

**Budget Committee
November 2, 2013**

Present: Nancy Spencer Smith, Chairperson; Craig Farley; Carlene Stewart; Dave Mankus; Priscilla Colbath; Jerry O'Connor; Bruce Rich; Ken Paul, Selectmen's Rep; Ron Canney; Relf Fogg, School Board Rep; Teresa A. Williams, Town Administrator; and Toni Bodah, Secretary. Asha Kenney joined the session in progress.

Ms. Smith called the posted meeting to order at 9 a.m. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Various department heads, and committee/agency representatives were present as indicated below.

Ms. Smith provided an overview of the rules of procedure for this meeting, as well as the procedure to review the budget as approved by the Board of Selectmen.

Health & Welfare – Outside Agencies

Tri-County CAP – Lisa Hinckley – Ms. Hinckley provided an overview of the organization and its purpose. Ms. Smith noted that the appropriation has been flat-lined over a number of years. Discussion of the 2272 meals served over the past year. This program is separate from the GWRC meal program. Mr. Rich referred to the number of organizations providing food to the community. Mr. Mankus referred to the difference between CAP's 2013 budget of funds from various towns and the actual funds received. Ms. Hinckley noted this is just a matter of some towns providing approved funds at different times. **Ms. Colbath moved to approve the \$12,500 appropriation request for Tri-County CAP. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.** Ms. Olimpio made reference to CAP requesting \$7000 to provide only 1 meal per week at the Catholic Church.

VNA/Hospice – Bette Coffey – Ms. Coffey provided an overview of services provided. Ms. Smith questioned how the universal health care reform will affect this program. Ms. Coffey is unsure; however, she expects it will be a challenge. If more people are on Medicaid, they will need to review the budget. **Mr. Paul moved the \$14,270 appropriation request for VNA/Hospice. Ms. Colbath seconded the motion, which passed 10-1.**

Starting Point – Suzette Indelicato – Ms. Indelicato provided the Committee members with updated information as a result of their recent audit. She also provided an overview of services provided. Ms. Smith asked about the effects of universal health care reform on this program and whether there are any trends in town. Ms. Indelicato spoke to the established working relationship with the Police Department and the efforts to build a relationship with the school. Mr. Mankus asked for clarification on transitional housing. Ms. Indelicato indicated this allows displaced families to stay in the same area, keeping the children in the same school system. The goal is to transition these families into self-supporting situations. **Ms. Colbath moved the \$1751 appropriation request for Starting Point. Mr. O'Connor seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.**

Huggins Hospital Med Bridge – Jack Drinkwater – Mr. Drinkwater advised that they are seeking approximately \$1 per application received in order to cover the cost of software and office supplies. This is a completely volunteer organization. When Ms. Smith asked about the possible effects of universal health care reform to this program, Mr. Drinkwater stated he anticipates no effect. There is, however, other potential legislation regarding medication expenses that could have an effect, if passed by the State of NH. Mr. O'Connor referred to the number of prescriptions filled per individual per year and asked whether this is part of the federal prescription program.

Mr. Drinkwater believes that the people who qualify for the federal program are part of Medicare Part D, which is not a part of this Med Bridge program. **Mr. Paul moved the \$748 appropriation request for Huggins Hospital Med Bridge. Mr. Fogg seconded the motion, which passed 10-1.**

Northern Human Services – Eve Klotz – Ms. Klotz reviewed the services provided to Wakefield residents over the past year, as well as general services provided. She expects universal health care reform will help a number of current participants from Wakefield, should they decide to sign up. Ms. Klotz is unsure what will happen to Medicaid funding and referred to the complicated process to transition to various funding opportunities. She advised Mr. Fogg that she personally has been addressing the Wakefield Budget Committee since 2000. This organization was formerly known as Carroll County Mental Health.

Mr. O'Connor noted that it seems as though the services of several organizations overlap and questioned the possibility of combining efforts. Ms. Klotz advised that the cost of medications can be as high as \$3000 per month. The Mental Health Center relies on Medication Bridge to assist with these medications. She believes the Mental Health Center is unique in the services provided to its clients. Mr. Canney asked about specific programs and their effectiveness. Ms. Klotz advised they are audited each year by the State, the results of which confirm that their programs are proven effective. Their programs are out-patient programs, no placement programs. Ms. Klotz stressed they are working with the most severe population and referred to the professionals involved. Mr. Fogg noted that the appropriation request has remained constant for the past 10 years. **Mr. Mankus moved to approve the \$4300 appropriation request for Northern Human Services. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.**

