



Budget-Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

March 28, 2017

6:00pm – Meet with County Commissioner

6:30pm – Budget Workshop

Broadcast Studio
423 Webbs Mills Road

Resolution: We, the Raymond Board of Selectmen, recognize our individual and collective responsibilities as leaders and representatives of our community. To this end, we pledge to conduct ourselves in a manner befitting these roles and duties. We pledge and encourage others to "Be the Influence" and to recognize that decisions matter.

Committee Members Present: Brian Walker, Brien Richards, Marshall Bullock, Robert Gosselin, Debra Duchaine, Diana Picavet, Stephen Crockett

Committee Members Absent: Barry Moores, Nicholas Pitarys

Selectmen Present: Teresa Sadak, Joe Bruno, Rolf Olsen, Sam Gifford

Town Staff Present:

Don Willard, Town Manager
Cathy Ricker, Finance Director
Nathan White, Public Works Director
Chris Hanson, Code Enforcement Officer
Bruce Tupper, Fire Chief
Cathy Gosselin, Deputy Fire Chief
Sue Look, Town Clerk

1) Meet with County Commissioner Susan Witonis (District 2) Regarding the County Tax

Commissioner Witonis – I thought the best way would be to bring the people who are responsible for the budget

Peter Crichton, County Manager – Jim Gailey – Assistant County Manager, Alex Kimball – Finance Director, and Sheriff Kevin Joyce. The Finance Director has the handout explaining the County budget. The jail is unique to Cumberland County government and is the largest part of the budget. The legislature removed the arrangement of the State paying for any increases in jail spending. The Cross Insurance increase is due to the modernization of the Civic Center. We are trying to attract and keep quality employees. When we remove the large budget items we only have a 1.1% increase.

Select Chair Bruno – You can not take out the large budget items to show that you only have a 1.1% increase.

Mr Crichton – We are nationally accredited as a jail. The Cross Insurance Arena is headed in the right direction.

Chairman Bullock – We are very conscientious about our budget process. We do not think that a 7.5% increase is fair.

Mr Crichton – The increase was 5%. The valuation for Raymond went up and that is why your

tax increase from the County is larger. We get the valuation numbers from the State.

Mr Walker – Thank you for coming out. The jail has unused area. Do you see opportunities for filling that space?

Mr Crichton – We have 2 half pods that are closed. We have saved about \$500,000 annually by this. The Sheriff has worked with his team to change the ratio of officers to inmates to save money. We are bringing in inmates from other counties, but we lost the Oxford County contract.

Mr Walker – Is there an opportunity to use that space for other kinds of services?

Sheriff Joyce – Next Wednesday we are looking at the possibility of leasing one of the half pods to DHHS for competency exams.

Chairman Bullock – How many inmates, how many from Raymond? We are having trouble justifying the large increase in County Tax when our community is less than 5,000 year round residents.

Sheriff Joyce – There were 93 arrests in Raymond last year and 414 number of inmates today. There was a bidding war that caused us to lose Oxford. We have reduced our price for other counties to \$70. We take female and special needs inmates that the smaller jails have difficulty housing.

Selectman Olsen – What is our head cost?

Sheriff Joyce – It is \$112.

Selectman Olsen – Would we be better off to shut down pods and not take other counties' inmates?

Sheriff Joyce – I can not do that. We also take Federal inmates. Probation and parole – 19% of bed days were used by probation and parole. We become the default mental health facility.

Selectman Sadak – If you can rent that to DHHS, would any of the monies come back to the towns?

Sheriff Joyce – It would reduce our expenses.

Mrs Picavet – I know how much the county staff worked to put together a fiscally responsible budget.

Mr Walker – Looking at the revenue side of the Cross Arena, is it looking up.

Mr Crichton – When the CCC was established in the 1970s it was run by a board of trustees. The county does not manage the Civic Center. I think they are now moving in the right direction.

Mr Walker – I noticed that the bond principle is a flat number each year. The interest being paid is more than the principle.

Mr Kimball, Director of Cumberland County Finance – The bond was set up for 6 years building the interest and then it will begin to decrease.

Mr Richards – Federal requirements for a coordinator in the jail do not come with any funding, correct? Will new administration in DC make a change?

