

ELIOT BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 17, 2013

PRESENT: Rebecca Davis, Robert Fisher, William Jacques, Donna Murphy, Edward Strong  
ABSENT: Rosanne Adams, Phil Lytle

Meeting opened at 6:36 PM.

BUSINESS

1. The chairman expressed disappointment that the Budget Committee had not been informed of the September 23, 2013, deadline for getting its recommendation on the November 5, 2013, ballot for Article #4: Citizens Initiative (Route 236 Sewer Expansion Project). This emergency meeting of the Budget Committee was called to ensure that a vote on a recommendation was conducted in time to be placed on the ballot.
2. A Budget Committee meeting will be called for Tuesday, September 24, 2013, to discuss, among other things, the Budget Request Letter which is normally signed by both the chairman of the Board of Selectmen and the chairman of the Budget Committee. In a departure from routine, the Budget Committee chairman elected not to sign the letter until it had been reviewed and approved by the Budget Committee. Some items in the letter were either inaccurate or did not agree with the approach the Budget Committee wants to take with budget review for Fiscal Year 2014-2015.
3. Some residents have been expressing a concern over the "budget reductions made by the Budget Committee." There appears to be a misunderstanding over who exactly selected the particular budget reductions that were implemented in order to comply with the LD-1 tax cap. The Budget Committee needs to be active in clarifying that the budget was reduced as a result of the third vote on LD-1 (August 27, 2013), and all of the budget reduction choices were the result of decisions made solely by the Board of Selectmen - without any input from the Budget Committee. The Budget Committee, on its own initiative, had compiled a list of suggested budget cuts that would have had less impact on services, but no discussion or recommendations were requested by the Board.

It was agreed that Bill Jacques will develop a draft letter to the editor (of the Portsmouth Herald) for the committee's review.

4. The chairman questioned the starting point for Fiscal Year 2014-2015 budget requests. Should FY 2013-2014 be used, even though it contains the reductions that negatively affect services to residents, or should it be rolled back to the previous year in order to restore those services? The committee agreed to start with this year's budget (FY 2013-2014) and make adjustments as necessary during budget deliberations to eliminate problems.

5. A lively discussion ensued over some of the pros and cons of the Route 236 Sewer Expansion Project, which will make its appearance for a THIRD time on the November 5, 2013, ballot. Residents who wish to hear more are encouraged to watch the video streaming of this meeting, and other public hearings, available on the town's web site.

A MOTION was made by Ed Strong, and SECONDED by Bill Jacques, to make a recommendation of **NO** on the November 5, 2013, Warrant Article #4: Citizens Initiative (Route 236 Sewer Expansion Project):

VOTE: 3-1 [Chair concurs with the **NO** recommendation]

Meeting closed at 7:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Davis

Rebecca Davis, Secretary

Approved by,

Rebecca Davis

Rebecca Davis, Chairman

10/29/13

Date