

TOWN OF GROTON
2nd PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING
February 14, 2017

In Attendance: Christina Goodwin, John Rescigno, Kyle Andrews and Sara Smith (Administrative Assistant)

Audience Members Present

Christina called the Public Hearing on the Budget to order at 7:00 pm.

Christina explained that this meeting is a second public hearing on the 2017 proposed budget and warrant articles so the Select Board will only be addressing the questions that came up last week and any changes that were made by the Board. This is not to go over the entire budget and warrant articles again.

Warrant Articles

Province Road

Last week, Warrant Article 8 was "To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) for the purpose of repairing and maintaining Province Road." The question came up to see why there is a warrant article for this road only and not others. It was suggested that it should just come out of the Highway budget.

The Board reviewed with the Town's Attorney and agreed that it is not necessary and that the Highway Budget should cover any maintenance done to this road and any other gravel roads. No additional money will be added to the Highway budget.

Newfound Lakes Region Association (NLRA)

Last week, Warrant Article 20 was "To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of five hundred dollars (\$500) for support of the Newfound Lake Region Association (NLRA)." It was brought up that last year the Town approved \$1,000.00. The Board reviewed the original request and NLRA did request \$1,000.00, therefore, the Select Board agreed to change to \$1,000.00 for Town Meeting consideration.

Spraying under Utility Lines

This Warrant Article, which is Article 21, has changed. The Select Board changed the recommendation so the Select Board does not recommend 1-2. Christina explained that the reason she changed her recommendation was because of a concern that the individual property owners will not have their own say if this was approved at Town Meeting. The Town's Attorney did not believe that they would if passed and since there is no way to know the boundary line she doesn't feel comfortable supporting this. Kyle explained that is why he changed as well. John mentioned he still supports because he feels the spraying under the smaller power lines will help with the electrical issues we are having.

Budget

Christina explained that the overall amount of the operating budget has not changed and remains at \$715,037.00. There were just a few minor changes.

Cemeteries

The change here was to make the Repairs and Maintenance line \$2,500.00 and the Salaries line \$1,500.00. With these changes the cemetery budget amount is the same.

Pamela Hamel asked why the budget wasn't changed if the Province Road Warrant Article was changed. It was explained that the material line from last year we were way under so the Select Board feels there is enough in the budget right now to cover it and will watch it for the next year. Pam mentioned that the wages were also taken out of this line for that project. Sara explained last year the wages were not but in the years past they were.

Answers to questions from last meeting

Health insurance

Christina explained that the Health Insurance information is correct. This was budgeted higher last year because there were two positions, the Town Clerk and the Road Agent that were changing and it was unknown what type of plans were going to be needed, so the worst case scenario was budgeted. This year there were no changes in staffing, so the Board was more comfortable with the budget amount.

Full Time Officer vs Part Time Officer

Last week a concern was raised about the number of hours worked for reporting to the New Hampshire Retirement System (NHRS). NHRS advised that the Officer would need to average 35 hours a week for retirement reporting to be required.

Gas line

Last week it was suggested to have one combined gas line under the Highway Department instead of separate lines for Parks, Cemetery, etc. The Board agreed that it does make sense but it was not feasible to be done this year and the Board will look into changing it for next year.

Having no other business to conduct with the Public Hearing, Christina motioned to close the budget hearing at 7:18 pm, John 2nd, so voted.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sara Smith
Administrative Assistant