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**Town of Henniker
Budget Advisory Committee
Monday, December 12, 2016
Henniker Town Hall**

Members Present: David Woolpert, Cheryl Morse, Christopher Robert, Peter Flynn,
Bruce Trivellini, Michael Cyr

Guests: Ryan Murphy

Recording Secretary: Cherry Palmisano

Chairman Flynn opened the meeting at 6:10pm.

Bruce Trivellini moved, Christopher Robert seconded to accept the minutes of November 19, 2016 as presented. Passed 5-0-0

The Budget Advisory Committee will discuss and review all operating budgets as presented at the Joint Selectmen and Budget Advisory Meetings of November 5th and 19th.

Tax Maps

Bruce Trivellini moved, Cheryl Morse seconded to support the proposed budget of \$4,600 for Tax Maps. Passed 5-0-0

Legal

Kris Blomback had made a recommended change of \$10,000 for consideration at the Selectboard meeting bringing the original \$30,000 request down to \$20,000.

Dave Woolpert entered the meeting.

Fund balance refers to anticipated surplus to be used use for emergencies. Peter Flynn mentioned the town being in deplorable condition with the amount in the fund balance.

Christopher Robert said that legal and welfare are the two areas where you can grossly under budget and still fund.

The legal budget has been consistent at \$20,000.

Cheryl Morse moved, Michael Cyr seconded to support the proposed recommended change to fund Legal at \$20,000. Passed 6-0-0

Insurance

Cheryl Morse moved, Michael Cyr seconded to support the proposed budget of \$152,874 for Insurance as presented. Passed 6-0-0

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Debt Service

Dave Woolpert moved, Cheryl Morse seconded to support the proposed budget of \$340,006 for Debt Service as presented. Passed 6-0-0

Committee members discussed the function/purpose of a Tax Anticipated Note (TAN). The Committee will like to discuss the TAN function more deeply at a later time.

Municipal Dues

Cheryl Morse moved, Christopher Robert seconded to support the proposed budget of \$3,867 for Municipal Dues as presented. Passed 6-0-0

Police

The decrease in the budget reflects not purchasing a \$42k vehicle. The Committee would like to recommend a capital reserve fund for vehicle purchases. The cost for Parking Enforcement is \$20,000, but revenue is only \$5,000. The Committee discussed NEC's effect on the police budget.

Cheryl Morse moved, Dave Woolpert seconded to support the proposed budget of \$1,159,423 for Police as presented with the recommendation that parking fines are keeping with NEC parking fees.

Christopher mentioned the request for an additional officer will be in next year's budget as well as a car.

Passed 6-0-0

Animal Control

Dave said that the Budget Advisory Committee made a recommendation a couple of years ago to do away with this budget. Michael wants to make sure that the fees are in line with other communities.

Cheryl Morse moved, Christopher Robert seconded to support the proposed budget of \$12,059 for Animal Control with special consideration that all fines and all fees associated with Animal Control are keeping with the City of Concord. Passed 6-0-0

Wastewater

Cheryl Morse moved, Dave Woolpert seconded to support the proposed budget of \$580,707 for Wastewater.

The Selectmen are the Commissioner's for Wastewater. The town does the management of the Wastewater accounts. The department is supported by user fees, but is a town department.

Passed 5-0-1, Michael Cyr abstained.

Solid Waste

Peter would like to add \$5,000 into the part-time line item, because he has a concern about the usage of that facility by people who do not come from Henniker or pay \$1.00 to purchase the sticker. He feels they need a part-time employee to police the facility. The budget includes \$6,600 for an extra part-time person on the weekends. Bruce noted seeing the increased amount of contractors disposing at the Transfer Station and would like to have a discussion and

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evaluation for contractor permits. Peter mentioned a policy for Solid Waste fees, which most likely needs to be reviewed.

Dave Woolpert moved, Cheryl Morse seconded to support the proposed budget of \$443,557 for Solid Waste with a recommendation to review all the dumping fees. Passed 6-0-0

Welfare

Dave mentioned that there was poor service being offered to people who needed support before the second person was hired. Now there are regular hours during the week and because of that people who would be digging into the town budget are getting support.

Christopher mentioned that the more hours put in, the more services are provided. He said there were claims made that the second person is investing additional hours to save the town money.

Cheryl noted that the budget reflects the wage line being decreased and asked if the Selectboard is thinking they will get more if there is one single position in the position.

