

Town of Union
Budget Committee Meeting
January 11, 2017

Present: Terry Brackett; Bruce Cobb; Constance Bodine; Dan Day; Erik Armundsen; Howard Butler; Lawrence Nash; Paul Gaudreau; Laura Curtis; Secretary, and John Mountainland arrived after the meeting was in progress.

Guests: Jay Feyler; Greg Grotton; John Shepard; Jim Justice; and Lyle Cramer.

Call to order: 7:03pm

Pledge of Allegiance:

Approve Minutes of 7/13/16

Motion by: Howard Butler to approve minutes

2nd by: Lawrence Nash

Discussion: Terry wanted to know about the approval of the minutes at last meeting, Laura stated that she showed 2 members voting and the rest abstentions because they were not present at the meeting that we were to approve.

vote: Unanimous

Terry Brackett stated that last year people were not happy with the procedures. The Committee wanted to have more input in the budget process, getting involved a little earlier., Tentative budget schedules were passed out. January 17th is ambulance budget at the Selectmen's Meeting. January 31st all department budgets are due to Town Manager

Would it make sense for us to get the package at same time as Selectmen – Jay stated it would be quite different than the finished product. Department Heads brings budget to Jay – Jay may change and Department Heads bring reasons to Jay- Jay submits to Selectmen.

You can come to the Selectmen's meeting and in the past the only one or two Budget Committee Members have shown up at the Selectmen's meeting where budget was being reviewed. The selectmen vote on the Warrant article just like the Budget committee does.

Attending these meetings is the best place to speak your opinion – you do not have a vote but you can speak your opinion.

Usually the Town portion of the budget stays pretty flat, it is the Assessments that keep going up (school, county and tri county).

The school board has to guess at what the state monies are going to be because they do not know during the budget cycle. They were supposed to get 55% and they only got 42% from state which is a 13% decrease from the state. The \$25,000,000 that went for the new school is going to up the budget each year by \$800,000. We should attend the School Budget meetings also. Two other bonds last year – one in May and one in June. At the meeting where the budget was voted on last year, most of the people there were school employees and there were a couple of people from union. We need to have more of the people at these meetings.

Jay stated to keep up with the School Budget meetings is to go on web site and sign up for the list serve.

When there are issues you need to contact your representatives and let them know your feelings on the school budgets, county budgets etc. Getting the word out is very important and can make a difference.

We have a lot of students in the school system with reduced lunches stated Erik which adds a lot to the budget.

Greg Grotton stated that at the meeting for the School Budget that School Staff and Teachers were present and only 4 or 5 residents from Union. If we had 18 people there the budget would not have passed. Greg stated we have a lot of foreclosures going on now for property's that the owners can't pay the taxes. We have had to foreclose on a woman with children. That is a tough thing to have to do.

Jay stated there are a lot more foreclosures now than there was a few years back. Last year we had about 6 of them.

Greg has proposed that we show up at these meetings. We could pick liaisons for the meeting. This would not work it would just be better if people could show when they can.

We would also like to get a copy of the budget when the selectmen get it. It was brought up about having comparables and Jay stated that there would be a couple of years on the budget.

Jay has met with the School Superintendant and he liked him, he is making people be accountable.

Motion by: Bruce Cobb to adjourn

2nd by: Howard Butler

Vote: Unanimous

Adjourned: 7:54pm

Respectfully submitted by:

Laura J Curtis
Secretary