Mr Crichton – The coordinator is a requirement now. We are waiting to see if there will be any

changes due to the new administration. The communication center is saving about \$200,000 per year.

Selectman Olsen – How many heads did you cut this year? How much of the \$700,000 comes back to Raymond?

Mr Crichton – For 1 program 5. We have added to our staff at communications center as we have gotten contracts with municipalities. We have eliminated positions. There is the \$200,000 in savings in the communications center. The Sheriff's Office is the most visible service provided to the Town of Raymond.

Selectman Olsen – The town populace is seeing that we put in \$700,000 and get out less than that while other municipalities are paying less and getting more. The tax is based on valuation, not the number of people, nor the services we use.

Chairman Bullock – I could not find the videos and minutes of commissioners' meetings, where are they?

Mr Crichton – We are working on that.

Town Manager Willard – We are very pleased with the relationship we have with the Sheriff's Office.

Mr Walker – I think it is important to understand that \$700,000 in a small town like this is a major part of a budget. We look at our budget as we have \$700,000 that we must pay, what do we need to cut to pay this? I also think you need to understand that as you drive north or west the value perceived is less.

Chairman Bullock – I have 1 final questions for Commissioner Witonis, what are you doing as our representative to control these expenses?

Commissioner Witonis – I have always been an advocate for Public Safety. I do a lot with the Sheriff's Office to make sure that we are providing the best service that we can here for the Town of Raymond. I am also on the liason between the Commissioners and the Cross Insurance Arena. I was on with the building our committee. If people will remember, I was not for the renovation of the Civic Center at that time. And the reason will be is that I felt some other issues that with the people out here and with the community had to make the decision am I going to buy a gallon of milk or am I going to do a prescription for my family. So at the time I was not for, nor did I support, with the renovation. But, when the referendum passed, and the citizens passed the bond issue, with the Civic Center to be \$32,000,000, I had to support that because the people were supported it and I supported it for the people. I have put myself on with the Committee for the strategic development of the Civic Center. I am always active, and I go in there and I am constantly saying we need to cut because the people in the rural communities are feeling that they are not getting the value here.

Chairman Bullock – Can you give us an example of where your suggestion of cuts has been successful?

Commissioner Witonis – I was very strong with this year and Peter can contest to this in the Human Service area of the budget. I put forth some cuts that I was not happy with all the money that we give to the Human Service areas. And there were cuts and I think it is because I kept pushing and pushing and said we need to make these cuts. Because I am not convinced that it is the responsibility of Cumberland County to be supporting these to the fullest extent. And I don't know with whose responsibility it is. We have seen that question for the past 4-6 years. Does it fall on the responsibility of the State, or fall on the responsibility of the towns, or does it fall on the responsibility of the Federal government, or does it fall here in the local municipality? And I have

not been able to get the correct answer, so I do go in there and I do cut in areas that I feel. There was a job that came up here recently and I did not support that job. And I have been out there, and I do, and my board with contest to it, I am not the one sitting back at the meetings and being quiet. I am out there trying to make the cuts. Trying to provide the best service possible for the municipalities because the areas I serve are out here in the rural community where I feel there should be some more services.

Chairman Bullock – You know that we feel like the “golden goose” out in the “north 40” and if the county wants money they come out and get a golden egg. Thank you very much, and thank you Peter, thank you Sheriff. We will take a 2 minute recess.

2) Lake Region Bus Presentation

Jack DeBeradinis, Executive Director of RTP – The service has been ongoing for 3.5 years. We appreciate the funding we received for the past 2 years. Our service helps to link the residents to the City of Portland. We run 4 round trips daily that start in Bridgton at 6:30am and ends at 10:30pm. We plan to add 2 or 3 round trips on Saturdays this summer. We have an 18 passenger vehicle. It is equipped with Wi-fi and a bike rack. This year we will add a rider access GPS so they can see where the bus is and how long before it gets to them. We are asking \$9,656. The total budget is \$142,000. We are focused on increasing ridership. In the past year it has increased 48%. We went from 6,000 boardings per year to 8,800 in the past year. We have increased advertising and are working with the Town of Windham for a CDBG for tickets for low-income riders. We are working with MEDOT to buy a replacement bus with Federal grants. The current bus has well over 200,000 miles. Thank you to Raymond for their support over the past couple of years.

