

Joint Select Board and Budget Advisory Committee Meeting Summary
Hutton Room, Municipal Center, 10 Bunker Hill Avenue, Stratham, NH 03885

Meeting Date: December 5, 2019

Attendees:

- Mike Houghton, Select Board Chair
- Joe Lovejoy, Select Board Vice Chair
- Allison Knab, Select Board Chair (absent)
- Bruce Scamman, Budget Advisory Committee, Chair
- Gary Dolan, Budget Advisory Committee
- Nathan Merrill, Budget Advisory Committee
- June Sawyer (absent), Budget Advisory Committee
- Beth Dupell (absent), Budget Advisory Committee
- Eric von der Linden, Budget Advisory Committee, School District Rep.
- Dave Emanuel, Town Moderator
- David Moore, Town Administrator
- Dawna Duhamel, Finance Administrator

Select Board Chair Mike Houghton opened the joint meeting of the Select Board and Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) and welcomed the BAC members as well as the Moderator. The Chair discussed the schedule for the next several meetings and the intent behind the plan for revised proceedings. He indicated the Board and staff have worked to develop a draft budget; the Board has identified organizational goals for the year ahead and he pointed to the value of getting input on budgetary priorities and choices going forward from the Budget Advisory Committee.

In addition feedback on goals and priorities the Chair indicated, it would be good to hear what the BAC would like to know more about and what ideas the group has. BAC members were recognized to provide comments on the outline of BAC proceedings for the year. Several members expressed concerns about the outline including not having the materials for the budget prior to the meeting; concerns that the structure of the meetings precluded effective time for questions; and whether because of the structure of the meetings Department heads would need to come back twice. The group sought clarification as to whether the group would discuss the Capital improvement Plan appropriations; the answer was that as the plan for January 9th.

The Budget Advisory Committee members then moved to choosing a Chair. Mr. Dolan moved to nominate Bruce Scamman to serve as Chair; the motion was seconded by Nate Merrill. Mr. Scamman indicated his willingness to serve and all voted in favor.

Following the introductory comments, the Select Board Chair invited the Town Administrator to begin a presentation which covered a summary of the draft 2020 budget, including key trends and budget drivers as well as context for the budget by providing multi-year information about operating budgets and tax rates. He noted the evening's presentation would focus on the

operating budget and that work continues on the Capital Improvement Plan and other budget related items that are expressed in warrant articles such as funding capital reserves.

The meeting then moved to the department presentations scheduled for the evening which included the Town Clerk, Elections, Planning, Building Inspection/Code Enforcement, Fire Department, Police Department and Assessing. Following the presentations some questions and answers and discussion took place regarding the evening's presentation.

Following a brief break for food, the Select Board chair reconvened the meeting for a general discussion. The Board Chair encouraged clarifications about what was heard, requests for what the Committee would like to hear more of and other discussion. He also clarified that preliminary final year-end budget figures will be able to be provided to the Board the beginning of the first full-week in January.

Questions or clarifications were sought on a number of items a sample of which are described here: confirming the Elections budget is sufficient for the year (Mr. Moore to confirm); consideration of an organizational goal more directly tied to customer service and purpose; will the Planning Department be able to file subdivision/site plans electronically; confirming how Fire details are paid for recreation programming (clarification to come); clarification on the year over year change in the Fire Department budget (discussed and resolved in the meeting); confirmation that revaluation expenses for Assessing were funded through the CIP (yes, revaluation expenses funded through CIP); consideration of SRO for SMS (policy decision of school board).

The meeting was adjourned at 8:57 p.m.