

Town of Cornish
Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Friday February 14, 2014 7:00pm
PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING

Present: Merilynn Bourne, John Hammond, Scott Baker

1. At 7:02pm, the Board of Selectmen opened a public hearing for the purpose of reviewing the proposed Town Warrant and Town Budget for 2014. Department Heads present: Doug Hackett, Police. John Hammond started the hearing by reviewing increases/decreases by department. Regarding the Cemetery budget and the stolen equipment, the public asked if we would continue to store equipment in the Hearse House. John stated that it used to be stored at the Highway Garage and we will discuss the future storage once the equipment has been replaced. There was a question about the low cost of liability insurance in 2013 and it was explained that we received a reduced premium last year as part of a state wide settlement with the regulatory board. Doug Hackett reviewed his budget request. He explained the budget was essentially the same as last year with the exception of wage. Doug explained that the line for Contracted Services (prosecutions) was reduced because one of his officers has agreed to handle those prosecutions. If the town is not willing to fund increased hours for daytime coverage, that line will have to be increased because we will not have the officer any longer. Heidi Jaarsma asked Doug if there would be any increase in department hours in the future. Doug said "no", he does not expect to increase hours for coverage. Bill Caterino asked if Office Brann's hours could be increased in the future, if the town so desired. Doug reported that Officer Brann can work up to 32 hours per week as a retired officer but is currently only working 21 hrs/week. John Hammond reviewed the Fire Department budget. Scott Baker reviewed the Highway Department Budget. Scott explained that the medical insurance line was up because we need to be prepared for a family plan request depending upon who is elected as Road Agent. Scott explained the reason for the increase in the Permit line. We need a wetlands permit and some engineering for culvert work on Hell Hollow Rd. Scott explained that sand is up by 208% because we no longer have local access to sand. We have to contract for the material and trucking. Scott explained the rationale for increasing the maintenance lines for the big equipment to reflect actual usage. He explained the increase on the grader line due to the need for tires. Tim Schad asked about reducing the diesel fuel line in light of the fact that we may be contracting for the hauling of sand and gravel which should save on diesel. Scott said that was still up for discussion. We reviewed expenses due to the July flood event. Bill Caterino suggests we review the Hired Equipment line. Perhaps we can save there. Dan Flynn asked is the price for sand would include trucking. John explained that we would like to get prices with delivery. John Hammond reviewed the remainder of the budget. Merilynn then reviewed Operating Transfers and Articles. When we reached the Article to create a Bldg Capital Reserve Acct, Heidi explained that the \$10,000 being requested would be partially funded by \$4,862, to come from fund balance to lower what is collected in taxes. Those funds came from the sale of merchandise for the 250th Celebration and the 250th Committee members support that allocation. The Selectmen then explained the two non-money articles; the position of Road Agent and extended hours for polling. There was a brief discussion about the pros and cons of electing vs. hiring a Road Agent. The Selectmen explained that the article for extended hours was to provide fuller access to the polls during elections. Many working voters find the current hours restrictive.

Adjourned 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Merilynn Bourne, Selectwoman