Mr Gosselin – Do you get any funding from the County?

Director DeBeradinis – The county started off helping us with a grant to get the current bus. Operationally no.

Town Manager Willard – Do you get any money from GPCOG?

Director DeBeradinis – We use 2 consultants from GPCOG for which we pay \$15,000 out of federal monies.

Mr Walker – Do you see your budget needs changing over the next few years?

Director DeBeradinis – I do not see the amount from the Towns changing.

Select Chair Bruno – How much are your fares? We are subsidizing for a longer ride.

Director DeBeradinis – \$3 and \$2 for seniors. It is a regional transportation public service. Portland and Westbrook pay more due to ADA services and are not part of this group.

Ms Duchaine – How many miles per day?

Director DeBeradinis – 320 miles.

Selectman Olsen – Has the grant been approved for the new bus?

Director DeBeradinis – We have the local match in-hand and have been approved for the grants.

Mr Richards – Are there any security issues with the low ridership?

Director DeBeradinis – A couple of months ago the bus was almost in Windham, it was a dark and stormy night and suddenly there was a car heading directly at them. The driver was able to move to the side of the road safely and checked out the riders. When I checked the security recording the riders give the driver a round of applause. We have had a few incidences where the riders were unruly.

3) Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting

Motion to approve minutes from March 7, 2017, as amended by Mr Walker. Seconded by Mr Gosselin.

Unanimously approved.

4) Workshop called to order by Chairman Bullock at 6:58pm.

5) Review of FY 2017-2018 Budget

a) Revenues

Chairman Bullock – Will the sign reserve continue if we buy the sign this year?

Finance Director Ricker – No, it will go away.

b) Administration

Chairman Bullock – Why is there a difference in the figure on page 20 for administration of about \$7,000?

Finance Director Ricker – \$488,998.08 is the correct figure.

Chairman Bullock – We had talked about either paying GPCOG or MMA.

Select Chair Bruno – How do people feel about MMA?

Selectman Sadak – I thing last year we weighed it out, are we actually getting what we pay.

Finance Director Ricker – We would save money by going with their general liability insurance. If we pull out the dues, we will need to increase the cost of insurance.

Select Chair Bruno – Why are the dues so high? It used to be \$1 per head.

Town Manager Willard – I think it is a per capita fee.

Finance Director Ricker – I will check with MMA.

Chairman Bullock – What is the difference if we do not go with MMA?

Finance Director Ricker - \$3,000 or \$4,000 more.

Selectman Olsen – You have an overall net decrease by going with MMA.

Chairman Bullock – What types of training do we take advantage of?

Finance Director Ricker – We do Elected Officials, Tax Collector, Treasurer, Registrar, Clerk

Town Manager Willard – The value of MMA is always the joint services, insurance.

Select Chair Bruno – What is this large increase in contracts?

Finance Director Ricker – It is the TRIO software. \$28,000 is one time purchase. Annual maintenance is \$4,700 (about \$2,000 less than Northern Data Systems).

Town Manager Willard – The bigger issue on this is I don't think NDS will exist much longer for municipal software.

Deputy Chief Gosselin – MMA does do an automatic safety grant each year to its members.

c) Assessing

Town Manager Willard – Peter brought up regionalized assessing and we are doing assessing at the same cost with local control.

d) Code Enforcement

Chairman Bullock – How many hours do you have from the assistant?

CEO Hanson – Currently 16 hours and I want to increase it to 22.

Select Chair Bruno – How many building permits this year?

CEO Hanson – Last year was 33 and we are above that this year. It may continue climbing, there are some of the larger developers who began in prior years will probably get going this year or next.

Ms Duchaine - \$1,400 for phone and \$5,000 for software and phone?

CEO Hanson – It is so I have my office on my phone and on my tablet in the field to be more efficient.

Mr Gosselin – Why do wait to the 1st tax bill in October to initiate taxes on new residences and not when they are done?

Finance Director Ricker – It is state statute that taxes are based on value as of April 1st.

e) Town Hall

Selectman Sadak – I think Town Hall is going to need some money to renovate and so will the Library. We need to put money aside to fix both of these. We have a very small budget (compared to the school and the county).

