

September 23, 2015

Notes of the Budget Workshop held Wednesday, September 23, 2015, at 4:00 PM, at the Keene Town Hall. The following Town Board Members were present: William B. Ferebee, Supervisor, Paul R. Martin, Robert M. Biesemeyer, Michael J. Buysse and Jerry D. Smith, Members of Council. Also present were: Susan Whitney, Clerk to the Supervisor/Data Processer and Ellen Estes, Town Clerk.

The Chairman, Mr. Ferebee, called the workshop to order and said he was going to review and discuss the numbers in the budget with the Town Board line by line.

Starting at the beginning he said the Town Board shows no increase in salaries saying the two estimates returned did not show increases.

Next in the Justice budget, he said the salary shows a 3% increase.

At this time, the Board discussed and agreed to a 3% increase across the board.

Mr. Ferebee said that his position shows the \$10,000 he was asking for.

Mr. Biesemeyer suggested continuing to go through this draft of the budget line by line.

Mr. Ferebee pointed out that the Assessor's budget had been increased to show the \$4,000 for help with the 2016 revaluation.

The Board discussed the \$500 for lifeflight.

The Board discussed what could be done to bring down the amount needed for street lighting. There was discussion about eliminating some of the street lights in the outlying areas of Town.

When discussing the Highway Garage section, Mr. Smith said he would like to see money in the budget to have the garage floor sealed saying that the salt is eating away at the floor.

Mr. Ferebee said he would talk to Mr. Manley about checking into the process and try to have the men take care of it.

Mr. Buysse said he thinks there is an issue with the windows.

Mr. Ferebee said that he anticipated this repair with the extra \$5,000 put into the contractual expense line.

The next discussion was in regards to the sidewalks from the school to the back corner of Market Street.

Mr. Ferebee said he has looked into grants but there are none for sidewalks.

The next discussion was in regards to recent tree cutting.

Mr. Martin said there are more trees that need to be cut at the Veterans Memorial.

Mr. Ferebee said the girls could take those down.

Mr. Ferebee said the Youth Commission Contractual for the summer program has been raised a little. Ms. Whitney said this was not increased when the extra hour or when the extra week was added and the old amount was no longer enough.

Mr. Ferebee said that \$30,000 has been deducted from the transfer station budget saying the personal service had been cut \$10,000 by removing money for a second person in the summer and because the attendants were hired at a lower rate of pay.

He also said that the zero-sort is not costing as much as was prepared for so that item has been reduced \$20,000.

Mr. Ferebee said that due to losing some of our retirees, the Medicare Supplement had been reduced.

Mr. Ferebee said there wasn't much change to the revenues for the General Fund on page 8.

The next discussion was in regards to the Highway Budget.

On Mr. Manley's worksheet he had requested \$25,000 be added to his budget for a new mower to mow the road sides.

After moving around the numbers to the appropriate lines, the Board cut \$20,000 from the contractual line in General Repairs. This amount was \$75,000 in the 2015 budget with \$20,018 used as of August 31st.

The amount this reduction would change the budget percentage was discussed.

The equipment line was raised from \$58,760 to \$83,760 to allow for the requested tractor and make the 4th and final payment on the tandem.

Ms. Whitney said that under Highway Employee Benefits the obligation for the Early Incentive Payment has been finished saying this payment is gone.

The Board looked over the Library Budget, Mr. Ferebee said other than the 3% salary increases there isn't much change.

He said the same for the Water Districts, though he said they still need a little tweaking.

Mr. Buysse asked if there was any paperwork that needed to be filed in case the budget goes over the 2% tax cap.

Mr. Ferebee said that wasn't going to be necessary.

When asked about a new piece of equipment for plowing the sidewalks, Mr. Ferebee said he could pull together \$10,000 in the 2015 budget.

Mr. Biesemeyer said the Board needed to discuss the \$10,000 raise the Supervisor had requested saying he doesn't want to see it left in the budget.

Mr. Buysse asked him what he would like to see.

There was discussion regarding Mr. Politi's salary in North Elba being split between Supervisor and Budget Officer.

Mr. Martin said he would like to see the Board unanimously give Mr. Ferebee a \$7,500 increase.

Mr. Biesemeyer said he would not go along with that, he said the position and salary is posted.

Mr. Ferebee said that precedent had been set when the Tax Collector was given an increase.

Mr. Buysse said the salary between Supervisors should be kept competitive with other Towns.

The Board discussed where the Town of Keene falls on that scale with Mr. Biesemeyer saying he felt it was in with the majority of the Towns falling between \$22,000 and \$32,000.

Mr. Martin asked Mr. Biesemeyer if he would go along with a \$5,000 increase.

Mr. Smith said he thought giving a \$5,000 increase this year and a \$5,000 next year would make the people complain.

Mr. Biesemeyer suggested raising the Supervisor's salary to \$30,000 and appointing Mr.

Ferebee as Budget Officer for \$3,000.

Discussion continued and the amounts finally agreed upon unanimously were \$30,820 as the Supervisor's salary and \$3,000 for Budget Officer.

The Board discussed their interest in how to go about lowering salaries when new people start jobs.

Mr. Biesemeyer said this should be based on experience.

The Board discussed the State's 2% tax cap.

Mr. Biesemeyer said he would like to see no increase in the budget.

Mr. Ferebee did not agree with him.

With all business on the budget completed for tonight, the meeting was adjourned at 5:19 PM.

Ellen S. Estes, Town Clerk
September 24, 2015

William B. Ferebee, Supervisor
Paul R. Martin, Councilman
Robert M. Biesemeyer, Councilman
Michael J. Buysse, Councilman
Jerry D. Smith, Councilman