

# TOWN OF BENNINGTON

## BUDGET COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting – November 6, 2007

Moderator John J. Cronin, III appointed the following individuals to the 2008 Budget Committee: Melissa Clark, Harvey Goodwin, Lucien Lizotte, Brent Paradis and Debra Whitney.

Present were Harvey Goodwin, Lucien Lizotte and Debra Whitney, as well as Administrator Denise French. A motion was made, seconded and voted to appoint Harvey Goodwin, Chairman of the Budget Committee.

The 2008 Budget Worksheets were void of proposed salaries. Prior to the submission of proposed Budgets the Selectmen and the Budget Committee jointly requested that 2008 Budgets not exceed a 3% increase.

The following Budgets were reviewed and accepted, unless otherwise noted:

Executive Office = \$23,000

The 2008 Budget request is \$400 higher than last year and is a result of a \$400 increase to the computer line-item. Software support has increased.

Election & Registration = \$5,075

The Election portion of the 2008 Budget is \$1,125 higher than last year. The 2007 Budget allowed for one election; there are four election dates in 2008.

The Registration portion of the 2008 Budget is \$100 higher than last year due to increased dues and office supplies.

Financial Administration = \$15,690 **TABLED**

The proposed Financial Administration Budget represents a net increase of \$1,020. Auditing Services are projected to cost \$9,500; Assessing was reduced by \$500.

The Budget Committee question if the Town should seek bids for the 2007 Audit of the Town's financial records.

Trustees of Trust Funds = \$325

The 2008 Budget remains unchanged from last year.

Judicial & Legal Expense = \$11,750 **TABLED**

The 2008 Budget for general legal support, defense proceedings and legal claims remains the same at \$10,000 cumulatively. The Budget Committee unanimously voted to extract the \$1,750 legal line-item within the ZBA Budget and move the money into this category.

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Personnel Administration = not submitted as of this date.

Planning & Zoning = \$4,300

The Planning Board portion of the 2008 Budget decreased \$400.

The Zoning Board of Adjustment portion of the 2008 Budget decreased \$1,250.

This net decrease is a result of removing the \$1,750 legal line-item and adding \$500 to the miscellaneous line-item.

General Government Buildings = \$17,300

The 2008 Budget decreased \$500. The \$500 line-item for tax-deeded property was eliminated.

Cemeteries = \$5,750

The 2008 Budget increased \$1,200. The grounds keeping line-items were adjusted in total by \$200 to adequately reflect the true contract price. Initially the Trustees requested \$1,000 for tree removal under “Expansion & Safety Budget”, along with \$1,525 for surveying 25 new lots. The Budget Committee voted to increase the stone/tree/maintenance line-item by \$1,000 and to request the surveying funds through a Warrant Article.

Property/Liability/Bond Insurance = \$19,500 **TABLED**

The annual insurance premium is estimated to be \$17,500. The remaining \$2,000 is funding for the insurance deductible coverage line-item.

Contingency Fund = \$4,100 **TABLED**

The Budget Committee will review the actual 2007 expenditures later in December.

Police Department = \$60,022 **TABLED**

The proposed Budget is \$6,840 higher than last year. The 2008 proposed increase in cost for the Regional Prosecutor is \$6,959. At the Selectmen’s direction the Chief included \$2,500 in the Police Department Budget for expansion of the evidence room. Also included is \$2,000 for the delayed purchase of imaging software.

The Police Chief is scheduled to meet with the Budget Committee November 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

Ambulance = \$8,240 **TABLED**

Fire Department = \$51,850 **TABLED**

At a glance, the 2008 Budget appears to be \$2,793 lower than last year. However, funding of \$8,147 for radio lease and \$5,000 for a computer and software were included in the overall 2007 Budget but not funded in 2008. Adjusting these items for comparison purposes would indicate a 2008 Budget increase of \$10,354.

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The Fire Chief is scheduled to meet with the Budget Committee November 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m.

Medical/Rescue = \$9,000 **TABLED**

The proposed Budget is \$2,700 higher than last year, even though only \$1,007 has been spent the first nine months of 2007.