Selectman Gifford – How can the heating oil be so small?

Finance Director Ricker – It is only for the Town Hall. We are locked in through June. GPCOG's bid will be in May. I am waiting for Downeast to get back with me.

Town Manager Willard – We have a favorable contract and have weatherized the building

as best we can.

Chairman Bullock – How many gallons does the Town (not just the Town Hall) use per year?

Selectman Sadak – 3,300 gallons.

f) Insurance & Employee Benefits

Mr Walker – That was going to be looked at...

Finance Director Ricker – When we looked at a change it was worse - \$1,000 more per month.

Selectman Olsen – We talked about front-loading the HRA and then just topping it off each year (a carry forward reserve account).

Finance Director Ricker – My plan is to make a change for December 31st and go to a calendar year plan.

Select Chair Bruno – Can you meet with the Cross rep and see if you can get a better number?

Finance Director Ricker – I did. We have single, married, with children. I looked at the HRA last year and we paid out about 35%.

Mrs Picavet – The HRA goes on calendar year.

Select Chair Bruno – I want you to look at what has been spent thus far and what is likely to be spent and reserve the rest of the HRA.

g) General Assistance

No issues

h) Technology Department

Select Chair Bruno – Weren't we paying the administrator \$60,000?

Town Manager Willard – We eliminated the Broadcast Studio Manager and amended Kevin's contract. The videographers only tape the meetings. Kevin does the post production and everything else to do with the meetings.

Chairman Bullock – The money paid to Kevin flows to a company and not to Kevin as an individual, correct?

Town Manager Willard – No, Kevin is a contract employee with no benefits.

Chairman Bruno – We had \$180,000 contract for 3 years that went out to RFP. He was not going to be an employee of the Town. It was a company who bid on the project. We pay the \$60,000 to the company. This is news to me.

Mr Crockett – It should be a 1099.

Select Chair Bruno – So we are paying FICA and Workman’s Comp on him? That is not the original arrangement.

Chairman Bullock – I thought we hired Kevin Woodbrey Inc.

Town Manager Willard – We will go back and research the history.

i) Community Development & Services

- Naples, Casco, Raymond American Legion Post 155 – Support \$400
- Chambers of Commerce – Should come out of Economic Development in the budget, not here
 - 1) Sebago Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce
 - 2) Greater Bridgton Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce
- Windham/Raymond Community Calendar 2018 – Remove and do not support - \$750
- Regional Transportation Program (RTP)

Selectman Olsen – I am glad they have grants for the new bus.

Mr Walker – The issue is are we a part of the Lakes Region or not. It provides a service to those with limited or no means of transportation. I think it provides a valuable conduit into Portland.

Selectman Olsen – Raymond is getting to be an older town and if this could help some of our seniors...

Advisory vote for \$7,000. Vote 7 to 5. **Passed.**

- Miscellaneous Community Agencies – No funding currently
 - 1) American Red Cross
 - 2) The Life Flight Foundation
 - 3) Maine Public Radio - Television - Online (MPBN)
 - 4) Southern Maine Agency on Aging
 - 5) Tri-County Mental Health Services

Mr Walker – I am for giving money to Southern Maine Agency on Aging and Tri-County Mental Health Services

Advisory vote to add \$500 for these 2 agencies. Vote 1 to 8. **Defeated.**

j) Fire - EMS Department

Select Chair Bruno – Why is the heating going up?

Fire Chief Tupper – We are over 100% of budget this year already.

Mr Walker – Fit test equipment is shared?

Fire Chief Tupper – Yes, we share with multiple towns. Gray is applying for a grant for this.

Ms Duchaine – What is going to be fixed?

Fire Chief Tupper – Building Maintenance is ongoing maintenance – door openers, doors, waxing floors, etc.

k) Animal Control

Finance Director Ricker – We will have the total cost on the warrant and the \$4,000 will be on the Revenue side.

l) Public Works

Select Chair Bruno – Snow removal has gone down because you renegotiated with P&K and took on more roads?

Public Works Director White – Correct. We took on Route 85.

Mr Gosselin – Fuel costs have dropped?

Public Works Director White – It is due to our contracted price and the vendor's projection of usage.

Mr Walker – What does roadside mowing cover?

