

**Town Of Haddam
BOARD OF FINANCE
Budget Meeting
Town Office Building Annex
Wednesday, March 3, 2014
MINUTES**

Approved as Printed at the March 17, 2014 Budget Meeting

In attendance: Chairman David Kapitulik, Members: John Bosco, Marjorie DeBold, and John Tabak and Alternates: Joseph Centofanti, Cheryl Haase and Joanne Nesti

Not in Attendance: Vice Chairman Harlan Fredericksen and Member Lucille Silvestrini

Staff in Attendance: Financial coordinator Georgia Emanuel and Recording Secretary Barbara Galloway
First Selectman Melissa Schlag and Selectman Sean Donlan were also in attendance.

Chairman Kapitulik called the Meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

- Seating of Alternates

Ms. DeBold made the Motion seconded by Mr. Bosco to seat Mr. Centofanti and Ms. Nesti for Vice Chairman Fredericksen and Ms. Silvestrini. The Motion was approved by Chairman Kapitulik, Mr. Bosco, Ms. DeBold, and Mr. Tabak.

1A. Public Input

Resident Ed Schwing informed the Board that the Board of Selectmen now have a public comment opportunity at the beginning of its meetings in the event a resident has an issue to present and then again at the end of their meetings to allow public comment about what had transpired during the meeting. He suggested that this Board consider adding another chance for a public input option at the end of its meetings. Chairman Kapitulik thanked Mr. Schwing for this information/suggestion and he noted that this would be brought up for discussion at the next Regular Meeting (March 10). No other members of the public who were present had comments or questions.

1. Budget Review - 2014-2015

a. Distribution of Budget Notebooks to Board Members

First Selectman Schlag distributed the Board of Selectmen-proposed 2014-2015 Budget notebooks to the Board Members and staff.

b. *Introduction of the proposed 2014-2015 Budget for the Town of Haddam to the Board - presentation by the Board of Selectmen (BOS)*
First Selectman Schlag reviewed with the Board Members various portions of the proposed Budget, pointing out significant changes and highlighting department/agency budgets of special interest/concern. First Selectman Schlag enumerated some of the ongoing adjustments she is making that would save the Town substantial funding including 1) rethinking the necessity of some transfer station expenses and ways to better address or reduce these costs, all being studied by the transfer station task force committee, 2) potential changes in the administration of some town departments/agencies that have similar/duplicated mandates 3) re-consideration of heating fuel, telephone and other costs for Town buildings, and 4) the means of disposal of town buildings' trash.

c. *Board review and discussion with the BOS of significant aspects of this Budget*

In response to Mr. Bosco's question, Chairman Kapitulik gave an overview of the Town's Budget process, from the initial request forms to the town meeting, for the new Board Members, including this Board's mandate and purview regarding the Budget deliberations.

First Selectman Schlag informed the Board Members that the employee contract negotiations (for some union Town Office Building employees) continue until early April so at this time she does not have information to share regarding a potential proposal for wage increases. The departments had left their budget wage lines at \$0, but the Board of Selectmen had included budget year 2013-2014 wage information on these lines in its proposal. To deal with this unknown wage information, the Board agreed to Mr. Centofanti's suggestion to deliberate the budgets with no wage changes (from 2013-2014), but to allow a wage contingency line to be funded as appropriate at a later date once the wage contract is completed and to discuss and distribute the funding from that wage contingency line into the individual department budget wage lines prior to completion of Budget deliberations.

d. *Development of a plan for reviewing proposed budgets and scheduling of any needed interviews with individual department/agency representatives*

Board Members discussed which departments with whose department heads they want to have meetings regarding specific issues, new or significant funding requests, and/or where large sums of money must be funded. A list was created and the department/agency heads involved will be contacted to schedule meetings with the Board.

e. *Begin Review of/Deliberations regarding individual Department/Agency requests within the 2014-2015 Budget*

The Board agreed to begin tonight deliberations on the 2014-2015 Budget and approve the department budgets with the routine, non-controversial

requests first and allow time for the Board to schedule meeting dates with the identified department heads for future Meeting nights.