The Fire Chief is scheduled to meet with the Budget Committee November 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m.

Building Inspection = \$1,000

The proposed Budget is \$500 less than last year and results from a reduction of \$500 in the books and education line-item.

At the suggestion of the Town Administrator, the Budget Committee will recommend renaming this budget to “Code Enforcement” which would encompass additional duties.

Emergency Management = \$4,250 **TABLED**

The 2008 proposed Budget is a new Budget. Funding for the purchase of safety supplies, i.e. cautionary road signs, road cones, etc. and mileage reimbursement is included in this Budget.

The Police Chief is also the Emergency Management Director. He is scheduled to meet with the Budget Committee November 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

General Highway Department = \$23,900

The 2008 proposed Budget submitted by the Road Agent was unchanged from last year. The Budget Committee added 3% (\$700) to the gasoline/oil line-item.

Highway & Streets = \$137,000

The 2008 proposed Budget submitted by the Road Agent was unchanged from last year. The Administrator reported she added 3% (\$4,000) to the tar/patch/seal line-item.

Street Lighting = \$7,000

The 2008 Budget is unchanged from last year.

Transfer Station = \$64,450

The 2008 Budget is \$1,450 higher than last year because of increased costs for disposing of Household Hazardous Waste and costs incurred from the newly mandated Electronic Recycling.

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The Administrator reported that the Town's contract for hauling and disposal expires in December. The contract renewal cost is unknown and this line-item is currently funded at the old contract rate.

Water Department = \$51,350

The 2008 Budget is \$1,600 higher. Line-items for the Town of Antrim and line repair/maintenance were both increased by \$1,000; pump house heat decreased by \$500.

Sewer Department = \$34,600

The 2008 Budget is \$1,500 higher. A \$1,000 increase is attributed to the Town of Antrim line-item; \$500 was added to the electricity line-item.

Health Department = \$150

The 2008 Budget is unchanged from last year.

Animal Control = \$550

The 2008 Budget is \$100 higher. The increase is for costs to shelter stray animals.

Health Agencies = \$5,881

The 2008 Budget is \$81 higher. The increase is for the annual appropriation to Monadnock Family Services.

Welfare Department = \$13,055

The 2008 Budget is \$350 lower than last year and is a net result of jockeying funds for various line-items.

Parks & Recreation = \$20,000

The 2008 Budget is unchanged from last year only because the Budget was not submitted.

Library = \$36,950

The 2008 Budget is \$630 higher. Costs for book collection and the photo copier increased while the cost for circulation and office decreased.

Patriotic Purposes = \$1,000

The 2008 Budget is unchanged from last year.

Education = \$1,464

The 2008 Budget is unchanged from last year.

Conservation Commission = \$1,675

The 2008 Budget is unchanged from last year.

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Principal – Long Term Notes = \$21,750

The 2008 Budget is unchanged from last year.

Interest – Long Term Notes = \$4,247

The 2008 Budget is \$1,165 lower.

Tax Anticipation Notes = \$3,000

The 2008 Budget is unchanged from last year. The Administrator cautioned that additional funds might be spent in 2008 to compensate for fronting expenses for the TEP project while awaiting 80% reimbursement from the Grant.

Capital Reserve Funds – not submitted as of this date.

2008 Warrant Articles – \$1,525

Cemetery Survey

The Administrator submitted written requests from the following agencies:

The Grapevine - \$3,000 (third year funds requested); Budget Committee approved.

Child Advocacy Center - \$1,000; Budget Committee declined.

The Samaritans, Inc. - \$250; Budget Committee declined.

American Red Cross - \$677; Budget Committee approved adding the funding to the newly created Emergency Management Budget. Inclusion of this item in the EM Budget is postponed until the Budget Committee meets with EM Director Steve Campbell.

An informal discussion followed regarding the anticipated request from The Grapevine for \$1,000 funding towards the newly established Teen Center in Antrim. The Budget Committee suggested tabling funding consideration until the Teen Center building has been approved for occupancy.

The Budget Committee voted to meet November 27, 2007 with the Police Chief and the Fire Chief.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Denise French  
Town Administrator