

REMINDER:
*****FRIDAY MARCH 13TH *****
AT 7 PM IN THE HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

This is where those present will vote on school expenses for 2009-2010

FEBRUARY 26TH BOARD OF SELECTMAN MEETING RESULTS

It was a very long meeting and there was no significant public comment however the night was very interesting.

The proposed 9+ % increase budget was presented and the vote was 2 for and 2 against (Selectman Crisp was not present). A 2-2 tie means there is no budget. After no movement the question was asked what it would take to get to a budget? The answer was additional spending adjustments and with that the work began.

At 11 PM the board voted 4 to 0 to approve a budget that ended with almost NO increase in the operating budget. However everyone should remember that the warrant articles could add hundreds of thousands of dollars in new expenses.

How did we get to the new budget?

The three major factors accounting for large increase in the operating budget:

1. **Over a quarter of a million dollar fixed increase in trash disposal cost,**
2. **the proposed change to move the road paving (hot asphalt) out of a warrant article and into the operating budget (where part or all paving money could be moved to any other expense line) and**
3. **the NEW \$150,000 annual bond payment (money already spent on the town water and sewer project was bonded on a 3-2 vote).**

Thursday nights spending adjustments (as I remember them):

1. **Trash** - With regard to the trash issue the operating budget will reflect the cost of doing nothing different (a significant increase in the property tax rate and tax bill). There will be a separate warrant article to move to pay as you throw. If this warrant passes there will be a small increase of about \$28,000 in cost but a major source of new income that will help decrease our property taxes.

There will be a major presentation in this issue at the town meeting!

2. **Road Paving** – This line item was removed from the operating budget and placed in a warrant article (\$350,000). This is similar to what was done last year and all Selectman present agreed to allow the town meeting voters to decide if in these financial times they want to increase their taxes to pay for road paving. (FYI- there is still money in the operating budget for road repairs including patching potholes)

3. **New annual \$150,000 bond payment** - With regard to paying for the 1st water and sewer bond (\$2+ million) there is no explanation needed. We borrowed the money and now we have to pay the bill.

4. **Town employees** compensation will be held neutral.

5. **Selectman** reduced their pay by \$500 reportedly making us the lowest paid selectman in the state.

6. **Highway Department** was reduce by about \$100,000.

7. **Planning Board** was reduced by about \$25,000. The reduction came from an effort to develop new marketing materials and a new Internet presence. Why update all the

marketing materials when we don't know if we will have a new water and sewer system to market. Next year appeared to me to be better timing for this effort.

8. **Police Department** budget was reduced by about \$45k including no new Police Cruiser. This was a particular concern to me because the PD last year bought a new larger 4 wheel drive vehicle to replace their two year old 40,000 mile "old" 4 wheel drive vehicle. The smaller 4 wheel drive was given to the Fire department to add to their new fleet of vehicles. The other suggestion was to follow the NH State Police example and turn the cruisers off for 10 to 15 minutes every hour. This saves fuel and improves the environment (less carbon pollution).

9. **Fire Department** budget was reduce by about \$20,000.

10. **Parks & recreation** was also decreased by about \$11,000.

11. **Heritage Commission** was cut in half to \$2,500 (for fire proof cabinets to protect original documents such as the towns hand writ tens list of Civil War participants.)

There may have been a few other adjustments that I am not remembering this morning but I believe this is most what happened.

Warrant articles deserving special consideration:

The highway department wants a new new plow truck at a cost of \$170,000 (we bought 2 new plow trucks last year).

The Fire Department wants a new ambulance also around \$170,000 (we bought a new pumper truck, a new forestry truck and new rescue truck last year) .

Articles referring to spending or raising money for capital reserve funds will require voters to decide whether, in these times, it is best to spend money or save money that earn a little interest income.

If you have any questions please feel free to call me at 715-1875.

Tom Keane

Next Select Board Meeting

This Thursday March 5th @ the Municipal Bldg. (Grandview)

5:30PM