Cheryl Morse moved, Christopher Robert seconded to support \$86,314 for Welfare conditionally if the salary of \$10,400 can continue with the same level of service.

The committee is recommending one individual, instead of two so there will be no overlapping.

Dave Woolpert moved to amend the motion to \$90,214. Amendment Passed 5-1-0; Peter Flynn was opposed

The motion with amendment to support \$90.214. Passed 6-0-0

Elections

Bruce Trivellini moved, Cheryl Morse seconded to support the proposed budget of \$6,870 for Elections. Passed 6-0

Library

There is an increase of \$3,000 in the budget.

Cheryl Morse moved, Dave Woolpert seconded to support the proposed budget of \$220,390 for the Library.

Bruce commented on the \$18,000 for library acquisitions, which is significant, and he questioned the use of interlibrary loan. He would like the Committee to keep a close eye of the acquisition line going forward.

Dave explained that his wife works part-time for the library.

Passed 4-1-1; Dave Woolpert abstained, Bruce Trivellini was opposed.

Planning

Bruce noted that the use of the Planning Consultant position is one that is certainly necessary, but the Planning Board has become very complacent and using him more as an employee and not a Planning Consultant. He feels this line item should be cut to send a message to the Selectboard as to how this position is needed and thinks the position is warranted as a consultant position, but has become a regular committee member.

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Bruce Trivellini moved, Cheryl Morse seconded to support \$32,736 for Planning by specifically reducing the consulting fees line by \$15,350, which would leave that line at \$18,000 with the recommendation that the purpose and functionalization of the planning consultant be reviewed.

Christopher mentioned that when this came up at the joint Selectmen/Budget Advisory Committee meeting the feeling of Russ Roy was that there was a lot of value in the Planning Consultant. Bruce said that they need to be more effective as to how the Planning Consultant is utilized. Dave thinks this is a good way of reflecting that they don't need the consultant present for the meetings and the billing should reflect which project the consultant is working on. Bruce thinks the planner can disseminate more through electronic for, instead of being present at the meetings.

Passed 4-1-1; Peter Flynn was opposed and Christopher Robert abstained.

Zoning

Bruce said again, the Planning Consultant is at every single meeting and there is a lawyer sitting as the chairman of this particular board. He recommends that this budget be reduced by \$1,500.

Bruce Trivellini moved, Cheryl Morse seconded to support a budget of \$4,021 for Zoning reflecting a \$1,500 reduction in Planning Consultant fees. Passed 4-1-1, Peter Flynn was opposed and Christopher Robert abstained.

Highway

Bruce Trivellini moved, Cheryl Morse seconded to support the proposed budget of \$636,855 for Highway. Passed 6-0-0

Highway/Streets

It was noted that with 52 miles of paved roads and 49 miles of dirt roads in town, the amount of necessary road repairs is staggering. The committee discussed that the Road Management Committee is evaluating the roads through a process and have not yet finalized their report. Until their report comes out, the budget does not reflect what needs to be done.

Cheryl Morse moved, Christopher Robert seconded to support the proposed budget of \$385,500 for Highway/Streets.

It was noted that utilizing used guard rails was discussed by the Road Management Committee, and Selectmen French said that he was going to review the possibility of utilizing used state guardrails.

Passed 6-0-0

Street Lights

Bruce Trivellini moved, Cheryl Morse seconded to support the proposed budget of \$25,460 for Street Lights. Passed 6-0-0

Fire/Rescue

It was discussed that there is one annual billing to Bradford for Ambulance Service Revenue. Bruce said that he was stunned when Chief French said that he had not billed them yet, which is

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not a good quality practice. Bruce would like to recommend reviewing the contract for better payment services.

Dave Woolpert moved, Cheryl Morse seconded to support \$782,348 for the total Fire/Rescue Budget as recommended. Passed 6-0-0

Code

The Selectmen's recommendation was to cut this budget to \$0. This would mean that contractors and/or property owners will need to hire an independent inspector. Fire and Life Safety inspections will still be conducted by the Fire Captain. The Selectmen requested that the Town Administrator research the availability of the Fire Marshall to do the inspections.

Peter Flynn moved, Cheryl Morse seconded to recommend \$6,083 for Code. Passed 6-0-0

Patriotic Purposes

Cheryl Morse moved, Christopher Robert seconded to support the proposed budget of \$2,150 for Patriotic Purposes. Passed 6-0-0

Town Clerk

The proposed budget includes making a part-time deputy clerk full-time with benefits. Cheryl does not think the increase is necessary. This budget impacts the Town Clerk, Tax Collect, and Town Office budgets.

