



**Budget-Finance Committee
Minutes**

January 23, 2018, at 6:00pm

Broadcast Studio

423 Webbs Mills Road

Committee Members Present: Marshall Bullock, Robert Gosselin, Brian Walker, Brien Richards, Debra Duchaine, Diana Picavet, Dana DesJardins, Barry Moores

Committee Members Absent: none

Board of Selectmen Present: none

Town Staff Present:

Don Willard – Town Manager
Cathy Ricker – Finance Director
Sue Look – Town Clerk

1. Called to order at 6:00pm by Chairman Bullock

2. Approval of Minutes
 - a) April 18, 2017
Motion to approve as amended by Mr Walker. Seconded by Mr Moores. Mr DesJardins recused himself due to not being present for the meeting in question.
Mr Gosselin did not arrive until “New Business”
6 voted to approve, 1 recused and 1 absent. Motion carried.

 - b) November 9, 2017
Motion to approve as presented by Mr Walker. Seconded by Mr Moores.
Unanimously approved.

3. New Business
 - a) Review of Auditor’s Reports
No questions.

b) Review of the FYE 2017 General Ledger Accounts

It is formatted differently than in years past. Blue is positive and red is negative making them easy to read. The budget will be in this format this year.
No questions.

c) Review of the 12/31/2017 GL Reports

Mr Walker – I have about 6 points that I will be looking for as the Town comes with a budget. The first is under General Revenue. I would like to get a projection of where they think year end surplus or deficit might be. It seems like we are running a fairly decent surplus right now. I would also like to see what the surplus or deficit for 2 accounts would be for 2017-18 – employee benefits and insurance.

Chairman Bullock – You are looking for these to come forth during the budget process?

Mr Walker – Yes.

Chairman Bullock – I am wondering if you could hold these until we see if there are any comments on the 12/31/2017 GL Reports.

Mr Walker – I took these questions from those reports but can certainly hold off.

Chairman Bullock – Here is 1 piece of “low hanging fruit” that I thought somebody might pick up on. There was a \$77,500 overage in Miscellaneous Income. That was the sale of the easement to CMP for the Patricia Avenue property.

Town Manager Willard – There will be a bit more coming in from this sale. We still have a significant piece of property up there.

Chairman Bullock – The other one is that there is a \$5,000 entry for blue parking fees in the income section.

Finance Director Ricker – It is payment in lieu of taxes, not parking.

Town Manager Willard – This is from a non-profit, Jordan Bay Place on Levy Lane, that is not required to pay taxes, but does anyway. They feel that their residents use the Public Safety services in particular and should pay some.

The whole committee requested a copy of all meeting documents printed and hole punched.

Mr Walker – There is \$12,000 in the budget for sign donation from the Fire Department Foundation from last year's fundraising.

Finance Director Ricker – I just billed it.

Mr Walker – On snowmobile reimbursement, I was surprised to see that there wasn't any revenue yet.

Finance Director Ricker – It came in January.

Chairman Bullock – The only other one I wanted to comment on was the General Government Town Hall contract that is already \$2,000 over budget. I believe that was an omission in the budget process last year.

Finance Director Ricker – It is for Cleaning Services. In the past it was in Public Works and I wanted to move it to where it belonged. The negative will remind us to budget for it for the coming year.

Town Manager Willard – While we are on the Town Office, we had some significant damage during the October 2017 wind storm. There will be revenue from insurance and there may well be monies from a FEMA claim. The tower is gone and I hope to move the tower to the school.

Mr Walker – Account 6000 – Fire Department, we haven't paid any money to dispatch services yet.

Finance Director Ricker – We pay that annually.

Mr Walker – When we pay the Cumberland County Tax are required to make a single payment at the beginning of the year?

Finance Director Ricker – The County is on a calendar year. We always pay it at the end of October, which is as late as we can.

Town Manager Willard – I am sure there are towns that pay it the minute it is assessed, but we have not done that.

Mr Walker – Account 5500 – Technology, there have been a lot of changes to the sub-accounts over the past few years which makes it more difficult to track year-to-year changes. I hope we are close to being dialed in on those sub-accounts and keep them more consistent. We are showing large overages in contract fees and services in both Public Works and Town Hall. Is this an opportunistic utilization of outside providers or is this a shift in the way we are spending monies and strategies? I am going to be looking for what the contractors are doing and the names of the contractors we are using. I am

hoping that all non-governmental organizations that are receiving funds from the Town will continue to provide clarity on the value they bring to Town residents and sufficient financials to support our understanding of their budget and how we fit in to what they do. We have amazing people doing wonderful work and I want to make sure that we understand how they see the value they provide to the Town residents and why the Town should be supporting them. The ones I had written down are the Hawthorne House, the Library, the Vitalization Committee, RWPA, Raymond Rec, Raymond Rattlers, any of the groups that are non-governmental entities that are getting support.

