

Approved

**Town of Brentwood
Budget Hearing
Minutes of January 14, 2013**

Present: Elyse Seeley (Chair), Bill Faria, Malcolm Allison, John Lyon, Bob Mantegari, Dianne Vosgien (School Board Representative), Ken Christiansen (Selectmen Rep).

Absent: (excused) Krista Steger

Visitors: Crystal Buswell, Mike Morgan, Ron Kew, Bruce Stevens, Jane Byrne, Liz Faria, Doug Cowie, Kevin Lemoine, Brian West.

Chairperson Elyse Seeley called the hearing to order at 7:00 pm. All stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance..

1. This is an official and duly noticed hearing on the Brentwood, NH Town and Swasey Central School budgets.

Town Budget:

2. There is a difference of \$5, 575.00 between the recommendations of the Budget Committee and the Board of Selectmen (BOS) and it is in the Mary E. Bartlett Library budget proposal. The Library requested additional money to expand hours. Budcom suggested the library present their proposal at town meeting and explain the costs involved to the taxpayers including expected long term increases, i.e. salary, retirement etc. rather than survey just library patrons. The difference represents approximately a \$.01 cent increase per \$1000.00 of assessed value.
3. You will find an increase in personnel wages across the board. Budcom agreed with Selectmen's approval of a 2% COLA and approved merit increases based on personnel reviews. The BOS did not take an increase and the Town Clerk/Tax Collector did not take the COLA but rather took a merit raise instead. There were few merit raises, all based on performance and recommendations of Department Heads. A question was asked to explain the difference and whether someone could get both. Merit raises usually involve a step increase in grade and the COLA was suggested at 2% total, and an employee could get both. Merit raises have been on hold the last three years for town employees, with the exception of the Recreation Director.
4. Town Warrant Articles were reviewed. A proposed Warrant Article to replace the Crawley Falls bridge (\$165,000) will be withdrawn due to a change from the DOT and NH DRA: we are not authorized to go out for bids until after July of 2013 at the earliest. The Budget Committee will most likely recommend that money go into a Capital Reserve Fund in any case to prepare for the cost next year. BOS have not discussed this warrant but Jane Byrne advised that this should be a separate warrant from the current Capital Reserve for bridge repairs since we know this will be a bridge replacement and not a repair. Also, we expect that DOT will fund 80% of this repair and the work will not be done until 2014. Budcom will meet after BOS discusses, recommends and votes on this issue. We expect to recommend up to \$75,000.00 to be appropriated for the purpose of this bridge replacement.
5. There are two Fire Association Warrant Articles related to donating money to the town: one is for 90K to go towards Fire Department vehicles, and the other is for 39K. The second specifically asks to accept a donation of \$39,000.00 from the sale of the old fire house from the Fire Association to purchase a Cascade Oxygen machine (to fill oxygen tanks). This does

not include about a \$500.00 per year maintenance cost which will be part of the FD operating budget beginning in 2014. Kevin thinks the FD plans to purchase a new ladder truck in 2014.

6. Warrant Articles are down \$12,831.00 from last year's requests. Though these will change slightly with the change on the bridge replacement WA, as of now Budcom's recommendations are up \$94,696.00 (2.9%) and the Selectmen's number is \$100,271.00 (up 3.08%), the difference being the library increase of \$5,575.00. There was a question regarding what hours the Library wanted to add.

School Budget:

7. Swasey School came in with a budget reduction of .23% due to enrollment reductions at the school. The proposed budget is \$5,176,504.00, down \$12,079.00 from last year's budget of \$5,188,583.00, and is recommended by both the School Board and Budcom. There are no Warrant Articles being proposed.

Other:

8. It is important to note there is as of now a SAU 16 Regional Cooperative School District budget proposal of \$52,700,000.00 for operations. This is a reduction from the default budget. This operating budget is less than the default budget and adds approximately .72 cents per \$1,000.00 of assessed value, to be voted on at a separate Deliberative Session on February 7th at Exeter High.
9. Overall, the increase represented by all recommended budgets is expected to come in at under \$1.00 per \$1,000.00 of assessed value for Brentwood. This may change, may be offset by impact fees, any surplus funds voted by BOS and any unplanned state revenues the town may receive. Your elected officials try their best to insure taxes remain stable from year to year.

10. Public Comments

Questions from those present were answered by Board Members .

Hearing closed at 7:30

Minutes respectfully submitted by William C Faria