Public Works Director White – Every town road with sickle bar mower and 3 sites bush-hogged.

m) Solid Waste

Mr Gosselin – Last meeting we talked about recycling and how much we want to do it, but it triples our cost. Not that I want to go back on the efforts we have made, but that is \$150,000.

Select Board Chair - \$131,000

Public Works Director White – You would see an increase in tipping fees since it would be added to trash. You would see a decrease in the transportation costs. I don't have the exact figures, but you would see about \$100,000 savings in transportation costs.

Town Manager Willard – The trend is going the other way, Scarborough and South Portland are going the other way and are now taking food waste. People see it as an environmental good. These days it is a cost to the Town. There is a worldwide glut of recycled materials, but it is the right thing to do.

n) Employee Compensation & Training

Select Chair Bruno – Employee Merit Pool, have you started working on that yet?

Town Manager Willard – We will do the first reviews next month and will be ready with the first round of awards in the new fiscal year.

Select Chair Bruno – We are also going to make that a carry-over account, right?

Town Manager Willard – Correct.

Chairman Bullock – These are strictly merit increases...

Town Manager Willard – There is no COLA, there is no step. Only merit.

Chairman Bullock – There are no salary increases based on salary impacts or anything like that?

Town Manager Willard – Only merit.

Chairman Bullock – We went through the alignment process last year, right?

Select Chair Bruno – There are a few, like the Fire Chief, who are still catching up this year and then it will only be merit.

Chairman Bullock – So this 5% will not totally be spent?

Town Manager Willard – No. That is the upper limit of what employees could qualify for.

o) Cemeteries

Public Works Director White – The \$10,000 is for finishing the Raymond Hill Cemetery expansion – loam, hydro-seeding, etc.

Mr Walker – I would like to recommend that we reduce this by some amount because we have sufficient inventory for many years. We can give people 5 options of where they want to rest themselves, and we are building more infrastructure that has to be mowed and the mowing contract keeps going up. I total agree that we have a responsibility to provide cemeteries and support them, but I believe that we have sufficient capacity and that can be developed at a later date.

Chairman Bullock – If I was a Raymond resident, I would want to be buried that cemetery (Raymond Hill Cemetery), I would not want to take “Plan B”.

Selectman Sadak – Don’t we have some lots back there that we have to fix?

Public Works Director White – Yes. There 3 lots that sparked this. They have been sold and the lots are not finished. When I started here 20 years ago that was all mow-able area and the decision was made to stop mowing it. Now we are in the situation that is costing more money to get the trees out of there, get it graded off and get it loamed and seeded. At the very least it will need to be bush-hogged and a portion mowed, so we will have maintenance. We have to keep it mowed.

Selectman Sadak – I agree with Marshall. I would want it done if that was where I wanted to be.

Mr Gosselin – If I remember correctly, a big part of this is to get the cemetery in GIS with your inventory permanently identifiable. Will this encompass the whole expansion?

Town Clerk Look – The GIS is for all the cemeteries.

Mr Walker – What do you see the Cemetery Budget as if this were to pass as proposed?

Town Clerk Look – I gave you a projection, less the mowing contract as this next year is the

final of a 3-year contract. It would be a decrease because the \$10,000 is a one-time expense to create the lots that have already been sold and ready the remainder for sale.

Chairman Bullock – There is a \$4,000 revenue from perpetual care that offsets some of the cost.

Select Chair Bruno – Do you want to propose a number to reduce by?

Mr Walker – No.

p) Parks/Recreation

Advisory vote to increase Raymond Baseball to \$2,000.

Select Chair Bruno – It has been \$1,000 as long as I remember.

Mr Crockett – Just one comment. They asked for \$1,000, and when it was brought up to them that they could ask for more they did not.

Selectman Sadak – I don't think they wanted to be greedy.

Mr Crockett – If you are the president of an organization and you need more to run the organization, you are going to ask for it. You don't ask, you don't get.

Selectman Bruno – I think it has been \$1,000 since the 1980s

6 to 4 in favor. **Passed.**

Selectman Olsen – Keep in mind that when you see the final warrant articles you can still make a different recommendation if you so choose.

Selectman Sadak – What are we doing with Raymond Rattlers - \$1,600 or \$2,000?

