

Eliot Budget Committee Meeting
Tues. March 5, 2013
Town Hall, Small Conference Room

PRESENT: Rebecca Davis, Ed Strong (Skype), Bill Jacques, John Reed, Bob Fisher

ABSENT: Jeff Pelkey

Also in attendance was the reporter for the Portsmouth Herald, and 5 members of the public.

Meeting called to order at 6:05pm.

BUSINESS

1. Review of warrant articles for special Town Meeting on March 23rd. It was noted that the original purpose of having the special town meeting was to approve the IMA between Kittery and Eliot for the Sewer. The Selectmen took this off the warrant the agreement is not ready to present to the voters.

CONSENSUS was to wait for the BOS recommendations before making any final decisions with the hope of obtaining more information about some of these items.

(a) Article 2 [Route 236 TIF money]: The Chair will ask for a clearer breakdown of what these amounts are for.

(b) Article 3 [transfer to Contingency account]: CONSENSUS - that this could be tabled to the June Annual meeting so that all budget matters and requests for funding can be considered all together. There is no urgency in doing it now.

(c) Article 4 [transfer from Unreserved fund to perfect title Map 9, lot 4]: It was noted that there hasn't been a clear understanding of the reasoning of this from the start and the "stories" seem to change. The Chair will ask for clarification and more specific information as to the advantages to the town.

(d) Article 5 [money from Unreserved Fund for job/compensation study]: It was noted that there has been and it has been said there will be no RFP done prior to this going on the warrant. There are still several outstanding questions such as the reasoning behind doing this at this time. Will it be used as a basis for union negotiations? Will it include all town employees union or not? What firms have they been looking at? In general, the CONSENSUS was that it would be a good thing to have done especially with unions being formed but the Committee needs more concrete information.

(e) Article 6 [re-roof town garage]: Present to speak on this were Charles Case and Ben Brickett of the Energy Committee. They presented the plans and reasoning behind the shoring up of the roof to accept the solar panels and also discussed present and future plans for using solar energy to reduce town electrical costs. The reasoning behind approving now is to have the panels up before the summer begins. This is the peak time to see just how well the system will work. Other than the shoring and re-roof, the solar panel project itself will be of no cost to the town until time to decide to either buy or lease the system at the end of 6 years. (2019). The cost to buy at that time will be \$40,000, a considerable savings on a \$160,000 system that is warranted for 10 years with a panel life of 40 years. The system is being installed by Revision Energy.

(f) Article 7 [using Unreserved funds to pay county's bill]: The Chair reported that there is no penalty assessed in holding off till the June meeting to decide. CONSENSUS to leave until the June Town Meeting.

2. Posting of position in Clerk's office due to retirement: The Chair noted that several people have questioned the posting of this position without including some need for financial skills since it is being talked about the need for treasurer assistance. MOTION made by Reed and 2nd by Jacques to recommend that the Selectmen modify the job description for the replacement clerk to include the necessary knowledge and skills need to assist the town treasurer or to find someone in-house who has those skills and can assist. VOTE: 4-0, Chair Concurs.

3. The Chair stated that the Budget Committee's questions to the Selectmen do not in any way cast aspersions on the work that they do. The Budget Committee though has the right to expect answers to its questions so it can make good recommendations to the public.

4. Robert Fisher thanked the members of the Energy Committee and the public for attending and expressing their views.

5. The Chair asked if there was anyone on the committee who could review the ECSD accounts.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm

Respectfully submitted,

Rosanne Adams