010 Selectmen

During the discussion of this department's budget, First Selectman Schlag informed the Board that she has been considering several possible scenarios to address employee needs within the Financial Office. In agreement with the Financial Coordinator, First Selectman Schlag is contemplating the acquisition of a part time (or possibly full time) professional Financial Director for this office to work with the current Financial Coordinator. This new position would make the Temporary Finance Assistant position unnecessary. After a brief discussion, the Board agreed to create a new line within this budget entitled "Financial Director" and to fund it with a potential \$50,000 working figure and to omit the 12-01012 Temporary Finance Assistant Wages line (Board of Selectmen requested at \$18,000). Chairman Kapitulik suggested that the Board might also increase the amount funded within Contingency in the coming year to allow for fully funding the line in the event a full time Finance Director is hired during the 2014-2015 year. Ms. Schlag also noted that the Town Office Building supplementary payroll costs for all offices, once in the individual budgets, are all now included in the line 14-01013 TOB Coverage that is managed by the First Selectman.

Ms. DeBold made the Motion seconded by Mr. Tabak to approve the 010 Selectmen Budget (from Board of Selectmen proposed \$296,187 - see changes described above) with an amended total of \$328,187. The Motion was approved unanimously.

015 Probate

Ms. Emanuel noted that the Selectmen's Request in this budget is for \$2,660, but the actual fee will be \$2,661 per the backup information provided.

Ms. DeBold made the Motion seconded by Mr. Centofanti to approve the 015 Probate budget (from the Board of Selectmen proposed \$2,660) with the amended total of \$2,661. The Motion was approved unanimously.

020 Elections

First Selectman Schlag noted that the department had requested a \$2,000 increase in the wage line to be shared by the two registrars and possible other employees, but that the Board of Selectmen had recommended keeping the line the same as in the previous (2013-14) budget.

Mr. Bosco made the Motion seconded by Mr. Tabak to approve the 020 Elections budget as proposed by the Board of Selectmen with the total of \$50,730. The Motion was approved by Chairman Kapitulik, Mr. Bosco, Mr. Centofanti, Ms. Nesti, and Mr. Tabak. There were no votes against. Ms. DeBold abstained as an interested party. The Motion was approved.

025 Board of Finance – It was noted that \$10 has been kept over the years in the Financial Consultant line in order to keep the line open to accept future funds as might be necessary. After discussion, it was agreed that the line could remain open with a zero balance, as well. The Board agreed to keep the line item #34-02505 Financial Consultant on this budget, but to reduce the balance in the line from \$10 to \$0.

Mr. Tabak made the Motion seconded by Ms. Nesti to approve the 025 Board of Finance budget (from the Board of Selectmen proposed \$43,310) as amended with a total of \$43,300. The Motion was approved unanimously.

030 Assessor

First Selectman Schlag noted that the Assessor had requested funding of \$9,400 in an Outside Services line, if it is needed; however, the Board of Selectmen believed that two full time employees would be sufficient to complete the work in this office, although it had opted to potentially use funding from the supplemental payroll line in its budget in the event that additional help in this area it deems it necessary during this budget period.

Ms. DeBold made the Motion seconded by Ms. Nesti to approve the 030 Assessor budget as proposed by the Board of Selectmen with a total of \$111,377. The Motion was approved unanimously.

035 Board of Assessment Appeal ("Board of Tax Review")

It was noted that this budget had a Professional Development line funded with \$150 in Department requests, but this would not be an annual cost. It has been planned to use this training funding during the current budget year instead. The \$150 in line 53-03507 Professional Development will, therefore, be unneeded in this proposed budget. The Board of Selectmen had proposed funding of \$10 in this line in order to hold it open. As discussed earlier in the meeting, it had been determined that a budget line could be kept open with a \$0 balance, it was agreed to leave the line in this budget, but not to fund it this year.

Ms. DeBold made the Motion seconded by Mr. Bosco to approve the 035 Board of Assessment Appeals/Board of Tax Review (from the Board of Selectmen requested \$10) with the amended total of \$0. The Motion was approved unanimously.

040 Tax Collector

This budget was tabled as the Tax Collector had expressed an interest in meeting with the Board prior to its deliberations.

045 Treasurer

After a brief discussion, the Board agreed to leave this budget as proposed with no changes from the previous year's budget.

Ms. Nesti made the Motion seconded by Mr. Tabak to approve the 045 Treasurer budget as proposed by the department and the Board Selectmen at \$13,537. The Motion was approved unanimously.

