

Town of Raymond
401 Webbs Mills Road
Raymond, Maine 04071

BUDGET/FINANCE COMMITTEE

Monday, February 28, 2012

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE: Rolf Olsen, Chairman; Steve Crockett; Bob Gosselin; Peter Dunn; Marshall Bullock, Tacy Hartley, Sue Accardi, and Brian Walker.

BUDGET/FINANCE COMMITTEE ABSENT: None [One position not filled]

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Joe Bruno, Lonnie Taylor, Mike Reynolds, Charles Leavitt, and Sam Gifford.

SELECTMEN ABSENT: None

TOWN STAFF: Nathan White, Public Works Director; Bruce Tupper, Fire Chief; Denis Morse Fire Department Business Manager; Cathy Gosselin, EMS Director; Don Willard, Town Manager; and Nancy Yates, Finance Director.

OTHERS: Norma Richard, Raymond Village Library; Mike McClellan; and Dana Desjardins.

1. Call to order. Rolf Olsen called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm at the Broadcast Studio.

2. Approval of minutes March 28, 2011 and December 19, 2011.

MOTOIN: Bob Gosselin motioned to approve the minutes of December 19, 2011. Seconded by Peter Dunn.

VOTE: Unanimous.

3. Discussion of the Raymond Town Budget 2012-2013.

OVERVIEW: Don Willard reported that there was 2.21% growth allowed under LD1. The Selectmen don't want to use any undesignated fund balance [UFB] to offset the tax rate. This budget is \$86,711 over LD1 without the use of undesignated fund balance. The Selectmen's goal for UFB is over by **\$300???**. There is an increase in the Capital Improvement Plan [CIP] for road maintenance. Core services are only represented in this budget. The consolidation with Cumberland County Dispatch has been a cost savings. Raymond is still looking at regionalization with Naples, Casco, and Raymond for public safety issues. The contract services for Frye Island and Gray for Fire Rescue services is still in force. The Selectmen's new goal this year was to be informed of areas of departments need which currently aren't being served. The percentage of our budget is RSU #14 School 71%, Cumberland County 6%, and Town 23% and are constant. The TIF budget **178,???** **Reduced to**. The Chipco building, which is in the TIF District, is not being used as fully as it once was which would promote more TIF funds.

Mr. Olsen noted that questions brought forth from the Budget Committee have been answered and should be discussed during this review of the budget.

Administration: 3% increase wages based on the northeast region survey. General Assistance Administrator Alice Hamilton will receive a \$1/hr increase, as well as Deputy Tax Collector Sue Carr who will cross train for the responsibilities in assessing and Code Enforcement. It is necessary to have a backup for Danielle Loring. The Code Enforcement Officer will receive an increase this year. The travel and training budget is increased. The IRS mileage expense has increased per IRS directive. The Election budget has an increase for mechanizing elections with a voting machine and ballots.

Mike Reynolds will not be taking his \$1,200 stipend. There was discussion of the new voting machine purchase through the Secretary of State's Elections Department. The water machine expense was necessary for town office because of the poor quality well water. The office is looking for donated water from Poland Spring. Mr. Olsen had a problem with paying the Cumberland County tax and also having to pay for recording, deed, and lien fees. He felt it was double taxation. Mr. Bruno said that if he wins the election, he will not be taking his salary as well.

Mr. Leavitt said there was a lot to like in this budget beginning with not using UFB. Town Manager life insurance and long term disability is under the insurance column. Code Enforcement now has a vehicle provided. Mr. Willard explained that Nathan White has a vehicle provided as well as the fire chief which is a marked vehicle from state surplus because they are on call 24/7, 365 days a year. It was noted that the CEO historically had a stipend to use his own vehicle for town business. We're now providing a surplus used marked vehicle for town business which enhances its visibility by the townspeople. The Town Manager has a vehicle stipend and uses it for his business travel which is \$300 net per month. Mr. Leavitt questioned the 3% increase for wages. He would like to see what is being done in other local towns. Mr. Willard felt it was to help employees cover their increased living expense.

Steve Crockett noted a 20% increase for insurance which is the turnover from last year. Mr. Willard felt it would be actually lower than that which will be discovered in an insurance search this spring. His intention is to have no increase. We have only 16 full time employees who cross train and do more than one job covering the personnel loss from past years. Mr. Bruno felt that in Maine the insurance will be a 5-10% increase. Mr. Willard said that the 20% was used as a worst case scenario. Mrs. Yates answered that renewal is July 1st so she will begin researching insurance in the next couple of months.

