



To: The Hinesburg Selectboard
From: Trevor Lashua, Town Administrator
Date: February 5, 2015
Re: Proposed 2015 Town Meeting Budget Assignments and Framework

Here is a proposed order of operations for the Town Meeting budget presentations. The power point slides are described in the comments to the right. The goal is to come in around the 25-minute mark, so the time available is five minutes per person:

Jon – Introduction and overview.

- The FY16 budget attempted to find the balance between maintaining services and infrastructure plans while mitigating the impact on property taxpayers in a year with no fund balance to lower tax rates and conservative grand list growth projections.
- The budget process begins in September, with a Selectboard retreat to focus on both short- and long-term goals, and ends when the Town Meeting warning is set in late January.
- In between, department heads assemble budgets, they and committee/board/commission chairs meet with the Selectboard to discuss budget requests, and the budget is better refined along the way.
- The proposed FY16 budget is a 2.14% increase in expenditures from FY15, after removing reappraisal from the calculation.
- The estimated tax rate increase is 2.99 cents per \$100 of assessed value.
- The Selectboard was able to utilize unassigned fund balance to lessen the tax rate impact for FY15 – according to the recent audit fund balance is at the minimum set aside (7.5% of budgeted expenditures), meaning no additional fund balance is available to lower the FY16 rate.
- This offsets changes in other non-tax revenues and grand list growth, projected at a conservative 1.08%.

Comment [TL1]: Slide 1: Summary of expenditures and revenue.

Comment [TL2]: Slide 2: The two pie charts, showing the percentage of the budget by category, and the amount (per penny) of the tax rate by category.

Phil – General Government

- The proposed budget includes a 20-hour per week planner for the Planning and Zoning department. The planner will help the department with the development review workload, and hopefully also free up time for the director to work on long-term planning projects.
- The Special Projects Coordinator, currently split between Planning and Zoning and the Town Administrator, moves to the Town Administrator's office. The SPC is becoming the Town's primary human resources coordinator, leads and assists with special projects, and spearheads the Town's communications efforts (primarily through the Weekly Report), among other duties. A majority of the time is currently spent working from the Administrator's office.
- FY16 is the first year of a two-year reappraisal process. Reappraisal will cost \$78,000 per year, and will be funded through monies already collected for this specific purpose.
- While health insurance costs are proposed to increase by 16%, that figure is offset by a reduction in the amount budgeted for the health insurance buyout. The change in health

Comment [TL3]: Slide 3: The general government areas encompassed, shown in bullet form, for example:
• Selectboard: -\$629, -1.12%
• Town Administrator: +\$11,122; +11.5%
• Etc.

Comment [TL4]: Slide 4: Health insurance table showing number of FTEs per department, cost.

insurance costs is due to an increase in rates (nearly 8%) and employees moving to family level coverage due to additions to their families. The category as a whole, which includes vision, dental, and disability insurance, is a 2% increase.

- Union employees, in this case the employees in the highway department, are budgeted to receive cost of living adjustments of 3% per the contract. Other employees are generally budgeted to receive a 2.5% cost of living adjustment.

Mike – Police and Fire

- Police

- The costs related to dispatch have increased. Dispatch costs are generally based upon call volume, and provided by the Shelburne Police Department. The Town is exploring options to create a set fee, and whether or not other options – such as dispatch through the Vermont State Police – are available.
- The department is fully-staffed, and is comprised of the chief, sergeant, four full-time community police officers, and an administrative assistant (25 hours per week).
- The increase in the capital transfer is primarily due to the first payments being made on two police vehicles recently replaced. The Town has lease-financed the purchase of those vehicles (lease-to-own).

Comment [TL5]: Slide 5: Summary of the HCPD budget proposal. Photo of one of the new cruisers included.

- Fire

- There is an increase in wages, due in large part to an increase in call volume.
- The increase for personal protective equipment and other equipment is simply in recognition of what those items actually cost.
- The capital transfer for FY17 (next year) will likely feature the first payment on a rescue/pumper. This one vehicle will replace two others, and is expected to cost just less than \$500,000.
- The move to a rescue/pumper allows for re-utilization of space within the fire station, so that the ladder truck planned for future purchase (primarily by impact fee revenue) can also fit within the facility. This postpones the needed station upgrades and expansion.

Comment [TL6]: Slide 6: Summary of the HFD budget proposal. Photo of a rescue/pumper truck included.

Andrea – Highway

- Highway employees are represented by AFSCME, and as such, are covered by a contract that calls for a cost of living adjustment of 3%. At the same time, these employees pay a higher percentage towards their premiums (per the same contract).
- The number for dust control is the same as approved for FY15, however the request was to increase it. While this saves money, it does mean that dust control operations may be more limited than they have been in past years.
- The increase in road salt costs is due to a large jump in the price per ton. Supply is also an issue in winters such as this one, as Hinesburg – like most municipalities in Vermont – does not have the capability to store an entire winter’s supply and must resupply throughout the winter.
- The highway garage project is on-going, with a plan to be developed this year to present to voters. Funds budgeted for FY15 are being utilized to continue that work.
- The capital transfer essentially pays for equipment already replaced, and envisions replacement of a dump truck in FY16 (with the first payment due in FY17).
- The paving amount included in the capital transfer has remained the same, though in the long-term the dollars spent will need to be increased if the Town wishes to continue to repave 2.3 miles per year. In the short-term, the lower gas prices provide some optimism that paving prices will allow us to stretch FY15 dollars farther.

Comment [TL7]: Slide 7: Summary of the highway budget proposal.

Comment [TL8]: Slide 8: Photo of the highway garage.

Comment [TL9]: Slide 9: The map showing the paving schedule.

Tom – Recreation and Buildings and Facilities

- Recreation

- Most of the changes occur on the revenue side, where the numbers have been adjusted to be closer to the actuals.
- There is a slight increase for printing, with graphic design of the program brochures to be done by a resident whose profession is graphic design.
- Rectrac is a software package that will enable the department to more effectively and efficiently track registration, provides improved financial reporting and tracking, and is the precursor to online program registration – possibly the most often requested service addition.
- The capital transfer is for the Bissonette Fields Recreation Area. Local permits are in hand, the land has been transferred to the Town, and construction on parts of the facility may begin as early as this spring. The multi-purpose playing fields are the first to be constructed.

Comment [TL10]: Slide 10: Summary table showing recreation budget proposal.

Comment [TL11]: Slide 11: The fields site plan, as approved.

- Buildings and Facilities

- The amount budgeted for maintenance of the Town Forest remains at the FY15 level.
- The line for the Trails Committee is increased by \$1,500, an amount which helps improve the Russell Trail through replacement of a bridge (the one behind the backstop).
- The increase in professional services is due to contracting for the plowing of parking lots and sidewalks, and shoveling around Town Hall. In years past, the sidewalk plowing number has appeared in the budget under wages.
- The department budget has decreased overall from FY15, largely due to a reduction in the capital transfer.

Comment [TL12]: Slide 12: Summary table of B&F budget proposal. Photo of the Village south sidewalk.

Jon – Conclusion and questions.

Comment [TL13]: Slide 12: Same as slide 1.