Bruce Trivellini moved, Cheryl Morse seconded to support this position as part time only in the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's Office and recommend no change in staffing in the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's Office with a budget that reflects current staffing. Passed 5-1-0; Christopher Robert was opposed

Conservation

Cheryl Morse moved, Bruce Trivellini seconded to support the proposed budget of \$2,790 for Conservation. Passed 5-0-1; Dave Woolpert abstained

Athletic

It was discussed that the fund balance is pretty high. Comments were made that only half the budget has been expended to date.

Dave Woolpert moved, Cheryl Morse seconded to support the proposed budget of \$40,149 for Athletics. Passed 6-0-0

Cemeteries

Peter would like to see this budget reduced by \$2,000; specifically decreasing the request for tree removal from \$12,000 to \$10,000.

Peter Flynn moved, Bruce Trivellini seconded to support \$19,750 for Cemeteries. Passed 6-0-0

Community Concerts

Bruce Trivellini moved, Dave Woolpert seconded to support the original budget request of \$6,645. Passed 5-0-1; Cheryl Morse abstained

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Emergency Management

Cheryl Morse moved, Christopher Robert seconded to support the proposed budget of \$1,492 for Emergency Management. Passed 6-0-0

Community

Bruce had distributed a memo stating that he wanted to look at a break down of this budget. He was taken back to hear that White Birch pays \$5,000 monthly in rent for their facility when the town owns the Community Center, which could be used for senior programs and utilize this opportunity to save money. 87% of their budget goes towards administrative fees and rent Senior's are paying out of pocket for trips. It is noted that Dave is on the Board and Mike's wife is also on the Board. Dave spoke as a White Birch Board member and explained that they reviewed having a stand-alone senior program, but the cost was so large. Dave said White Birch would like to see the Community Center offered to them as a space to utilize. Bruce mentioned grants through the Lions Club and Rotary and would like to see more community involvement from these groups in funding. The only funding for senior programs comes from the town. Kris Blomback had recommended to split the difference of the increase at a previous Selectmen's meeting.

Cheryl mentioned the Merrimack Advocacy Group for sexual abuse and victims that is an advocacy group which helps the victims follow through. Matt French did not provide factual data to support their request.

Peter Flynn moved, Michael Cyr seconded to support \$78,000, which includes cuts recommended by the Selectmen keeping CAP at \$12,000, White Birch \$62,500, Library \$350, reflecting \$74,850 as recommended by the Selectmen. Passed 6-0-0

Town Office

If the request to make the part-time position in the Town Clerk's Office is not approved Assessing will remain at the current 20 hours of coverage. Peter said that the Selectmen will need to be make a decision, because the presentation was not clear.

Bruce Trivellini moved, Cheryl Morse seconded to support \$529,263 for Town Office. Passed 6-0-0

Executive

Cheryl Morse moved, Dave Woolpert seconded to support the proposed budget of \$21,067 for Executive. Passed 5-0-0 (Bruce was not in the room)

Warrant Articles

Dave Woolpert moved, Cheryl Morse seconded to recommend the first five warrant articles, which include Road Improvement – Highway Block Grant, Sidewalk Tractor, FD Equipment, add to Revaluation Fund Capital Reserve, create Transfer Station Capital Reserve, reflecting a total request of \$241,297. Passed 6-0-0

Dave Woolpert moved, Cheryl Morse seconded to support the request for \$60,000 for the Ambulance Fund Capital Reserve, \$100,000 for Fire Equipment Capital Reserve, \$10,000

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for Bridge Repair Fund Capital Reserve, \$25,000 for the Highway Equipment Fund reflecting a total of \$195,000. Passed 6-0-0

Dave Woolpert moved, Cheryl Morse seconded to support adding \$10,000 to the Police Department Building Fund. Passed 6-0-0

Bruce would like to see a recommendation from the Board sometime regarding the current building, which is not going to meet the future needs of the police department. Safety will be in jeopardy if they don't research purchasing land and consider a new building. It was discussed that the land next to the current station is already owned by the town. Christopher recommended a needs committee for police facility.

Peter Flynn moved, Bruce Trivellini seconded to adjourn at 9:42 pm. Passed 6-0-0