

**SELECTMEN'S BUDGET WORKSHOP**  
**Minutes of December 5, 2007**  
**4:06 p.m.**

*Selectmen:*

*Frank S. Michel, Chairman*  
*Peter F. Brothers, Vice Chairman*  
*Robert C. Flanders*  
*Miller C. Lovett*  
*Colette Worsman*

*Town Manager:*

*Carol M. Granfield*

*Director of Administrative Services:*

*Brenda L. Vittner*

*Executive Assistant:*

*Lisa Herder*

*Assessor:*

*Jim Commerford*

*Fire Chief:*

*Chuck Palm*

*Water & Sewer Superintendent:*

*Bob Hill*

*Parks & Recreation Director:*

*Vint Choiniere*

*Parks & Recreation Assistant Director:*

*Rick Desharnais*

*Parks & Recreation Operations Chief:*

*Russ Weeks*

The Workshop was opened by Chair Frank Michel at 4:06 p.m.

The Chair introduced the Selectmen, Assessor Jim Commerford, Town Manager Carol Granfield, Director of Administrative Services Brenda Vittner, and Executive Assistant Lisa Herder.

Chair Michel recapped the Board's approach for the 2008 budget process, which they had decided upon the prior evening, by stating that the Board would first find out the answers to their questions, along with a snapshot of the aggregate numbers, and then do a review at the end of the process, with votes at that time.

ASSESSING DEPARTMENT

The Chair introduced Jim Commerford, Assessor, and then opened the discussion regarding the Assessing Department. The Board each posed their questions regarding this budget. Jim responded to these questions including dialogue regarding the department's personnel.

The following Action Items resulted from their discussion:

- Account # 0100-01-010: Brenda will provide the Board with new spreadsheets as an error was made on the Administrative Assistant line. It was based upon a 40 hour work week. It will be corrected to reflect a 35 hour week, which will reduce this department's budget by approximately \$7,000.

The Chair thanked Jim for his time.

### FIRE DEPARTMENT

Chair Michel introduced the Fire Chief, Chuck Palm. He thanked Chuck for returning as Chief and for his ongoing effort. The Board each posed their questions regarding this budget. The Chief responded to these questions.

Selectman Brothers asked the Chief to explain the new Volunteer Firefighters Insurance line item. The Chief explained that the findings of the Employee Benefits Committee indicated that the volunteers were not being adequately compensated as compared to the other organizations surveyed. The department was already looking for a good retention program and the consensus of the volunteers was that rather than being paid more per hour, they would prefer this type of retirement-type benefit.

The funding of the program, program administration, and the Town's ongoing liability were discussed. The Chief expressed his desire to see this program get started this year and stated that he could find some funds elsewhere in his budget if the concept was supported by the Board.

Chair Michel asked the Chief to remind the Board what had transpired regarding the purchase of a new truck. The Chief did so and concluded that purchase of the aerial truck had been postponed as it did not fit in the station and a pump truck was purchased instead. He reminded the Board that each year he has put away funds for this Capital Expenditure, and the aerial truck would be needed in approximately six years.

The following Action Items resulted from their discussion:

- The Board was polled and all agreed that the Volunteer Firefighters Insurance item would be flagged for further discussion during the 2008 budget process.
- Brenda and Chuck would update the Fire Department numbers, to reflect the savings Chuck had identified in the course of this discussion, and provide this information to the Board.

The Chair thanked the Chief for his time.

WATER DEPARTMENT

The Chair introduced Bob Hill, Water & Sewer Superintendent, and then opened the discussion regarding the Water Department. Chair Michel inquired about the reclassification and consulting services notation. Carol responded by explaining that the \$12,500 was allocated to both the water and the sewer budgets, totaling \$25,000 for consulting services to complete an evaluation of the department's operations and staffing. Carol also explained that two members of staff were reclassified from higher to lower grades.

The Board each posed their questions regarding this budget. Bob responded to these questions.

The following Action Items resulted from their discussion:

- Brenda will update the "Estimate at 12/31/2007" column shown on all spreadsheets to reflect the most current figures instead of those from through September 30, 2007.
- Account # 4395-01-043: Bob will coordinate with Brenda to check these numbers.
- Brenda will provide the Board with an overview regarding ETFs, Reserves, and Fund Balance.

SEWER DEPARTMENT

Chair Michel opened the discussion regarding the Sewer Department by asking why the Winnepesaukee River Basin Program expenditures had increased. Bob responded that these costs were not under the Town's control as there was no negotiation possible with WRBP. Carol then handed out information, about WRBP and its programs, to the Board.

Selectmen Worsman inquired about the effect of the WRBP increases upon the Town's sewer rates. Brenda responded that sewer rates would be affected and that the Town would have to determine the change this month. Brenda also noted that the Sewer Department would show a loss, for the first time, in 2007.

The Board went on to each pose their questions regarding this budget. Bob responded to these questions. He also noted that approximately \$22,000 per year was earmarked for sewer meters. Chair Michel expressed his opinion that there might be a possibility to reduce appropriations by \$22,000 via the sewer meters. Selectman Brothers questioned the concept of spending down the fund for normal equipment replacement.

The following Action Items resulted from their discussion:

- Brenda will update the Sewer information and provide it to the Board.
- Chair Michel requested to flag the Sewer Meter item for further discussion during the 2008 budget process.

The Chair thanked Bob for his time.

#### PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

The Chair introduced Vint Choiniere - Parks & Recreation Director, Rick Desharnais - Parks & Recreation Assistant Director, and Russ Weeks – Parks & Recreation Operations Chief. He then opened the discussion regarding the Parks & Recreation Department.

Vint thanked his team, as well as Brenda, for all of their help in producing this year's budget. He went on to state that the budget must be changed to reflect the fact that adult basketball will not be offered in 2008, which results in a net decrease of \$5,880.

The Board went on to each pose their questions regarding this budget. Vint, Rick and Russ responded to these questions.

The following Action Items resulted from their discussion:

- Account # 0468-01-200: Brenda will show new decrease of \$5,880.
- Account # 0479-01-020: Brenda will delete this line as it is not needed for 2008.
- Brenda will also update the overall figures for this department as some encumbrances were mistakenly included.

The Chair thanked Vint and his staff for their time.

Chair Michel suggested that in light of number of meetings with department heads which still had to take place, the Board add an another Budget Workshop to their schedule. It was agreed that this additional workshop would be held on Monday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. at the Town Hall Annex.

*At 7:05 p.m., Selectman Worsman moved that the Board immediately adjourn. Seconded by Selectman Brothers. 5-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

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Carol M. Granfield, Town Manager

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Frank S. Michel, Chairman

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Lisa Herder, Executive Assistant

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Peter F. Brothers, Vice Chairman

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Robert C. Flanders

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Miller C. Lovett

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Colette Worsman