Greater Wakefield Resource Center – Liz Olimpio – Ms. Olimpio stated that last year they appropriated \$3000 to administer the Meals on Wheels program, the food for which is prepared in Ossipee. Last year they served 3700 meals. This year they are requesting only \$1000 to administer this program. \$22,000 for general administrative costs includes a salary increase for the Director, as well as funds to hire an individual to search for grants. In addition, GWRC proposes to establish a contingency fund for emergencies and/or unexpected issues. Mr. Dube referred to the current issue with a control valve, which is a \$600 part. This is the type of expense that would be covered by the contingency fund. Mr. Mankus referred to the elevator and sprinkler system that have been installed over the past several years. Mr. Dube stated that most of those costs were covered through donations. There are still code issues being addressed with the elevator. It is operable but requires a final inspection. The sprinkler system is operable on all occupied spaces. As new space is occupied, they will need to be sprinkled. Mr. O'Connor referred to a line added to the Town's operating budget last year for maintenance of this building. Mr. Dube stated that \$2500 was appropriated to that line to begin clapboard replacement. He anticipates they will request to encumber those funds and combine with \$2500 in the 2014 budget in order to address an entire side of the building next year. **Mr. Mankus moved to approve the \$30,000 appropriation for the Greater Wakefield Resource Center. Mr. Fogg seconded the motion, which passed 10-0-1.**

WIP – Victor Becker – Mr. Becker stated that this volunteer organization has been working with the Town for 15 years on improvements to Town Hall. He spoke to the number of code-compliant improvements, specifically the improved lighting in the Opera House and the sprinkling of the entire building, including alarms. Nearly \$1 million has been spent to date.

WPI is requesting level funding in order to pay a grant writer and to purchase minimal supplies. Discussion followed regarding the current grant environment. Mr. Rich asked what percentage of the project is complete. Mr. Becker estimated 50%. Ms. Smith asked that WPI provide the Budget Committee with a copy of their budget. Mr. Fogg was advised that Mr. Becker is not sure whether grants for which they are applying are federal grants. **Mr. O'Connor moved to approve the \$8200 appropriation for WPI. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.**

Mr. O'Connor noted that he is not a fan of creating contingency funds. He stated that we already have a maintenance line in the budget (for the GWRC). Mr. Paul explained that the Town will hold on to the money appropriated to the GWRC contingency fund, which will not be expended without the Selectmen's approval.

Acton Wakefield Watersheds Alliance – Linda Schier – Ms. Schier stated that AWWA is seeking level funding. AWWA's mission is to protect the lakes in Wakefield and border towns. She spoke to the numerous efforts and projects, in specific the current issues facing Province Lake. Approximately 9% of AWWA's budget is being requested of the Town of Wakefield. Mr. Mankus referred to the red ink in AWWA's budget. Mr. Samuelson stated that much has to do with timing of grants coming in vs. expenses being made. He believes this will work out by 2015. Mr. Fogg asked whether Acton contributes funds equal to Wakefield. Ms. Schier stated that Acton provides less because the appropriation requests are based on the amount of shoreline. Mr. Canney asked how Wakefield lakes stand. Ms. Schier stated that Province Lake is impaired, and Lovell Lake is in good shape. There is limited data as the information is provided by volunteers. AWWA hopes to hire an intern to assist with this data collection, then AWWA would be able to provide more data. Generally speaking, most lakes are in great shape. Mr. Paul noted that lake associations get funding through this program, as well as via a CRF for Invasive Species. The Selectmen have been discussing the possibility of moving some of the land use change penalty tax to water quality, instead of continuing to have 100% go to land conservation. **Mr. Fogg moved to approve the \$12,000 appropriation for AWWA. Mr. O'Connor seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.**

Appalachian Mtn Teen Project – Ray Conner – Mr. Conner spoke to AMTP's history of involvement in Wakefield, as well as the needs of the youth involved. **Mr. Fogg moved to approve the \$1200 appropriation for Appalachian Mtn Teen Project. Mr. O'Connor seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.**

CASA – Pat Weigle – Ms. Weigle is a volunteer for CASA and spoke to the difference between CASA and DCYS. CASA advocated for 49 children in the Ossipee Court during 2013. Mr. O'Connor noted that \$500 does not seem like much money. Ms. Weigle spoke to CASA's wide variety of funding sources. **Mr. Fogg moved to approve the \$500 appropriation for CASA. Mr. O'Connor seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.**

Food Pantry – Janet Miller – Ms. Miller noted that the Food Pantry has had a big year!! Each year sees an increase in the number of clients. The Food Pantry is now serving 70-80 families each week. They have implemented a screening process. This is a 100% volunteer organization with more than 60 volunteers.