Assessing has been reduced and we're very pleased with our new contract assessor Kurt Lebel.

The Town Office is slowly being improved and making it serviceable as well as becoming more efficient with new lighting from a grant and a new furnace. The grass mowing and Route 302 sidewalk snow blowing will go out to bid this year. Mr. Willard is getting an estimate for improving the front counter area which will give that working area more needed room.

Ms. Hartley asked how many vehicles Raymond has. Mr. Willard answered that we have fewer than other towns of our size, and they are all purchased secondhand, mostly from state surplus. When we need a new fire truck we purchase a demonstrator and negotiate for equipment we need in the truck.

Mr. Bullock asked about rescue billing amount? Mrs. Yates said the amount is what has been collected. Mrs. Gosselin said year to date \$128,000 in charges has a collectin of about \$89,000. Medicare/Medicaid is a minus \$30,000 because we can't bill them as much. We now are writing off more than years before possibly because of the economy. Medical Reimbursement sends three bills which ask for reply from the customer. Mrs. Gosselin finally reviews all unpaid statements before they are written off.

There is no General Assistance increase in the budget but we're also using the Community Action Fund which now has about \$19,000 in it for those people who can't quite meet the GA level. Mr. Walker asked if this fund can receive a match from the state. Mr. Willard replied that the private donation fund would not be matched only the money raised by the town for GA. Mrs. Yates noted that we've spent less than \$6,000 so far this year.

Technology - GIS has been moved to the Community Development account. Mr. Willard said that they are looking to include in the Planning officer duties economic development and GIS. Mr. Reynolds asked about the computerized reader board at the town office. Mr. Willard said that they are looking for an electronic reader board insert for that sign. The sign at the Public Safety Building was also built to receive a computerized sign. The Town Office staff is now doing it but they have problem keeping up with it with their other duties. The red on black sign could be used at the Public Safety Building but we would like to have a black on white sign for the town office. Mr. Olsen suggested getting the funds from the TIF budget. Mr. Walker asked about any homeland security grants? Mr. Willard replied that program is over. Mr. Leavitt questioned the paid employees working the broadcast studio and video taping. Mr. Willard said that the Selectmen asked to have all meetings video taped and put on the website which takes time and effort. The voluntary aspect doesn't work for this level of service. Mr. Olsen felt it was important to get the town's information out to the public since we no longer have the printed ROADRUNNER. Mr. Leavitt asked what the market rate was for this type of job? Mr. Willard said they were going by what the Windham school and town gave their employees. Mr. Walker wanted to poll how many people actually watch the meetings on TV. Mr. Willard was not sure but the town office gets reports that the public is watching. It is televised on cable TV, streamed on the internet through out website, and available on DVD from the town office and the library.

Community Development has increased because of the combining of the services under that heading. The Greater Portland Council of Governments [GPCOG] increase is because of Raymond's increase in population which is \$1 per capita assessed about every 10 years. They use the money for grant backup, supply co-purchasing, planning, transportation and many other services. They are investigating having a grant resource person to help towns apply for grants. They are also looking to have an economic development person to help towns plan for the future on a day by day basis. Mr. Leavitt asked about the \$3,800 for community development and whether it's built into this budget. Mr. Willard it could be, or since most of this year's hasn't been spent, it could be carried over to the new budget.

Fire Department and Emergency Management Services [EMS] - Chief Bruce Tupper reported it is the same as last year except for a 3% salary increase. The advantage of our past grants has allowed our budget to say level. We reduced the turnout gear item because of the grant money awarded to purchase new gear which should last 10 years. Mr. Leavitt thanked Chief Tupper for addressing the communication problem on the North Raymond part of town. Mr. Leavitt asked about the business manager stipend. Chief Tupper said that as of July 1st Denis Morse will be working as a volunteer.

Mr. Taylor asked why all cell phone usage wasn't under one contract to get a better price and/or amount of minutes.

Animal Control – There is only a 3% increase for salary. We now have 3 ACO's: Sue Fielder, Bobby Silcott, and Linda Alexander. Don Alexander has retired.

