

PHIPPSBURG BUDGET COMMITTEE

MEETING NOTES

February 23, 2010

Chairperson Lisa Gurney called the second meeting of the Phippsburg Budget Committee to order at 6:01 PM.

Members of the Budget Committee present at the meeting were: Lisa Gurney, Ashley Thayer, Shana York, Kim Albertson, Jim Totman, Betsy Varian and Paul Gamache.

The first order of business was to approve the minutes from the February 17, 2010 Budget Committee Meeting. A motion was made and seconded to pass the minutes without any changes. The motion passed without opposition.

The first presentation was from the Cable Access Television department. Since Bob Pring was behind the camera, Gary Morong presented the request. The request was listed as a decrease, however, the actual amount is the same as last year. The Town has removed the Station Manager salary of \$11,600 to a separate line item in the Town's budget with the other salaried employees. Therefore, the overall affect is a decrease by \$11,300 for this request and an increase by \$11,300 in the salary line of the Town's overall budget. Ashley abstained from voting since she sits on the CATV committee. Gary explained the media costs and the electrical work required by an outside contractor. He explained also that the New Equipment/Capital line in the budget is being used as a capital account since they don't have a separate capital account for this department. It was noted that the CATV generates income for the Town that flows through the Town's General Fund. Last year the CATV franchise fees amounted to \$22,000 which helps explain that the CATV is self-funding. The CATV committee applied for and received grant money last year and used some of that to buy a DVD burner for PES. The Budget Committee approved the request 6-0 (1 abstain).

The Cemetery District, Inc. is a separate enterprise that requests money from the Town to help provide cemetery services for the Town. Jean Flink, Trustee, presented and Chilloa Young, Chairperson, and Richard Wentzel, Trustee were present. Jean provided a list of costs the District encounters – groundskeeper, insurance, maintenance costs, association fees, costs to pin the lots and costs to amend the soil to prepare for caskets. It was noted that the District would like to request more from the Town to develop a capital fund to do some additional work but they recognize that this is not the year to make such a request. They noted that Curtis Doughty has provided rocks around the cemetery to mark the roads. They have been running a deficit of about \$2,500 for last few years from the lack of income from the interest in their perpetual account as well as the lack of investment by people in the community during hard times to make a decision to pay for this. The Committee approved the request by a vote of 7-0.

Ethan Debery presented the budget for the Harbor Commission. He has requested \$1,000 representing no change since last year. He mentioned that his cell phone is split with the Shellfish Commission. His carry forward is earmarked for long term operations/costs/repairs of the boat/motor. The requested amount was approved 7-0.

Dean Doyle, Jr. presented the budget for the Shellfish Commission. He described the difficulty in keeping up revenue with the Kelp Shed closed and that they are working on getting it re-opened. He estimated that the loss of license fees from the Kelp Shed has been \$2,000. He helped the Committee understand the travel expenses and the expense associated with water testing. Thanks to their aggressive efforts to test the water diligently, they are able to get sites opened back up sooner which is a great benefit to our Town. The Committee approved the request with a vote of 7-0.

Phil Pelletier was not able to present the budget for the Animal Control account. Chief of Police, John Skroski presented on his behalf. The Animal Control request represents a decrease of \$500. The main costs in this budget are due to hire of another employee, the costs to travel to Augusta for training and immunizations for the new employee. He noted that Steve Freeman will be taking over. The request passed with a vote of 7-0.

Chief Skroski then discussed the General budget for Police. His request of \$14,400 represents a decrease of \$850. He outlined the costs for dues, supplies and training – that they do some work online to save money but there are still some costs to use the online services. The taser ammunition must be replaced because the batteries expire or become unsafe. They also have mandatory training/certification and need books and police manuals. He mentioned that in order to be cost-effective the Police split cell phone costs with Animal Control and that the Town dispatch is linked to County dispatch so there is no cost for dispatch services. He raised the concern about repair for the two police vehicles. 2004 Expedition (purchased new) with 80,000 miles and 2003 Crown Victoria (purchased used) with 80,000 miles. Although he maintains the vehicles promptly, he has no real way to know when he will need to provide for major repair or replacement. When asked if he applies for or receives any grants, Chief Skroski affirmed that they do receive State funds through the Bureau of Highway & Safety for computer needs, however, they are not able to apply for federal grants through NIMS (National Incident Management System) since all Town officials must be compliant to make a request and the Town is not compliant. It was noted that with the request the remaining Carry Forward will be \$2,650. The request was approved with a 7-0 vote.

Chief Skroski asked the Committee to approve the Police (Capital) request of \$5,000 which represents no change. It was also noted that the revenue generated by the Police Department for parking tickets is deposited into the Town General Fund. Having already discussed the vehicles as the items earmarked for these funds, the Committee voted 7-0 to approve the request.

The Committee re-visited the Fire (General) request. It was noted that the Committee did not approve the request at the previous meeting due to a tie of 2-2 vote. Fire Chief Jim Totman distributed a new request. The revised request showed a decrease of \$8,000, however, the decrease was due to the fact that the budget was shifted to remove payroll of \$8,000 into its own separate account (consistent with what has been done by other departments). Therefore, the overall request submitted remained the same. Jim Totman and Shana York abstained from voting on this matter. After questions and discussion, Jim reconsidered his request and reduced the request from \$13,950 to \$10,000 representing a true decrease of \$3,950 overall. The motion to approve the revised request of \$10,000 passed with a vote of 5-0 (2 abstain).

The Committee Meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 3/2/10, at 6:00 p.m. The budgets presented will be: Totman Library, Patten Free Library, Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission and Town Landings.

Kim Albertson, Secretary