

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
BUDGET MEETING
February 21, 2017
Meeting Room A**

<u>Present:</u>	Norman Needleman	Audience Members
	Stacia Libby	James Francis
	Bruce Glowac	Maria Lucarelli
	Kelly Sterner	

Norman Needleman called the meeting to order at 5:03 pm

Public Comment: None

BUDGET REVIEWS:

Major Budget Drivers:

Norman Needleman reported that major budget drivers are some employee step increases and pay increases for the Town non-union and union employees. There is also a new part time assistant position in the Health Department. There was also a change in status for the building official who is going from part time to full time as a result of the large building projects occurring in the Town of Essex. Fringe Benefits are anticipated to increase by \$70,000 due to a change in participants along with an anticipated 10% increase for insurance premiums. There is a significant rate increase for water in the Fire Department budget line. There is also an increase in Maintenance and Repairs for additional tree work. Mr. Needleman reported that Emergency Medical Services will not have an increase this year.

Tri Town Youth Services – Tab 42, Page 46

The new Executive Director Allison Abramson presented. Ms. Abramson went over her background information and all of the different services that Tri-Town offers. Ms. Abramson reported that Tri-Town is looking into sustainability to the programs. There was discussion on the by-laws of Tri-Town Youth and whether the Board of Selectmen of surrounding Towns should be involved in decisions. Ms. Abramson reported that she is still the Parent Resource Officer. There are 18 members on the board and currently there are 10 active board members. There was discussion of amending the by-laws. Ms. Abramson reported that there is already good representation from all three towns on the board. Stacia Libby stated that she was excited to see what the Tri-Town Youth will be doing in the coming years.

The Selectmen went through the budget page by page with no change on many pages, except a small increase in salaries.

B1 - Selectmen's Budget – no change

B2 - Assessor – no change

B3 - Central Services – no change except for a slight increase due to the part time custodial workers getting their step increases and the new phone system had a slight

increase. It is anticipated that the heating fuel line should decrease, but was held flat this year.

B5 - Elections – decreased based on expected number of primaries, elections, etc.

B6 - Probate Court - was increased due to the possibility that the Probate Office may need to find new office space.

B7 - Tax Collector – no change

B8 - Town Clerk – no change

B9 - Finance – no change

B10 - Zoning Enforcement Agent – no change

B11 - Fringe Benefits – There was an addition of one employee who will be on the insurance for one year starting July 1, then on June 30th the full time employee will go back to part time and will come off the insurance.

B12 - General Insurance – a slight decrease because Worker's Compensation insurance went down.

B13 - Legal Services – no change

B14 - Public Restroom Facilities – no change. There was discussion on the amount of electricity usage in the parks is quite high. There was also discussion on the cost for the public restroom organic system is also quite high. The Selectmen requested the Waste Removal line be decreased from \$4,500 down to \$3,000. There was further discussion on finding out why the electric bills for the restrooms are so high.

B15 - Technology – slight increase due to the new permitting software for the Land Use Department and for Public Works in anticipation of setting up the workflow, etc. The conversion cost will be \$5,000 and then the annual cost will be \$5,000 to participate in the project. There was discussion on why the cost of the internet service provider is increasing, and it was reported that the Town has Comcast, AT&T, and the Nutmeg Network and historically the Town was under budgeting, so now this line reflects the accurate cost for Internet.

B17 - Board of Assessment Appeals – no change

B18 - Board of Finance – no change

B19 - Conservation Commission – no change

B20 - EDC – no change

B22 - IWWC – there was a decrease in engineering fees

B22 - Land Use - Administrative – this is a new page created in the budget which represents the administrative support staff for the Land Use Department.

B23 - Park and Recreation Department – increase is related to a step and salary increase.

B24 - Park and Recreation Commission – decrease in budget

B26 - Planning Commission – no change

B27 - Tree Committee – no change

B28 - Zoning Board of Appeals – no change

B29 - Zoning Commission – no change

B30 - Ambulance / EMT Services – slight decrease due to worker's compensation insurance decreasing.

B31 - Animal Control – no change

B32 - Building Department – the increase is due to the increase in hours for the Building Official who will be full time for one year.

B33 - Emergency Management – no change

B34 - Emergency 9-1-1 - no change. The Town did not get a formal budget request; the formula is typically based on the number of calls.

B35 - Fire Department – There is an increase of \$10,000 in the allocation this year.
B36 - Fire Marshal – no change
B37 - Harbor Patrol – no change
B38 - Police Services – the Town would like to add another part time police officer for a couple of shifts per week. There are also some step increases.
B40 – Resident State Trooper - the increase is based on the 3% contract increase
B41 - Water – there was a significant rate increase for water for fire protection water services.
B42 – Estuary Transit – the budget request represents Essex's share
B43 - Health Department – there was a shift in funds from inspection services to a part time employee.
B44 - Social Services – no change
B47 – Visiting Nurses – no change
B48 – Water Pollution Control – no change
B49 – Highway Department – a decrease in payroll due to two (2) long time employees retiring.
B51 – Town Garage – a decrease in heating fuel due to converting the garage from oil to propane
B54 - Libraries – no change.
B55 - Capital and Sinking Funds – \$5,000 additional funds were added to the Fire Department and \$5,000 was removed from Waste Water Management Plan.

There was discussion that next year there may be significant adjustments to education costs because of the anticipated decline of students at John Winthrop Middle School.

Public Comments

Mark Uihlein inquired about the funds for the Ambulance Association. Mr. Needleman reported that the ambulance is a separate entity and the Town pays only for their Worker's Compensation insurance.

Motion was made by Norman Needleman to cancel the Saturday, March 25th Board of Selectmen Budget Meeting. Bruce Glowac seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. All in favor.

ADJOURNMENT at 7:02 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Lucarelli