Town Manager Willard – I recall you saying no more than actual receipts.

Finance Director Ricker – We have \$1,600 to \$1,700 in revenue. I will check the actual.

q) Raymond Village Library

Select Chair Bruno – So they are asking for \$4,000 more than last year.

Selectman Sadak – I remember our last meeting and thinking we are getting actual numbers. Last year we kept asking for their numbers and they said then they would not be asking for another increase, but here we are \$4,000 increase over last year.

Mr Gosselin – Part of this increase is a matching grant, isn't it?

Chairman Bullock – No.

Advisory vote to move the \$60,500. Voted 6 to 4. **Passed.**

Select Board Chair Bruno – At what point do we simply take over the Library? They are getting more than 50% of their revenues from the Town.

Chairman Bullock – I have had several conversations with the people in the Library. I have tried very hard to avoid a conflict of interest position, I don't think I am in one now. I have recommended that instead of getting numbers that are tight and printed, we take a look at the 990s which by law are open for inspection. If we looked at the 990s for the past 3 years, that would give us some solid financial background. Then it would be up to them to give us 1 year of projected budget which would include fund raising efforts and so forth. I think it is important that we get solid background numbers that we have never had to get a better feeling or where they are going. I think the Library staff agrees with me on that one. In the past we have looked at accounting tricks (and Sheila admitted it). I think the Library will put the 990s on the table and a 1 page, going forward projection.

r) Capital Improvements & Debt Services

Mr Walker – I know we need the visibility, but it is a lot of money. Route 302 makes more sense than here and utilize it as a Town sign instead of Public Safety.

Select Chair Bullock – We have reserved \$26,000.

Chairman Bullock – They want 80% down payment.

Town Manager Willard – We will negotiate that piece.

Select Chair Bruno – The original intent was to replace the Town Hall sign. This sign has to come down at some point anyway.

Town Manager Willard – This is something that has been discussed for a long period of time. We have always had a reader board and the dream was that we would have an electronic reader board to get information out quickly. Virtually every town has one. We are trying to do it right. It is really not a staff thing, this came from the elected officials. I am thinking about using it to attract volunteers.

Chairman Bullock – How much reconstruction has to happen to the one on 302?

Deputy Fire Chief Gosselin – There is a cement base and the power is already there. The sign is total replacement.

Mrs Picavet – Is that one double-sided and this one is not?

Town Manager Willard – Yes.

Chairman Bullock – If we say no this year do we reserve another \$12,000 next year?

Select Chair Bruno – Why keep reserving if no one wants to spend the money?

Selectman Olsen – I see value in this. It is one of the avenues to keep people informed. There is already money set aside for this and the amount to be raised is not \$62,000.

Selectman Sadak – My only concern is that the one up here is 1-sided and people will be going down the street and trying to turn around to look at the sign.

Select Chair Bruno – You only have a 1-sided sign there now. How many years has it been a 1-sided sign?

Town Manager Willard – The problem is site lines.

Public Works Director White – We looked at it when Kevin was designing that sign and if it

is moved closer to the road so the back is visible it will block the visibility of traffic leaving the Town Office and Raymond Hill Road. The original sign that the current one replaced was also 1-sided.

Chairman Bullock – Chris, are we at the maximum height?

CEO Hanson – We could go to 20 feet.

Select Chair Bruno – We could see both sides at 20 feet, but it would look awful.

Mr Crockett – How many people are going to see the sign at Public Safety? How many live on Raymond Cape?

Mr Gosselin – Deep Cove Rd, Thomas Pond Terrace, ...

Mr Crockett – Year round?

Mr Gosselin – Yes.

Mr Walker – The 2 signs together would get pretty good coverage of the town. Main Street might be better.

Town Manager Willard – We have an offer from a land owner on Main Street, but there is the issue of power.

Mr Crockett – There is power at Tassel Top.

Select Chair Bruno – Tassel Top and Veterans' Park would be good places. Good Life is packed every day. You have to stop at the light.

Town Manager Willard – What you lose is the context of the municipal setting.

Select Board Chair – Not if it says Town of Raymond.

Town Clerk Look – Wiring the sign to our servers would be interesting from there. We do not want the exposure of using a wireless connection that could be hacked. It would not be good to find "colorful" messages on the sign.