050 Town Counsel

First Selectman Schlag had noted that by hiring different attorneys as town counsel, she has found a substantial savings from the expense of this budget in prior years. She noted that legal issues that had to be addressed in the recent past are now done or nearly finished. In response to concerns expressed by several Board Members about the substantial cuts the BOS made in this proposed budget, First Selectman Schlag assured them that after a lengthy review she believes that the proposed budget for town counsel is more than adequate to address any legal issues the town will experience in the coming year.

Mr. Bosco made the Motion seconded by Ms. Nesti to approve the 050 Town Counsel budget as amended by the Board of Selectmen (from the department request of \$46,000) with a total of \$41,000. The Motion was approved unanimously.

055 Town Clerk

It was noted that the new Town Clerk will be taking professional development classes as part of his ongoing training as well as attending professional meetings during the coming year. This precipitated the increase in mileage requested. Costs for some recordings have increased and a new Vital Statistics Book is required this year, as well.

Mr. Tabak made the Motion seconded by Ms. DeBold to approve the 055 Town Clerk budget as proposed by the Board of Selectmen with a total of \$100,261. The Motion was approved unanimously.

060 Town Hall

Ms. Nesti made the Motion seconded by Mr. Tabak to approve the 060 Town Hall budget as proposed by the Board of Selectmen with a total of \$9,013. The Motion was approved unanimously.

065 Town Office Building – First Selectman Schlag told the Board that the trash pickup at this site (and other Town-owned buildings) will now be completed by Public Works staff instead of by private contractor, as in the past.

Ms. DeBold made the Motion seconded by Ms. Nesti to approve the 065 Town Office Building budget as proposed by the Board of Selectmen with a total of \$26,000. The Motion was approved unanimously.

066 Town Office Building Annex

Mr. Tabak made the Motion seconded by Mr. Centofanti to approve the 066 Town Office Building Annex budget as proposed by the Board of Selectmen with a total of \$5,350. The Motion was approved unanimously.

070 Planning & Zoning

First Selectman Schlag informed the Board that the Lower Ct River Valley Council of Governments (COG), of which the Town is a member, offers professional consulting services as part of their membership services. She

noted that the Town used to maintain a budget line to pay for consultations from private companies. It was agreed that the line proposed by the department for Planning Services could be kept in the budget, but should be reduced from the proposed \$1,000 to \$0 since there are no specific planning services pending, plus none have been requested/approved in the past few budget years. If a specific project should arise that requires the Planning & Zoning Commission to seek its own consulting services, the commission can make the request of the Boards of Selectmen and Finance at that time.

Ms. DeBold made the Motion seconded by Ms. Nesti to approve the 070 Planning & Zoning budget as amended from the Board of Selectmen proposed \$6,770 with a total of \$5,770. The Motion was approved unanimously.

075 ZBA (Zoning Board of Appeals)

Mr. Tabak made the Motion seconded by Mr. Centofanti to approve the 075 ZBA (Zoning Board of Appeals) budget as proposed by the Board of Selectmen at \$90. The Motion was approved by Chairman Kapitulik, Mr. Bosco, Mr. Centofanti, Ms. Nesti, and Mr. Tabak. There were no votes against. Ms. DeBold abstained as an interested party. The Motion was approved.

f. Discussion of any additional Budget-related pertinent issues

Chairman Kapitulik reminded the Board Members that representatives of Blum, Shapiro, the Town's contracted Auditor, are scheduled to attend and make a presentation at the March 10 Regular Meeting.

g. Any discussion in preparation for the joint meeting of the RSD #17 Board of Education with the Boards of Selectmen and Finance for both Haddam and Killingworth scheduled for Monday, March 12, 2014 re: the 2013-14 RSD #17/Board of Education budget

Chairman Kapitulik asked the Members for possible questions to be brought before the Board of Education at the March 12 joint meeting. Among the topics suggested by Board Members are: 1) the BOE ideas and plans for ways of reducing staffing levels, 2) discussion of the internal services fund for medical, as it is currently overspent, and 3) discussion of capital and annual reimbursements to the Town(s).

2. Adjournment

Mr. Centofanti made the Motion seconded by Ms. DeBold to adjourn the Meeting. The Motion was approved unanimously. The Meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara D. Galloway