

**BOARD of SELECTMEN BUDGET MEETING – FEBRUARY 8, 2006**

TOWN HALL/LOWER LEVEL CONFERENCE ROOM – 7:30 P.M.

**REVISED/APPROVED MINUTES**

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These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not intended to be a verbatim transcription.

In attendance: R. Marconi, A. Bodner, D. Masters, J. Plock

Absent: B. Manners

R. Marconi called the Budget Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. J. Wahlberg, Town Controller, provided an overview of the budget discussion the previous evening, February 7. Community Grants, Commissions and Self Insurance budget topics were reviewed. The budget total was reduced to +6.54%, down from +7.26%. An additional \$392,000 needs to be cut to reach goal of +4.5%. He distributed a new summary sheet reflecting the February 7 decisions.

R. Marconi reported on a discussion with Jane Fields of the VNA regarding their financial situation. They are having to use funds from their \$3.7 endowment. The Somers operation has been shut down. R. Marconi indicated that he had mentioned the possibility of forgiving the rent charge for the year. Ms. Fields expressed appreciation for any way in which the BOS could be of assistance. They will come to the BOS Meeting on March 8 to do a presentation. The Emergency Preparedness operation is costing the VNA \$60,000-\$65,000. This includes costs for VNA people to attend the Emergency Preparedness meetings, recruitment of nurses for the inoculation center, training time, etc. The Board can ask questions when the VNA comes in March. It costs \$50,000 for the Health Fair and \$50,000 for the Flu Clinic. Ridgefield has received grant dollars from Homeland Security – perhaps some dollars can be allocated from that grant to the VNA, but not at all near \$60,000. D. Masters suggesting charging \$5.00/person at the Health Fair.

**Capital Budget Discussion –**

The big costs are under Highways and Parks & Recreation – these are the areas that need to be looked at carefully. R. Marconi and J. Wahlberg have not yet sat down and gone thru the capital requests as in past years. The Board of Selectmen together went page by page thru the capital requests. Their comments are as follows:

**General Government Department Summary**

- Assessor Vehicle \$ 25,000 R. Marconi took this out
- Assessor Software \$ 20,000 A. Garzi needs to say why necessary
- Assessor Fire Proof Cab \$ 1,300 Out
- Assessor HP 4000 Printer - \$1,400 instead of \$5,000 – Should be under computer replacements. Software should be thru IT Department; they know who to call for repairs.

- Planning & Zoning Vehicle \$25,000 Requested this amount – What about Chief Yarrish’s 10 year old vehicle – 100,000 miles but in excellent condition or do a lease as did with the Ford Ranger Pickup previously – Decision made to give Chief Yarrish’s vehicle to Planning & Zoning.
- Ridgefield Center Study \$20,000 Instead of requested \$25,000 – last done in 1975
- Plan of Conservation & Develop. – Mandated by State every 10 years. Reduce to \$20,000 for each 2008/09 and 2009/10.
- Information Services – Computer Replacements – Reduce to \$55,000
- Windows 2003 Upgrade \$ 20,000 Instead of \$25,000 – The Town has no maintenance agreements now; upgrading is needed
- Exchange Server \$ 10,000 – Postponed until 2007/08
- Network Upgrade for the Police Department - \$75,000 D. Masters asked about building a Data Center addition which would bring all computer systems into a controlled environment – this is a critical item!
- Permit Software – Phase II Requested \$45,000 – This can wait one year
- Town Hall – Needs work on the outside eaves and storm windows. The installation of storm windows would reduce heat loss.
- Preliminary Engineering Fund – Leave for now? \$100,000 for 2006/07? Reduced to \$75,000
- Library - \$65,000 for 2006/07 is out
- Tiger Hollow, Inc. – Matching grants available – thus only cost for 2006/07 is \$41,000. What about gate money that is being turned over to the Board of Education? R. Marconi to send the Board of Education a letter asking for info about gate revenue – can this be used as an alternative to Pay’nPlay?

Total now down to \$371,000

### **Community Golf Course Summary** –

- Pontoon Bridge Replacement - Postponed to 2007/08

### **Parks & Recreation Dept. Summary** –

- Maintenance Garage \$250,000 This is being reviewed
- Martin Park Improvements \$40,000 Playground equipment replacement – safety issue
- Martin Park – Dam \$14,500 This is for a new valve
- Equipment Replacement – Grounds maintenance \$13,200 left as is

### **Police Department Summary** –

- Equipment Replacements – Evidence Drying Cabinet \$8,000 Move to 2007/08
- Canine Building Improvements Cut to \$1,600
- Canine Equipment \$380 Move to operating equipment

New total is \$136,600

### **Fire Department Summary**

- Building Improvements – Headquarters II – Maintenance Ridgebury location  
\$20,000 for stove and refrigerator (This seems high)
- Exhaust System - \$80,000 move to 2007/08? Talk to Fire Dept. about this –  
Result – was cut to \$40,000
- Equipment – Copier Used for course info. Reduce to \$3,500

New total is \$285,500

### **Public Works Highway Department Summary**

- Lowboy Dump Trucks Only 1 and not 2 \$52,500
- Road Maintenance: Drainage/Waterway Work; Class #2 Overlay and Guardrail Replacements This is all guesswork – Not absolutely sure of numbers. It is important to do the drainage work before repaving.

### **Engineering Department Summary**

- Venus Building Upgrade (bathroom) \$92,000 Move to 2007/08
- Venus Building Roof - \$148,000 Have talked about this for the last 10 years
- Town Tree Warden – Tree Replacement Reduce to \$45,000

New total is \$279,500

### **Board of Education Summary**

- Asbestos Abatement Projects Reduce to \$156,000
- HVAC Replacements \$100,000 additional needed for East Ridge & Scotland -  
voted on for last year (Take out \$170,000)
- Window Replacements and Refurbish HS Elevator -Leave as requested
- Building Mechanical Projects Maintenance projects should not be listed as capital  
expenditures – cut out at this time
- Maintenance Van \$24,938 Eliminate

New total is \$197,500

### **School Buildings & Grounds Summary**

- Barlow Pool \$47,000 Suggest the Board of Education take over the pool. Does  
receive revenue from Aquatic Club rental - \$160,000; Lease goes to 9/10. This could be  
passed on to the Board of Ed . In the past Parks & Recreation has tried to build up use of  
the pool. A pool has to be maintained or it will deteriorate. A Public Relations blitz may

be helpful – let the public know of the problem. Suggest a group like “Friends of Barlow Pool”. This is a town asset that should not be left to disappear. Suggest that a letter regarding this be sent to the Board of Education .

- Vehicles – Ford Ranger Pickup Eliminate
- Vehicles – Dump Truck F350 Move to 2007/08

New total is \$146,000

Selectman’s Report – Boehringer Ingleheim ca

lled to indicate an interest in purchasing the Open Space property at Shadow Lake. This property is adjacent to their property and would provide them additional footprint property should they wish to apply for building expansion in the future. They would keep the property as open space and would give the Town of Ridgefield a conservation easement. R. Marconi will look into the possibility of providing this open space to Boehringer.

**J. Plock moved and D. Masters seconded a motion to adjourn the BOS Budget Meeting at 10:25 p.m. Motion passed 4-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Janet L. Johnson