Mr Richards – For those of us who prepaid our taxes, will the Town issue refunds?

Town Manager Willard – We have no plan to issue refunds. That is why we prefaced all the inquiries on this subject with “use your best judgement” and “contact your own tax accountant”. We are authorized to accept prepayments.

Finance Director Ricker – We have not had anyone request one. We took in about \$500,000.

d) Review of Proposed Ordinance Changes

Chairman Bullock – I hope that we all have copies of that. The Budget-Finance Committee was created in 1980 and it was authorized by the Town and at that time had a charge and an ordinance. In 1995 was the last and only revision to the ordinance. The ordinance is how we are going to legally operate this committee. In January of 2017 I had it on the agenda for this committee to go over. Last Fall, you (*Town Clerk Look*) and I coordinated and came up with some technical terms and made a preliminary revision which was sent out to the committee members. I had one person come back with a couple of comments. On January 4th I sent out a copy of the revised ordinance change, and then mentioned that I was going to take that to the Selectmen on the 9th of January for discussion, not for a vote. The reason for that is if we are going to entertain changes, then I need to keep the ball rolling because there is a deadline in April to print the Town Warrant. We need to address any changes in the next 30 days, so it can go to Public Hearing at the March Selectmen’s Meeting. As far as I know I think there is only 1 bone of contention on this.

Proposed Changes:

- The first change is removing the Chair of the School Board as ex officio. This door was always open, but the Chair did not attend any meetings. Since we no longer review the School Budget, this seat is not necessary.

- We would also like to add the provision for electing a vice-chairman. We have done that for the last 5 years, as do other committees. This is an attempt to align our processes with other committees in Town.
- Another one is dropping the membership from 9 to 7. We currently have 9 seats, 1 if vacant. My thinking on that is we do not need those extra 2 people because we no longer review the school system. As I said to the Selectmen, Board Members are supposed to be fingers of the community. We don't need our fingers in the school system anymore. If everyone here wants to run for re-election, fine. Everyone has a seat. Once someone decides not to run, attrition takes over and we will go down to 7.
- We need to address the gender language in the document.
- We need to add language to address Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest.
- The last one is to give the Selectmen the ability to fill a vacancy by appointment until the next election.

There is one change that I am not recommending and that is "5 to carry". The wording of the document says that a majority of "voters," which in this case is 8, it takes 5 votes to carry or deny a motion. That has nothing to do with who is in attendance. If there is a quorum present of 5 voters and 3 vote in the affirmative, the vote does not carry because our ordinance says it is the number of voters on the committee.

Mr Walker – I would like to start by trying to understand why you think this is a better option than a simple majority.

Chairman Bullock – I think for 3 reasons. 1 is we need to have as many positive or negative votes on an issue as possible. I would not want a \$1,000,000 or \$3,000,000 bond passed by 3 people. To me this puts us in a dangerous position. I have been involved in several situations, and I have not seen it happen here, where you get strategic absences. People don't show up so they don't have to vote. The third thing is, Roberts Rules Article 8 §48 allows us to set a rule, and as long as it is reasonable and as long as we follow it, then that is the rule. I will site 2 examples:

1. It takes 2/3rds majority to override a veto. That is an exception to the simple majority.
2. In the US Senate it takes 60 votes for an appropriations bill. This is another example of where that rule applies.

I think as a voting committee dealing with the Town of Raymond finances and all its millions, we have the responsibility to make sure that as many people are in agreement as possible.

Mr Walker – There are 2 main reasons why I have concern with “5 to carry”:

1. I think there is a real value in having consistency across elected organizations within the Town of Raymond. I don't think that having different rules for different organizations makes a lot of sense in terms of the general public understanding and I don't believe that the points you have made are sufficient enough to override that concern. The Bylaws of the Board of Selectmen are pretty simple. A quorum is a majority of the board and any action by the Board shall require the affirmative vote of the attending membership, not less than 3 members. That language to me, if were to just pull that and put it in ours, adjusted for a 7-member committee instead of 5, makes sense to me because now we are working with the same rule.
2. I do believe that the democratic principle of majority rules is a pretty important one. If you take this year with our 8 members, and it will take “5 to carry” this year, to me it is possible where there could be a situation with 5 people in attendance, and we have a 4 to 1 in favor, and the item would not carry. That to me is so overwhelmingly being in favor of it, you actually have given a single person the ability to essentially veto. I think that is horribly dangerous.

To address your concerns, if people are doing “strategic absences”, then I think we have a different issue. To deal with it the way our ordinance is written is the incorrect way of dealing with it.

