

TOWN OF RAYMOND
Selectmen's Workshop Minutes
Thursday, February 14, 2002

Attendance: Mark Acker, Chairman; Ada Brown; Charles Leavitt; Dana Desjardins; Betty McDermott; Elizabeth Algeo and John Rand, Raymond Conservation Commission; Kevin Woodbrey and Laurie Forbes, Technology Committee; Nathan White, Road Commissioner; Elizabeth Cummings, Treasurer; Denis Morse, Fire Chief; and Don Willard, Town Manager.

Call to order. Mark Acker called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm at the Town Office.

2002-2003 Town Budget Discussion.

DISCUSSION: Don Willard introduced the budget and thanked Elizabeth Cummings, Louise Lester and the Department Heads for their help in preparing the budget. He said that as the budget stands now the increase will be 2% over last year and there is expected to be a 1% increase in revenues.

#0100 Administration – no change.

#0125 Assessing – no change

DISCUSSION: Mr. Willard indicated that this amount would be the first payment of four in four years to pay for a revaluation of the Town. He suggested that once the budget is in force, then the Town should take a short term bond in order to go ahead with the work to get it on line and then pay the bond back over the three years. Chief Morse asked if the Comprehensive Plan survey could also include a question about seasonal conversion i.e. how many have been done and how many will be done in the next 10 years.

#0200 Town Office – no change

#0400 Insurance – no change

DISCUSSION: Mr. Acker felt that the level of employee benefit insurance should stay the same and not offer family coverage. Mr. Leavitt felt that by offering 100% coverage for employees but not family coverage, it keeps all employees on a level plain without an employee who gets family coverage at a financial advantage. He thought that benefit equity is best achieved through salaries and not medical benefits.

In talking about #1600 Rescue Billing Service it was decided that this didn't belong under Fire Department and possibly not insurance because it was a fee paid in order to get revenues. It was mentioned that it might be better situated under #0100 Administration as "third party billing contract".

#0500 General Assistance – no change

#0550 Technology Department – TBA

DISCUSSION: It was decided to discuss this further in possibly looking for more direction toward personnel to operate the equipment before investing major funds into purchasing more technology. Kevin Woodbrey said that more personnel was important but in order for the Town to move ahead with live broadcasting of meetings etc this investment would have to be accomplished along with the \$48,000 funds from the Time Warner contract. He said the major expense was for the equipment to be able to automatically play a schedule of programming instead of depending on a person to play the tapes. Betty McDermott and Ada Brown expressed the need to go ahead with this technology to make the Town's meetings available to everyone. Mr. Rand wondered if the Comprehensive Plan survey might not have questions in it concerning what the Town wanted for cable/video programming. Dana Desjardins also wanted to be sure that the school would have the personnel to teach this type of technology. Mr. Leavitt asked if there could be an alternate plan for this item by their next meeting.

DISCUSSION: It was resolved that even if the Selectmen didn't have the entire budget decided it should be sent to the Budget/Finance Committee with that notation.

#0575 Community Development and Services – on change

DISCUSSION: Under #1300 Milfoil Mr. Rand said that their total program cost would be about \$16,000 with the towns of Casco and Raymond contributing along with possible funds and materials from the Portland Water District.

Under #1200 Raymond Open Space Reserve Fund Mrs. Algeo said that having some funds available to show the State that Raymond is ready for land purchase for preservation was important. This would give the Town bargaining power since it would be immediately available without having to go out to look for money. Mr. Leavitt felt that this is a valuable initiative to purchase open land for the future. Mr. Acker disagreed feeling that money

should be raised for a project and not kept in trust by a Town just waiting for an opportunity.

#0600 Fire Department – no change

DISCUSSION: Chief Morse indicated that another paramedic was necessary and eventually he would like to have a paid paramedic on staff 24 hours for 7 days a week. Mr. Willard said that they were looking toward the other towns for more revenue because of the number of calls made to Casco and Frye Island. Mr. Leavitt added that the cost of those runs especially to Frye Island are in the peak season and should be more expensive than the rest of the year. Chief Morse also said that when the new Public Safety Building is functioning the old District One building would be closed.

#0650 Dispatch – no change

#0700 Emergency Management - no change

#0750 Animal Control – no change

#0775 Street Lights – no change

#0800 Public Works – no change

DISCUSSION: The addition of two new positions was determined to be necessary to be able to complete work needed. Mr. Willard said that some of the routes being done by P&K Sand & Gravel for winter road plowing at extra cost over the contract would be taken back by Public Works.

#0900 Solid Waste – no change

DISCUSSION: The high cost of hazardous waste day was decided to be a necessary event. John Rand and Elizabeth Algeo said that even though the price is high it's better than the possible alternative of having it get into the environment.

#1250 Parks – no change

#1200 Cemeteries – no change

#1300 Unclassified – no change

#1500 Capital Improvements – no change

#1400 County Tax – no change

Non-Property Tax Revenues - TBA

DISCUSSION: The Selectmen decided to discuss further whether they should include surplus funds in this account. Mr. Acker felt that the total should be raised through taxes and the surplus left in its account. Mrs. Cummings said that the auditor recommended having \$2.2 million in the fund balance. Mr. Acker felt that the tax rate should indicate what the Town is actually spending and not cushioning it with surplus. He felt that specific purchases should be made from surplus for one-time requests if absolutely necessary.

ADJOURNED: Mark Acker adjourned the meeting at 9:44 pm.

Louise H. Lester
Town Clerk