that the Sewer District be dissolved.

Kevin Waldron said that the town should not be responsible for the cost of resolving this issue.

Mr. Flynn noted that he has his own septic system. He pays for the disposal of his own sewerage and feels others should do the same. **Cunningham/Martinson** moved that the budget not include payment of WRBP capital costs for the sewer district. **Motion passed.**

The Chair closed the public hearing

Committee members reviewed the draft warrant. Committee members reviewed Article 9, which seeks an appropriation to cover start up costs for a Northfield Fire Department. **Bluhm/Martinson** moved to accept article 9 as presented. **Motion passed, Martinson voting against.**

Swancott/Pardy moved to recommend approval of articles 5, 7 and 8 as presented.

Motion passed.

Bluhm/Cunningham moved to approve article 10, with a recommended appropriation of \$3,200,836 not including the warrant articles previously approved. Motion passed.

II. Review of sewer district budget.

Roland Seymour reviewed the District's 2010 budget. A general discussion followed as to whether the town should accept responsibility for paying WRBP capital costs.

Budget Committee members accepted the proposed sewer district budget by consensus.

There being no other business the meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.