They are considering extending their hours and/or days per week, and currently serve residents of Wakefield and Brookfield. Mr. Knight stated that the operating expenses of the building have proven to be a little higher than expected, although it is helpful to be able to obtain propane at the Town's cost. Brookfield will also be approached for funding. The new building is being used more than 1 day each week since there is much prep and sorting involved. Mr. Knight clarified to Mr. Farley that the Food Pantry is presently open only on Wednesdays. Mr. Fogg asked whether donation buckets are available. Mr. Knight acknowledged there are and advised that they receive a number of private donations as well. Mr. Mankus suggested that everyone receive the email regarding the need for volunteers. **Mr. Mankus moved to approve the \$6000 appropriation for the Food Pantry. Mr. Fogg seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.**

COAST – North Bus – Diane Smith – Ms. Smith advised that the North Bus route is expanding. All drivers are volunteers. Wakefield residents represent 47% of the registered riders, with 4 volunteer drivers coming from Wakefield. COAST will no longer receive the private grant funds; however, they still have federal money, which requires a match. In response to a question from Mr. Rich, Ms. Smith stated that 37 registered riders from Wakefield took 245 trips. Mr. Canney asked whether there was any similar program prior to establishment of the North Bus. Ms. Smith believes this is a new concept, although the Good Shepherd program will get people to doctor appointments. The North Bus takes people to do errands in Rochester. **Mr. Paul moved to approve the \$1148 appropriation for COAST North Bus. Mr. Fogg seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.**

Wakefield Meals – No representative was present. Ms. Williams advised this program is administered by the GWRC. This program started about 3 years ago. Participants are interviewed by staff members. Local drivers pick up and deliver prepared food. **Mr. Fogg moved to approve the \$11,286 appropriation for Wakefield Meals. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.**

American Red Cross – No representative was present. **Mr. Fogg moved to approve the \$2276 appropriation for American Red Cross. Ms. Kenney seconded the motion, which passed 10-1.**

Ms. Smith called for a recess at 10:55 a.m. and called the meeting back to order at 11:05 a.m.

Health & Welfare - Public Assistance

Mr. Fogg moved the \$51,423 appropriation, as recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Paul seconded the motion. The 2014 request is less than the 2013 appropriation. Ms. Williams reviewed the budget request briefly, noting that the current director does a great job of screening applicants and redirecting them whenever possible. There is no longer an assistant director, and the hours for the director have increased. Mr. Canney referred to the salary line showing a 5% increase. Ms. Williams advised that pay rates are reviewed annually, and she explained use of the wage/class schedule. Mr. Paul spoke to use of that schedule in an effort to retain employees. **The motion then passed 11-0.**

Mr. Rich moved to approve a total of \$157,602 for Health & Welfare. Mr. Fogg seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.

Gafney Library – Beryl Donovan

Ms. Donovan explained that the Gafney is not owned by the Town of Wakefield; rather it is a separate 501.c.3. She provided a comparison of salaries at the Gafney to other area libraries. The annual appeal represents about 6% of the total budget. The increase in the 2014 request over 2013 is mostly represented by a new position in the children's library, in part a result of a security issue with the current employee working alone in a separate area from the main library. In an effort to tie the alarm system into the Town Hall system (at the request of the Fire Chief) the Gafney has been asked to develop a CAD drawing of the Gafney system, to include the cost of installation. Mr. Paul noted that the Gafney is a very busy library and asked whether there are any user fees to offset the budget. Ms. Donovan stated no such fees are in place, other than a nominal fee for non-resident users. **Mr. Mankus moved to approve the \$116,425 appropriation for the Gafney Library, as recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Fogg seconded the motion, which passed 9-0-2.**

Gafney Library Literacy Program – Beryl Donovan

Ms. Donovan advised that this program serves over 70 people on an annual basis. This includes the GED program. There was significant discussion as to why the salary of the GED coordinator listed on the budget (\$6720) does not match the listed anticipated income from the Alden Young Trust (\$7671). It may be that the anticipated income from the Trust includes payroll taxes; however, this is not certain. Ms. Donovan will endeavor to find out more information. **Mr. Paul moved to approve the \$37,210 appropriation for the Gafney Library Literacy Program, as recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Fogg seconded the motion, which passed 9-1-1.**

Wakefield Library – Peter Brown

Mr. Brown advised this is also an independent organization, not owned by the Town of Wakefield. He provided a brief history of the Wakefield Library. The 2014 request is slightly lower than the 2013 appropriation. **Mr. Mankus moved to approve the \$9610 appropriation for the Wakefield Library, as recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. O'Connor seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.**

General Government – Voter Registration

Mr. Fogg moved to approve the \$3150 appropriation for Voter Registration, as recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Canney seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.

