TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Budget Meeting Minutes

January 15, 2014

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom Steketee, John Adams

OTHERS PRESENT: Bob Palifka, Paul Carriero, Ruth Hook & Tom Thomson (Budget Advisory Committee), Ann Green, Sheri Clifford (Town Administrator), Terry Straight, Arthur Dennis (Fire Department), Tim Cole, Ann Green

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 pm.

Steketee explained that Board member Cooley was ill and therefore the discussion on wages would be discussed at a future meeting. He suggested that the Board and Budget Advisory Committee review warrant articles 3 through 9 as they pertain to the budget.

Palifka asked the Boards plan for following years with regards to the capital reserve fund, especially the police cruiser and fire truck, which would fall short of funds. Adams explained that the police cruise would be moved back to a seven-year replacement as it will not be used consistently for almost a year and that should take care of any shortfall.

Palifka stated that there should be a warrant article to expend $7,500 from the town buildings capital reserve fund to account for improvements to the town office and free library. The Board agreed and Clifford will draft the warrant article.

The warrant article on hazardous waste was increased due to being offered at a neighboring town rather than having to travel to West Lebanon. Carriero suggested having a breakdown of costs available at town meeting.

Carriero asked, with regards to warrant article 10 regarding the Board appointing the fire chief, what policies the Board will adopt for the fire chief to hire volunteers. Steketee said that there would be a job description to address the chief’s responsibilities. Also discussed was drafting a wage scale for the fire department. Thomson stated that if the Board is requesting a significant change there should be a specific policy showing why.

Hook asked if the warrant article passes and the Board appoints a fire chief, which causes the fire association to say enough, does the Board have a back-up plan to for a fire department. Steketee stated that applications would be requested and a decision would be based on qualifications.

Thomson asked if the hours and mileage reports for the highway department and police department could be made available at the beginning of the budget process. The Board agreed that this could be done.

Palifka asked when the Board would determine employee wages. The Budget Advisory Committee is meeting January 22, 2014 to draft a report and these figures would be helpful. Steketee stated that he would like the Board to meet January 20th or before to determine wages.

Palifka asked why there was not a warrant article for a fire truck. Adams explained that there were no details or cost estimate submitted with regards to a new fire truck. Not knowing the requirements it is not possible to draft a warrant article to present to the public. Adams said that following the budget process the Board will generate a committee to assist with the development of specifications for a fire truck, submit a warrant article next year and closely follow the purchasing policy.

Carriero asked about the snow plowing ordinance and what happens if a resident puts snow on a seasonal road that causes damage in the spring. Adams stated that any damaged caused to a town road, the person responsible is also responsible for the repairs. Thomson felt that this was not a problem and the warrant article was not necessary.

Thomson expressed his displeasure that information regarding employee wages and healthcare was discussed last minute. Hook felt that employees should only be offered insurance for themselves; if they wanted a two-person for family plan they should pay the difference for the insurance. Carriero felt that employees should be offered a comprehensive package to ensure attracting and keeping qualified employees.

Article 12 was discussed and determined that wording needs to be more specific. Article 13 was questioned and the Board stated that appointing a Tax Collector would have the Town the opportunity to have a qualified person hold that position and that the State was also discussing changing Town Clerks to appointed for the same reason.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,