

Town of Eliot  
Budget Committee Meeting  
July 9, 2019

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**Budget Committee Members:** Donna Murphy (Chair), Jim Tessier (Vice-Chair), Dennis Lentz (Secretary), Ed Strong, Brad Hughes, Janie Wang, and Megan Weeks Zotara.

**Call to Order:**

- Meeting was called to order @ 6:00 pm by the Chair (video streaming was used).

**Public Comment:**

- Three members of the public present.

**Welcome new member Megan Weeks-Zotara**

- The Budget Committee welcomed Megan Weeks-Zotera to a three-year term.

**Election of Officers**

- Motion by Ed Strong, second by Jim Tessier to nominate Donna Murphy for Chair. Vote 7-0 to approve.
- Motion by Donna Murphy, second by Brad Hughes to nominate Jim Tessier for Vice-Chair. Vote 7-0 to approve.
- Motion by Ed Strong, second by Brad Hughes to nominate Denny Lentz for Secretary. Vote 7-0 to approve.

**Approval of May 2019 minutes**

- Motion by Brad Hughes, second by Jim Tessier to approve the minutes as amended. Vote 7-0 to approve as amended.

**FOAA training**

- Donna Murphy stated she wanted to confirm that all received the email from the Town Manager about the FOAA training. Megan Weeks-Zotera, Brad Hughes, and Denny Lentz are required to review the training and submit documentation to the Town Manager that they have completed the training.

**Discussion on goals of William Fogg Library subcommittee**

- Motion by Donna Murphy, second by Brad Hughes to re-appoint Jim Tessier and Janie Wang to the subcommittee to the William Fogg Library. Vote 7-0 to approve.
- Lydia Goodwin (Library Director) and Larry Zotera (President of the Friends of the Library) engaged in a discussion on the Budget Committee subcommittee, the William

Fogg Library budget, William Fogg House, and the long-term plan and funding of the long-term plan. ***Please see video for details starting at approximately 6:16 and ending at 6:40.***

- Denny excused himself from the meeting at 6:41.

### **Goals and objectives for the 2020/2021 fiscal year**

- The Budget Committee named some of the successes and challenges of the process and items in the budget. Megan expressed interest in looking at the previous year's book to learn the format. Review the timeline for "Budget Season".

### **Budget Committee member reports and comments**

- Megan stated that she is learning and the first few months may not say much. Megan was encouraged to ask questions and participate. Jim stated this was a good time to join. Ed stated they have more time this time of year to focus on specific issues. Meetings during Budget Season are on Tuesday for the Budget Committee and Thursday for the joint meetings with the Town Manager and Select Board. Last year was more focused than previous years.
- Ed spoke about continuing to serve as the Budget Committee member for the contract negotiations.
- Motion by Donna Murphy, second by Jim Tessier to appoint Ed Strong as the Budget Committee member on the Union Negotiating Team. Ed stated that the current union contracts are Public Works and Police Department. In addition, Administration is forming a union. It is the same union, Teamsters, as DPW but different bargaining unit.
- Janie stated she felt bad about the subcommittee. Megan stated that we, the library, felt they were going well and there were great discussions. They felt they went okay. Megan knows now they were on a fact-finding mission. Lydia put a lot of work into in. Megan stated for the library, there wasn't one vote in our favor, referring to the Budget Committee and Select Board. Megan stated that is just life, just normal. They thought there would be one vote. That started them thinking. Megan stated that Donna said to them at one meeting they needed a five-year plan. Megan stated they have one. Megan asked, what are we doing wrong that you wanted us to do? Janie stated this made her feel better. Janie stated she and Jim are not advocates for the library. Megan stated that their thought at the end of the four or five meetings was that you (the Town) will never get control of the library. Megan spoke to the financial changes over the years and that the Trust will not sustain the library. Jim acknowledge the Library is a valuable asset to the citizens. Jim stated he was surprised by the conversation tonight. Lydia and the library were not very happy. Jim stated some of the confusion is that Lydia did lay out a plan and her plan was the Town was going to pay for it. Jim stated other options need to be discussed. Do not want to see the trust fund depleted and wants to keep the trust and the library viable. Donna reminded that no other outside

agency receives the amount of funding received by the library. The library is an outside agency and the Town has no say in how it is run. There are Town Departments that need to be funded. Ed stated that the Committee spent more time discussing the library than the Police Department budget. Megan stated there is a lot of support in this Town for the library. Megan stated that it is Lydia's job and every year she has to go in front of the Town at the Citizen's Option Meeting and it is a lot of work. Megan stated if we came to a goal amount it would be nice for Lydia. Brad stated there were different expectations between the Committee and the Library. Brad stated we need to stay within Legislative guidelines. In referring to the review the budget questions asked are; Who is going to take money out of their budget to meet the requirements? Where are we in terms of LD1? Brad stated that Megan had done her campaigning for the library and he appreciated it. You can vote for or against the library budget and that is okay. Brad stated we listen to a lot of people about their budgets and they work hard to prepare their budget and work as hard as Lydia. Megan stated they unanimously get supported. Brad and others disagreed. Ed explained that we get the numbers from the Town Manager. Jim questioned the value of the subcommittee and suggested discussing at the August meeting.

### **Adjournment**

- Motion by Brad Hughes, second by Ed Strong to adjourn at 7:15. Vote 6-0

Respectfully submitted,

*Donna Murphy*, Chair

Date Approved: September 10, 2019

*Dennis F. Lentz*, Secretary