

Town of Brentwood Municipal Budget Committee
Minutes of September 18, 2023 meeting, held at Brentwood Town Office

Members present: Jack Mitchell (chair), Michelle Siudut (secretary), Gabbie Kelly, Anthony Phillips, Letty Bedard (Swasey rep), Jon Morgan (selectmen's rep). Absent: Alina Arida

Jack called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Meeting Minutes

Motion by Gabbie, seconded by Letty to approve the committee meeting minutes from June 26 2023; approved, with Jon abstaining.

Motion by Gabbie, seconded by Anthony to approve the Public Works/Highway Department site visit minutes from July 10 20 23; approved, with Morgan abstaining.

Motion by Letty, seconded by Gabbie to approve the Brentwood Rec site visit minutes from August 7 2023; approved as amended, with Jon and Anthony abstaining.

Notes from the library site visit on August 21 2023 were reviewed. There was no quorum at that meeting, so these are not minutes. Anthony questioned the use of ARPA funds, Jack stated there are donors who want to donate, but have not committed until the Town confirms they will support this.

Anthony questioned if the ARPA funds are under the jurisdiction of BudCom; Jon said the Selectmen have control of ARPA funds. Jack questioned if the library issue would end up as a warrant article; Jon said he doesn't think one will be needed, as it will not be an operating expense if they use ARPA funds. Letty stated the town used \$221K in ARPA funds last year.

Selectmen's Report - Jon Morgan

Jon said they received the charette report. The Economic Development Committee is discussing it at their meeting tonight. They are looking at several funding opportunities including a community planning grant from DOT. This project is under the purview of EDC.

Attendance at the Rec center has been increasing, causing parking issues. The Rec Committee may want to re-design the parking lot for safety reasons.

Michelle asked the total cost of the charette. The Planning board, Rec department and Economic Development Committee each put \$2500 toward the total \$7500 cost. The full plan can be seen at PlanNH.org.

Discussion about the open position at the highway department, it was listed at \$21-25/hour, with CDL required.

Gabbie asked Jon for a solar update; he believes they will move forward with a purchase.

Swasey School Board Report - Letty Bedard

First school board meeting was this month. A preliminary presentation of SAU (administrative) budget was provided. Overall change is 3.21% (\$102,039) increase over last year. The big increases are salary for a grant writer (which was formerly funded by a grant) and health insurance (8.4%); there is a 7.65% decrease in admin salary line. The Public hearing will be on October 16th. Letty will forward the preliminary budget to Jack to disperse to the committee.

Swasey will be working on their budget at their next meeting.

Letty said the legislature has changed how they do adequacy, resulting in Brentwood expecting a large return. If there is no public hearing (which there does not appear to be time for), the school board will utilize the amount to offset taxes.

CIP Update

Anthony said they have gone through a few department submissions; they are making progress.

Municipal Update - Jack Mitchell

The current town office and 5 surrounding acres has been valued at \$1.2M. The Norwich Group, which put the original new site plan together, has offered to continue to help. Kip will be assessing the cost to renovate the police area. They plan on an Open House in October, then a public hearing. At this time, they are not planning to ask for funding in the 2024 budget.

Old/Other Business

Michelle asked Gabbie if they had made progress in clarifying line items with Karen. Gabbie had not yet reached out to Karen for this information.

Letty questioned who decides which line items expenses are allocated to. Jon said he believes Karen ultimately decides. Letty asked if expenses are put in possibly the wrong line, just so that no lines go negative. Jon was unsure. Discussion ensued about appropriately categorizing expenses. Gabbie said the auditors would require documentation of where/how items are itemized; perhaps we could obtain this documentation. The audit report is public; the documentation is owned by the town, so the documentation should be public also.

Discussion about processes, if all departments follow the same process. Gabbie read the audit report, in which it stated reconciliations were not done on a monthly basis and errors were not caught. This raised a number of questions. Jon suggested we compile a list of questions, which he will get answers for. Gabbie will draft a list and distribute to the committee for any additions. Jack was told by Karen that we should have the audit report in October. Gabbie requested it in Excel format.

Bylaws

Changes were discussed. Per our bylaws, we must wait until our next meeting to approve the changes. Jack asked Michelle to send the revisions, for review by the town attorney.

Section II - A. Amend to read "The Committee shall comprise of seven members and other representation as determined by Town Meeting adoption of RSA 32."

Section VI - G - 2. Change the word "appropriate" to "appropriated".

Section VII - B - 6. New section "The current Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) will be included in deliberations when making recommendations for department budgets, operating budgets, and other warrant articles."

Other sections of the bylaws were discussed. Our bylaws and state statute say we should be reviewing estimated revenues. We will request this information going forward.

Motion by Letty, seconded by Gabbie to approve the changes at the next meeting; approved unanimously.

Motion by Letty to adjourn; meeting adjourned at 8:01 pm.

Upcoming Meetings

Oct 9 2023 at 6 pm: Budget Committee Meeting

Oct 16 2023 at 6 pm: Budget Committee Meeting. Potential budgets to discuss: Emergency Management, Legal, Waste Collection and Disposal, Executive Office, Assessing, Welfare

Oct 23 2023 at 6 pm: Budget Committee Meeting. Potential budgets to discuss: Planning Board, ZBA, Budget Committee, Code Enforcement

Oct 30 2023 at 6 pm: Budget Committee Meeting. Potential budgets to discuss: Conservation, Cemetery, Information Systems, Regional Associations

Nov 6 2023 at 6 pm: Budget Committee Meeting. Potential budgets to discuss: Debt Service, Recreation, JLMC

Nov 13 2023 at 6 pm: Budget Committee Meeting. Potential budgets to discuss: Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Town Meeting, Election & Registration, Town Admin, Finance

Nov 20 2023 at 6 pm: Budget Committee Meeting. Potential budgets to discuss: Highway, General Government, Government Buildings

Nov 27 2023 at 6 pm: Budget Committee Meeting. Potential budgets to discuss: Fire, Library

Dec 4 2023 at 6 pm: Budget Committee Meeting. Potential budgets to discuss: Police, Animal Control, Insurance

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Siudut, Secretary