

Town of Ashfield
Select Board and Finance Committee budget meeting
March 14, 2016

The Select Board and Finance Committee had a joint meeting for the purpose of a 2017 budget discussion. The meeting was held at the Ashfield Town Hall on March 14, 2016 at 7:00 PM. There were no audio recorders at the meeting.

Select Board: Chair -Tom Carter. Vice Chair- Ron Coler, Todd Olanyk

Finance Committee: Ted Murray-Chair, Tom Schreiber, Lindy Gougeon, David Newell

Town Administrator: Kayce Warren

Asst. Municipal Clerk/Scribe: Lynn Taylor

This meeting was to discuss the budgets for the following departments: Senior Center, Council on Aging, Highway Department, Transfer Station, Tree Warden, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Veterans, and Board of Health.

Carter calls the Select Board to order at 7:03 PM

Murray calls the Finance Committee to order at 7:04 PM

Cathy Buntin, Doug Field, Steve Zamojski, and Wayne Wickland are present at the meeting to discuss the Senior Center and the Council on Aging budgets. For the new Finance Committee members Buntin gives a quick overview of the Senior Center then continues with presenting the FY17 budget. This years assessment for Ashfield's assessment has decreased from \$28,605.00 to \$26,419.00 for FY17. (see budget book). The Senior Center now has a third FRTA van available for the 9 Towns this allows them to pick up Seniors in Ashfield it will take them shopping to Shelburne Falls or go onto Greenfield as well. On the Fourth Thursday the van by request can go elsewhere. There is a discussion regarding Senior housing. Buntin is asked if grants for such housing is available; as of yet Buntin advises there is not. She also advises that now the busing issue seems to be handled she plans on getting behind the Senior Housing issues.

The Local Council on Aging budget for FY17 has only increased by \$50.00. Carter starts a discussion in regards to The Towns Senior van that has not been used for at least 1 ½ years and just sits at the Highway department. It is the thought that at this point perhaps the van should be disposed of. It costs money just being parked it is suggested taking it off the road. The van is 20 years old although, Wickland advises the van is in good shape; we just have a lack of licensed drivers. Wickland believes that keeping the van would benefit the Seniors if drivers could be found for events or shows out of Town. He asks the Board to have the discussion on the van at a later date as it does not affect the budget so he feels this meeting is not the place for the discussion.

Coler takes a minute to thank Cathy and all the members of the Local Council on Aging for all of the hard work they put forward during the year.

Thomas Poissant:

Highway Department: Poissant gives an overview of his FY17 Budget to the Boards. (see budget book) His budget is level funded for FY17 except the 2% cola in the labor line. Poissant advises the labor line includes four fulltime employees and one fifteen week temporary person, and does not include any summer help. General discussion pertaining to Chapter 90 funds as of this meeting Poissant advises that there is roughly \$80,000.00 available in Chapter 90 until the new allotment comes in which will amount to about \$250-300 Thousand. Capital needs for the Highway this year Poissant is looking to replace the 1997 John Deere backhoe estimated cost of a new machine would be \$130,000.00 also looking to replace the 2006 GMC pickup the estimated replacement cost would be \$32,000.00. after a discussion Boards decide that the replacement of the GMC pickup will be put off for another year and will take \$30,000.00 from Free cash and ask for a debt exclusion of \$100,000.00 for the purchase of a new backhoe.

Transfer Station: (see budget book) Poissant presents the Transfer Station budget to the Boards. The Operating Expenses have increased by \$420.00 which includes the 2% employee cola. Other Expenses HRMC has increased by \$2504.07. Poissant advises of revenue from recycling will now be coming back to the Towns. Ashfield received \$1127.10 and in January a recycling dividend grant for \$2100.00 came in. These monies may be used for buying or replacing containers. Discussion pertaining the DEP letter that we anticipate will be arriving shortly asking to fund the Engineering study for FY17 and for FY18 fund the construction portion of the landfill. Discussion with Poissant regarding the aging compactor, a year ago the

compactor broke down for a lengthy period yet no money has been put aside to look into purchasing a new one, much work and planning needs to take place on how to redesign the Transfer Station.

Poissant brought up a few things for discussion with the Boards, first being street signs. The wooden street signs that are presently out there do not meet State standards and will need to be replaced. He is trying to hold off purchasing and replacing until State decides exactly what they will require; already the State has changed the standards three times. Also Poissant recommends taking \$5,000.00 for the purpose of an independent salary survey and get some feedback back regarding Salary's amongst Town Employees. There was a discussion amongst the Boards and Warren stated that Franklin County was the lowest paid in Massachusetts.

Planning Board: level funded (see budget book)

Zoning Board of Appeals: level funded (see budget book)

Veterans: down from \$15,548.00 to \$12,360.00 as always this is an estimate (see budget book)

Board of Health: Level funded (see budget book)

Town Hall use application: (document 2) Tamsen Merrill is seeking to use the upper hall on the evening March 17, 2016 for the purpose of showing a documentary and discussion regarding the pipeline. There will be no admission but will be asking for donations. This is being shown in conjunction with the walk from Windsor to Northfield. There is discussion regarding the mandatory insurance rider Merrill will contact her insurance company. It is decided to approve the application with the \$75.00 rental fee going to the Pipeline Opposition fund.

MOTION: carter makes a motion to approve the application as submitted with the rental fee of \$75.00 going to the pipeline opposition fund and contingent on the required insurance, seconded by Coler. **VOTE: 3-0-0**

Judy Haupt from the Park Commission comes to the Board for a discussion on the progress concerning the dock at Ashfield Lake. She has been trying to get some boundary line measurements needed for the DEP plan, Coler advises Judy that he has those and would be glad to get them to her. Estimation for the permit to start construction is about two months. Judy advises they are \$50.00 short of their \$6000.00 fund raising goal. Carter makes a motion to follow the recommendation

of the Park Commission and move forward with the reconstruction and maintenance of the dock, seconded by Olanyk. **VOTE: 3-0-0**

Coler distributes a Pipeline Comparative Analysis (**document 3**) Coler explains to the Boards his desire to put an article on the Town Meeting Warrant taking \$5000.00 less the funds in the opposition donation fund for the purpose of supporting the intervenor status legal fight that Northfield is in. There is back and forth discussion on amounts. At the end of the discussion the Boards were leaning towards the amount of \$10,000.00.

Next Joint SB and Fin Comm. meetings March 22 and March 28

Fin Comm. Adjourned at 10:45 PM

SB adjourned at 10:45 PM

Document List

- 1. Agenda for March 14, 2016**
- 2. Town Hall use application**
- 3. Pipeline Comparative Analysis**