

Town of Milton
BUDGET COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING
October 8, 2020

ATTENDANCE:

Members: Humphrey Williams (Chair), Claudine Burnham, Peg Hurd, Lisa Gautreau, Danielle Marique, Mike Beaulieu, Larry Brown

Public: Bob Carrier

Humphrey Williams, Chair, opened the session at 6:00PM.

1.) Pledge of Allegiance: Humphrey Williams, Chair, led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2.) Roll Call:

a. Mr. Williams, Chair, led the roll call of members to determine if a quorum was present.

Humphrey Williams, Larry Brown, Danielle Marique, Lisa Gautreau, Peg Hurd, Mike Beaulieu. A quorum was present. (Claudine Burnham arrived after the initial roll call)

b. Public participation: Bob Carrier

3.) Vacancy:

Due to the recent resignation of Mr. Thomas McDougall, a vacancy on the committee became available. Mr. Williams stated he received one application request for the vacancy and that was Bob Carrier. Mr. Williams asked for a motion to accept Bob Carrier as a voting member of the budget committee, until March, 2021. Ms. Marique made the motion; Ms. Hurd seconded the motion. Mr. Beaulieu questioned as to when Mr. McDougall submitted his resignation? The resignation had occurred at a previous meeting. This resignation was very reluctantly accepted. Mr. Beaulieu believes Mr. Carrier will make an outstanding contribution to the committee.

Roll call to accept Mr. Carrier to the Budget Committee until March, 2021:

Larry Brown, Lisa Gautreau, Danielle Marique, Peg Hurd, Mike Beaulieu, Humphrey Williams – Yes. Welcome Bob Carrier to the committee.

Ms. Marique swore in Bob Carrier as a voting member.

4.) Review and Discussion of 2021 Town Operating Budget Proposals (as presented at the September 26, 2020 Joint BOS/Budget Committee Budget Presentation Meeting:

A review of all department proposed 2021 budgets as presented at the September 26th Joint BOS/Budget Committee meeting occurred, with reminder that all departments were asked to submit budgets under the current default budget.

Mr. Williams questioned Ms. Burnham if any changes had occurred since the joint meeting to the proposed budgets. Ms. Burnham stated all salaried lines have been changed as there had been a misunderstanding regarding salary increases for departments. There will be an across-the-board salary increase of 2% which is still under default budget.

Any adjustments will be made to the final budget; Ernest Creveling, Town Administrator, will add adjustments including salary increases.

Ms. Hurd questioned that even with salary increases will the budget still come under the recommended default? Yes.

Mr. Williams stated that the overall goal is streamline the budgeting process and to have a workable budget, not instruct each department how to allocate their budget.

Mr. Brown stated that it is always important to trust, but verify. The process this year should address any issues and help lessen comments expressed by residents on social media.

Mr. Williams stated that having the budget come in under the default this is specifically what the voters had originally requested.

A review of all budget numbers took place. The goal is to ensure that the default and bottom-line budget numbers agree.

Ms. Hurd questioned whether the salary increases are included in the budget review numbers? The two-percent increases (across-the-board), including corrections to FICA will be added. Mr. Williams will correct each line item and resend as final proposal.

According to Ms. Burnham, Mr. Creveling will be making several adjustments which will occur shortly.

During the review process, Mr. Beaulieu questioned the Street Lighting line item: With a proposed decrease in the Street Lighting numbers, will this lead to less street lighting or that street lights will be turned off? This decrease is due to increased efficiencies in the lighting systems and will not lead to less street lighting.

Regarding an increase in the Supervisors of the Checklist: Mr. Williams stated this is due to the required purging of voting lists which will lead to an increase in postage costs.

Regarding the Planning Board and Zoning Board budgets: The reductions were previously discussed at the September 26th, 2020 Joint BOS/Budget Committee meeting.

A discussion regarding salary increases occurred. Ms. Burnham stated a Warrant Article will be generated regarding a proposed establishment of an Employee Wage and Longevity Retention Plan. This plan will clarify annual salary increases and help address hiring and employee retention issues that the town of Milton has experienced.

Regarding Outside Appropriations: The original budget line items were reduced to \$0.00. To ensure that these line items remain in the budget, all line items were set to \$1.00 at the September 26th meeting. Ms. Burnham stated that Strafford CAP presented at the latest BOS Committee meeting and that other outside agencies will also be invited to present.

Regarding the Recreation Budget: There will be a slight change in this budget specifically related to salary and benefits. Ms. Hurd questioned if the Beach budget is separate from the Recreation budget? Answer: Yes, the beach is supported through the revolving fund. Ms. Hurd questioned if money is currently available through the revolving fund, could these funds be used for boat ramp repairs? According to Mr. Brown, monies through the capital reserves could be used.

Mr. Williams asked for a motion to move forward with the recommended department budget proposals.

Mr. Brown made the following motion: I move that the Chair collate department / line items as relayed by Claudine Burnham, from the latest town proposed budget, to create a new Budget Committee Proposed 2021 Budget for further review and validation, and vote at our next meeting. Seconded – Peg Hurd. A roll call vote was requested: Larry Brown, Lisa Gautreau, Danielle Marique, Claudine Burnham, Mike Beaulieu, Bob Carrier, Humphrey Williams all voted Yes.

All expenditures will be reviewed at the next regularly scheduled Budget Committee meeting. Projected budgets (which will include all final adjustments) will be posted on the town of Milton website for resident review.

5.) Other Business to Come Before the Board:

Larry Brown welcomed Mr. Carrier back to the team and feels this will be a huge benefit to both the board and to the community. Mr. Brown moved to have Mr. Currier appointed as Vice Chair. Mr. Williams asked that this move be tabled to the next Budget Committee meeting.

Ms. Marique asked if any Warrant Articles were being constructed; there are several currently under way. Mr. Williams noted when comparing the current budgeting process to previous years, we are way ahead of previous years, and added that the entire process has been streamlined. Ms. Hurd recommended the school board expenditures be added to the next meeting's agenda.

Mr. Beaulieu stated that Warrant Articles must be ready by January, 2021.

Ms. Marique reminded the board that school budgeting process is occurring in the near future. Mr. Williams stated that the same message will be sent to the school budget committee to make sure their budget comes in under default.

Mr. Williams stated that the town budget should be completed by end of October to move forward with department presentations to the town. All town department representatives should be prepared to receive and answer all questions from the residents and to ensure that the public has all the needed information.

Ms. Burnham stated the goal should be to get information to the public in November and wondered if this could be ready by November voting date? It was suggested that a handout be available to residents when voting.

6.) Public Comments / Questions:

There were no comments or questions from the public.

11.) Adjournment:

Mr. Williams stated he would entertain a motion to conclude the meeting.

Ms. Marique made the motion to adjourn at 8:00PM. Seconded by Ms. Hurd.

Roll call vote: Mr. Brown, Ms. Gautreau, Ms. Marique, Ms. Hurd, Ms. Brown, Mr. Beaulieu, Mr. Carrier, Mr. Williams all voted Yes. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Weiss – Budget Committee Recording Secretary

Minutes approved – November 12, 2020