Mr Gosselin – I am assuming that the majority number would change in the event that we have a member recuse himself from voting. Last year there were 4 that I recused from.

Mr Walker – Not the way it is written.

Chairman Bullock – There are a couple that I recuse from and some that others should recuse from. That eliminates a voter right there and that is a problem.

Mr Walker – We live in a small town and there is a lot of volunteerism going on. I am a big believer that we want to do as little as possible to dissuade people from serving in both elected and appointed roles.

Chairman Bullock – I am going to come back to you on 2 issues, that one being number one. If you are on this board, then you ran for election and you should do as best you can to come to the meetings.

Mr Walker – I couldn't agree with you more.

Chairman Bullock – As far as consistency with the Select Board, the Planning

Board, and us, I agree with it to a point. The point stops where the dollar starts. Since we are dealing with money, then we need to have as many people agree with it as possible.

Mr DesJardins – I am going back to when you recuse yourself. This is my opinion. If there is any money involved in your decision making, then I really, truly believe that you shouldn't be on this committee or the Select Board. If there is conflicts of interest where you have people making money or their spouse is making money, then that should be in the ordinance.

Chairman Bullock – It kind of is in the ordinance.

Mr DesJardins – We have several members on both Boards that have conflicts of interest and, in my opinion, that is not right.

Chairman Bullock – But it goes back to Brian's comment that this is a small town.

Mr DesJardins – It is a small town, but it still doesn't have to be corrupt.

Mr Moores – I think, Dana, if you are calling it corrupt, if the person recuses themselves from a particular vote, it alleviates any type of problem.

Mr DesJardins – Yeah, but then at the end of the meeting, Barry, at the end of budget season I have watched meetings, I have seen people recuse themselves and at the end of the budget process they all do this (*Mr DesJardins raised his hand*).

Mr Moores – That is right because they are a citizen of the Town of Raymond and they have the same right as you and I have.

Mr DesJardins – Exactly, but to have people on the Board that have relatives that work for the Town, I have a problem with that. I refused work when I was on the Selectmen Board because it didn't seem right to me to do. There were other electricians, Bennett, etc., I just didn't feel it was the right thing for me to do. Even during the ice storm. I helped the school out and I didn't charge them because I couldn't do it because I have... those were my ways of thinking of it. That is the only comment I have, thank you.

Chairman Bullock – It is a good one, Dana. Thank you very much. Does everyone agree with the proposed changes with the exception of the voting. (*There was much head nodding.*) Brian would you send me your suggested change via email?

Mr Walker – Sure.

Chairman Bullock – If anyone else wants to pipe in with an opinion, please. My intent would be, keeping the timeframe in mind, is that our next meeting would be February 27th which is what I call the Cost Center presentations. I am reserving the right to shuffle the presentations, I am not sure who is going to go up first, don't take how it is written as verbatim. My intent would be that once those presentations are done to excuse everybody who is non-voting on Budget-Finance and we will vote on this issue. It will be an up or down vote. I am not changing what is existing, you are recommending a change.

Mr Walker – OK.

Chairman Bullock – Does that sound OK with everybody?

Mr Gosselin – I don't think we vote at this meeting, do we?

Chairman Bullock – When we have this workshop, after the presentations, I will close that part of the meeting and then we will open it up to vote.

Mr Walker – So, will we be voting for your proposed...?

Chairman Bullock – My proposal is to do nothing with that paragraph, you are the one recommending making a change. You are the one who would make the motion.

Mr Walker – I would make the motion and I would need to get 5 votes to do that?

Chairman Bullock – Right.

Mr Walker – So you would make a motion for the other changes and then I would make a motion to change the voting?

Chairman Bullock – Yes, we could do it that way. Yours would be an amendment to my motion.

Mr Walker – So you would need to get 5 votes and then if that doesn't go then I would get a chance at it.

Chairman Bullock – Fine. Whatever way you want to approach this. If neither is carried then the ordinance stands as it is.

All members of the committee requested that they receive the budget in paper copy.

Mr Gosselin – Whose terms are up this year?

Town Clerk Look:

- 2018 – Deb Duchanie, Brien Richards, and Robert Gosselin
- 2019 – Brian Walker, Diana Picavet, and Barry Moores
- 2020 – Marshall Bullock, Dana DesJardins, and the vacant seat

4. Budget-Finance Committee Comment

Mr Walker – I appreciate how you received my comments and I appreciate your Chairmanship.

Chairman Bullock – I am just trying to do my best for the Town of Raymond.

Mr DesJardins – Thank you, Marshall.

Chairman Bullock – Thank you, Dana.

5. Public Comment

6. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 6:40pm by Mr Gosselin. Seconded by Mr Richards.
Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

*Susan L Look
Town Clerk*