Public Works – Mr. Reynolds asked if this year's salt can be used for next year? Mr. White replied that we can't store salt long term. We purchase as we need through the GPCOG deal. There are no penalties whether we purchase or not as there is with the state bid structure. Mr. Walker asked about the diesel fuel budget? Mr. White said this was our best estimate of what we'll need. Mrs. Yates said that last year we cut it, but this year it appears we'll go over that amount. Mr. Leavitt asked about the snow plowing contract. Mr. White replied that this is the last year on this contract with P&K Sand and Gravel. We'll go to bid next summer for a new contract. Mr. Leavitt asked what is cost per mile. Mr. White said Raymond pays about \$41/mile and Windham about \$35/mile. We're plowing with more vehicles per mile in Raymond which is better than some of our neighbors which extrapolates to 1.5 hour per run and other towns 3 hours per run.

Street lights – The increase is for the cost of electricity. The Route 302 street lights are in the TIF budget.

Solid Waste – The increase is the solid waste contract, and the decreasing cost from MMWAC debt cost. Mr. Walker asked why the price hasn't gone down with more single sort usage. Mr. Willard will ask Joe Kazar, Director of MMWAC. Mr. Leavitt said that there are 2 more years for the EcoMaine demo project. What is Raymond's position with ownership of this property. Mr. Willard said that the participating towns own it but didn't know what the future was for the land.

Cemeteries – Mrs. Lester explained that the increase was to finish the marking of the lots in the Dailey Annex of the North Raymond Cemetery. Once this is done we can begin selling lots/plots there.

Parks & Recreation – Mr. Crockett asked about their maintenance expense? Mr. White replied it's part of the Public Works budget. Mr. Leavitt asked about the Camp Agawam field mowing and might Camp Agawam help with this expense or reduce the cost. Could some of the trust funds help pay for this. Mr. Willard felt with the value of the field to Raymond this was an ideal public private partnership.

Library – Norma Richard reported that Barbara Thorpe the library director is retiring and they will be looking for a replacement who needs to be a college graduate and additionally there are two part-time people who have programs. They are looking toward additional space. Forty five percent is supported by the town, the rest from fund raisers. Mr. Bruno asked how they came to the amount of increase. Ms. Richard said it was for a salary increase. Raymond's funding is 48% of the new budget. Mr. Leavitt noted that the 13% increase was large considering that we're no longer giving funding to any other outside providers. He would like to see a bigger portion of the budget donations from the citizens. Mr. Reynolds spoke of the library's technological advances and felt that this increase was a good investment in Raymond's. Ms. Richard noted that our library is working under the state average in cost per capita.

CIP – Willard total cost is going down. Denis gave a review of regionalization, equipment, and trucks. Looking to purchase a tank truck when we regionalize which should replace a 20 year old truck which we've kept going by repair and replacing parts i.e. water tank. They don't want to bond for a new truck but they would like to keep the payment value which is paying off their last bond in order to put aside in the CIP for another vehicle in the future. He said that if regionalization doesn't go through then they will have to present a larger budget to keep the department going. They are preparing a list of equipment and it's potential life and expense.

Bruno gross budget increase is 54,000. Yates the reduction in revenues. He wanted to do something with the assessing CIP of \$28,000 and use it because we won't be doing a reval for the next 10 years. Olsen that move would need a town meeting vote because it was voted as designated funds. It would be a gamble to reduce the current \$70,000 increase. Willard the override could work for us if we go to bond next year. Bruno felt that the \$14,000 left could be found in cuts in the budget. Reynolds wanted it understood that the use of this \$28,000 is a one time advantage. Bruno our valuation is now at 110%. Walker questioned the advantage of using this money and moving away from CIP and moving to debt. Bullock asked whether there were other places where there is stagnant funds. It was noted there were none. Dunn asked where this idea will go. Bruno said that it would be discussed and voted on by the Selectmen and then sent to the Budget Committee for their vote.

County Tax – none

TIF – Willard town attorney will give a recommendation of how we should order our TIF at no cost. The assessor will also be looking at it. Olsen felt the sign should be in the TIF. Bruno also felt that it could be a CIP line item. Willard felt in time the price might go down.

Revenues were discussed and it's projected that there will be a decrease of \$79,380. Bullock wanted to know if there was enough energy spend on collecting overdue taxes. Yates said we're around 95+ %.

Next meeting 4/2/12

10:11 pm