General Government – Executive

Mr. O'Connor moved to approve the \$114,044 appropriation for Executive, as recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Fogg seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.

General Government – Legal

Mr. Fogg moved to approve the \$30,001 appropriation for Legal, as recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Stewart seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.

General Government – Personnel Benefits

Ms. Smith noted that 2 lines are estimates only, as the services are out to bid. This section will be revisited in early December.

General Government – Insurance

This section also includes estimates and will be revisited in early December.

General Government - Town Hall

The Board of Selectmen has not yet reviewed bids received for cleaning, so this section, too, will be revisited in December.

General Government – General Administration

Ms. Smith questioned the purpose of the Unexpected Expenses line. Ms. William explained this covers anything that happens that was not planned for. This could include issues with heat, mold, plumbing, elevator, deductible for accidents, flood, association dues for tax acquired property, etc. Appropriating for this line is hit or miss. Mr. Rich would like to limit the number of unexpected expense lines. Mr. O'Connor indicated that the description is rather vague. **Mr. Fogg moved to approve the \$81,803 appropriation for General Administration, as recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.**

General Government – Heritage Commission – Pam Wiggin

Ms. Wiggin spoke to the responsibilities of the Heritage Commission, as well as their current projects. Much of their work is accomplished through donations. The only increase in the appropriation request relates to utility costs. The next special event is in December—Christmas at Heritage Park.

Discussion included identifying historic sites on Town tax maps. Mr. Brown noted this is connected with the Master Plan, which the Commission will be getting back to. Mr. Mankus hopes to determine the cost to have the sites identified on the tax maps. Ms. Wiggin will work with Land Use in that regard.

Mr. Fogg moved to approve the \$10,824 appropriation for the Heritage Commission, as recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. O'Connor seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.

General Government - Land Use – Nathan Fogg

The clerical line has been reduced to \$1 since Mr. Fogg's salary is included in the Code Enforcement budget. Mr. O'Connor asked whether legal questions are directed to Town Counsel. Mr. Fogg noted that questions specific to Land Use that are directed to Town Counsel are charged to the Land Use legal line. Some questions are handled by LGC. Mr. Relf Fogg noted there is a difference between the department's request and the Selectmen's recommendation. **Mr. Relf Fogg moved to approve the \$11,172 appropriation for Land Use, as recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Stewart seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.**

Public Safety – Code Enforcement – Nathan Fogg

Mr. Fogg explained that rather than a fulltime CEO/BI, we now have a part-time CEO and a part-time building inspector. He anticipates use of the soon-to-be-retired Expedition from the Police Department. The title of line 01-4240-1-850 was changed to reflect that those maps relate to 911 identification. **Mr. O'Connor moved to approve the \$104,635 appropriation for Code Enforcement, as recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Colbath seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.**

Community Services – Patriotic Services

It was noted that the Town purchases flags, which the VFW places at veterans' grave sites. **Mr. Fogg moved the \$1650 appropriation for Patriotic Services, as recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Stewart seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.**

Sewer

The treatment site maintenance line has been reduced from 2013 as the lagoons will not need to be cleaned out in 2014. Mr. Mankus wonders whether the Town loses money between charging tipping fees, then paying to clean the tanks and/or lagoons. This is not the case. Mr. Paul noted that the real cost will occur when/if the Town needs to develop an actual treatment facility. **Mr. Rich moved to approve the \$69,695 appropriation for Sewer, as recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Fogg seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.**

Debt Service

Mr. Fogg moved to approve the \$12,154 appropriation for Debt Service (Bond Payments and TAN Interest), as recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Canney seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.

Capital Outlay

Mr. O'Connor moved to approve the \$13,417 appropriation for Capital Outlay, as recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Fogg seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.

Mr. Mankus noted there is a line for PEG station equipment (with no appropriation) and sought confirmation that there is another budget for the PEG station. Ms. Williams explained this line in Capital Outlay likely reflects a previous warrant article from several years ago. This line has nothing to do with the anticipated franchise fees. Ms. Williams will clean up this section as there are several other lines that could also be eliminated.

Conservation Commission

Mr. O'Connor moved to approve the \$3966 appropriation for Conservation Commission, as recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 10-0-1.

Public Works – Street Lighting

Mr. O'Connor moved to approve the \$29,000 appropriation for Street Lighting, as recommended by the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Stewart seconded the motion, which passed 11-0.

Ms. Williams advised that the Selectmen still need to consider warrant articles. She suggested a date in December be established to review articles and other outstanding budget issues. The next meeting of the Budget Committee is November 4 at 6:30 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Toni Bodah, Secretary