Mrs Picavet – Is there any way we could get some revenue from the signs?

Select Board Chair Bruno – We have never as a Town sold advertising.

Selectman Olsen – It also gets away from our mission of informing the citizens.

Select Board Chair Bruno – We are keeping the mill rate down, if we are going to invest this is the year to do it.

Mr Crockett – You say this money is in the reserve account. Isn't it similar to a personal savings account? I mean the money doesn't have to go to the sign.

Select Chair Bruno – This reserve account was set up for the sign because we knew we had to replace this one.

Mr Crockett – That sign could be replaced for a lot less money.

Select Chair Bruno – The problem is we always wanted an electronic sign because you can't

get to that sign in the winter to change it.

Mr Crockett – They have been snow-blowing to that sign for many, many years.

Select Chair Bruno – No one goes out there and does it.

Mr Crockett – That is not true. I think that someone who worked here before changed the letters.

Town Clerk Look – Someone who works here now used to go out and change the letters and the last time it took 2 to 3 hours for my hands to stop aching, so I stopped doing it.

Advisory vote to move forward with both signs. Voted 9 to 1. **Passed.**

Mr Walker – It is good for the Town image.

Select Chair Bruno – I see the one in Gray and I read it. Next year we are retiring more debt?

Finance Director Ricker – The General Fund will see the Public Safety building done.

s) **County Tax**

No issues

t) **TIF District**

● **GPCOG**

Mr Walker – Jessica Fay said there are monies available to form a GPCOG type of organization.

Select Board Bruno – We don't need more of those organizations.

Finance Director Ricker – We do get power buying through them.

Public Works Director White – Right now we are getting salt, street signs, and road striping through GPCOG. We would get the same pricing for street signs and road striping, but not for salt. GPCOG bids our salt as a package. They guarantee testing and delivery. If we don't go with GPCOG, when we put an order in for salt we will be delivered to after all GPCOG members get their deliveries. They will not guarantee price, nor availability. There are 2 suppliers and both have the same policy. We could go with MEDOT, but you must buy what you estimate for salt. There is a penalty for going more than 20% or 30% over. No one would tell me what the additional cost would be if we were not GPCOG members. I would have to put it out to bid. The price now is the delivered price.

Selectman Olsen – The question is, is it worth \$4,000?

Public Works Director White – We get 1,000 to 1,200 ton per year. I budget for 1,000. I don't know.

Finance Director Ricker – We also use GPCOG for gas, diesel, and office supplies.

Town Manager Willard – I have been pushing really hard to get GPCOG to support initiatives that would benefit Raymond – economic support and assistance, helping to

move forward the broadband initiative, etc. They have only had a new director since last summer, so maybe something will happen.

Mr Walker – Do you have support from other towns on broadband?

Town Manager Willard – Gray, Windham, and Standish.

Chairman Bullock – Do we still have a Selectmen's Rep on GPCOG?

Town Manager Willard – I think Sam expressed an interest in that.

Mr Gosselin – Do we have a Selectman rep for the school?

Select Chair Bruno – We have 3 elected positions. Their increase is around 7% I believe.

Mr Walker – Do we know when the budget hearings are for the school?

Chairman Bullock – It is on their website.

Selectman Sadak – There are not many people who attend those and often there are more Raymond people than Windham.

Mr Walker – It is the same type of situation as we have with the County.

Select Chair Bruno – You will get a similar presentation from the School Board.

Chairman Bullock – I did run some preliminary numbers based on the school budget and based on the ED279 that comes out. We are looking at about \$10.2 to the school system this year based on 6.6%, which is going to put our mill rate in the 12.8 range. Sorry to be the bearer of bad news. Those are my first numbers.

Select Chair Bruno – Hopefully they will actually scrutinize their budget.

6) Public Comments

Town Manager Willard – I would like to thank our new Finance Director for a job well done on her first try through.

Leigh Walker – I would like to thank you for your support of the Library. I know it has been a rocky road over the past couple of years. I am glad I was here to hear that you want the 990s and the absolute details and I am happy to give you whatever you need. Thank you very much.

7) Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 8:33pm by Mr Gosselin. Seconded by Mr Richards.
Unanimously approve.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan L Look
Town Clerk