# Grafton Budget Committee

#  Meeting Minutes

#  January 14, 2022

**Members present**: Ed Grinley (Chair), Catherine Mulholland, Pam Curran and Cindy Kudlik (Select Board ex-officio pro-temp and minute taker).

**Also present**: Paul & Denise Vogt, Karen Johnson, Sandy Griffin, Maureen O’Reilly, Steve Kudlik, Lex Berezhny, Karen Meyers, and George Curran

Meeting called to order by Ed Grinley at 18:20. Ed moved to approve the 1/5/22 minutes; Pam seconded. Catherine abstained. Motion passed.

Warrant articles recommended (numbered according to the order received, these may be numbered differently on the warrant when published):

1- To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of fifty thousand dollars to the purpose of paving town roads.

2- To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of fifty thousand dollars to be placed in the previously established Highway Department Capital Reserve Fund.

3- To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of thirty-five thousand dollars to be placed in the previously established Fire Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund.

4- To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of seventy-three thousand dollars from the Ambulance Savings Account to be placed in the previously established New Ambulance Capital Reserve Fund. This article, if passed, will have no impact on taxation.

6- To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of ten thousand dollars to be placed in the previously established Town Hall Capital Reserve Fund.

7- To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars to be placed in the previously established Bridge Capital Reserve Fund.

8- To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of ten thousand dollars to be placed in the previously established Recycling Capital Reserve Fund.

9- To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of five thousand dollars to be placed in the previously established Veterans Park Capital Reserve Fund and to name the Selectmen as agents to expend.

10- To see if the Town will vote to increase the Selectmen stipend by $500, this will increase the current stipend from $2000 to $2500.

13- To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of nine thousand dollars to be placed in the previously established Police Cruiser Capital Reserve Fund.

14- To see if the Town will vote to re-establish the Property Tax Revaluations Capital Reserve Fund and to raise and appropriate the sum of fifteen thousand dollars to be placed in that fund.

Warrant articles not recommended

5 – To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of three thousand dollars for the restoration of the Town’s historical records. Pam and Ed voted to recommend, Catherine and Cindy voted not to recommend.

Ed stated the meeting would be suspended at 18:42 until the public hearing begins at 7pm.

Ed called the Public Hearing to order at 19:00

Ed read through the budgets in alphabetical order. Ed then opened the floor to questions.

George Curran addressed the committee stating he has finally understood gross basis budgeting for the library. He apologized for the confusion he had a part in creating over the budget previously submitted. He is asking the committee to reconsider the Library budget without $3,000 as gross basis but leave the bottom line as is. Ed said no decision would be made in the hearing but will consider it when the regular meeting reconvenes after the hearing. Ed asked if George talked to the other Library Trustees about this and George stated that he couldn’t because they haven’t had a scheduled meeting. Much discussion ensued regarding how accounts are funded, what is appropriate gross basis funds to spend or what to spend gross basis funds on.

Maureen asked why the Fire Department budget increased so much over last year. Pam explained what her handout indicated on Page 5. Steve Kudlik offered further explanation as a Fire Department member. Karen Meyers asked about the specific things needed that Steve mentioned such as air tanks and bunker gear, if the budget committee is aware of them and feels there’s enough to get what’s needed.

Cindy asked some questions regarding the Library budget, regarding utilities and restrooms. George Curran and Ed explained that they felt those amounts were adequate.

Maureen asked about warrant articles – ambulance savings account – is that the correct name of the account? Cindy will check. Why is the committee not recommending the historical records warrant article? Ed explained that the Town Clerk didn’t respond to the Selectmen’s request as to how many books are left to be done. When the budget committee vote on recommending it was a tie so it didn’t pass. When is our next bridge due to be fixed? Ed responded that the state changed their criteria and we no longer have any bridges on the red list. What is the recycle center capital reserve account for and have the taxpayers ever put money in it before? Ed told her it is in case the DES tells us the dump must be closed and moved and we have put money in it, last year it was warrant article 13 and passed.

Ed moved to close the public hearing at 20:15. Catherine seconded; motion passed unanimously.

Tax Collector budget – The licensed software line item request was $2,900 but the bill came in at $2,600. Ed said he talked to Bonnie and she’s fine with the $300 reduction. Ed moved to approve the Tax Collector budget at $19,200 with the change to the licensed software line from $2900 to $2600. 3 ayes, Pam is a nay. Motion passed.

Recycle Center – Ed talked to Rick about the budget being overspent on all but the uniforms and wages line items. There are several lines of spending that were one-offs and won’t recur next year. Some will be reined in next year. Ed suggested changing dumping fees line item $48,000 (up $3000) for a total of $97,950. Passed unanimously.

Selectmen - Cindy asked to increase audit line item from $13,200 to $14,000 due to the auditors raising their price and add $1000 to phone/fax/internet under General Government Buildings to make it $3,800 as the Selectmen have agreed to install internet access at the Town Hall, giving us a new total of $318,107. Passed unanimously.

Library - Motion from Catherine to eliminate gross basis and add $3,000 to bottom line to total $22,874. No second. Ed moved to remove gross basis $3,000 and approve budget at $16,874. There was some discussion before a second was made and Pam then moved to leave it as is with a total appropriation of $19,874 with the $3000 gross basis. Passed unanimously.

Catherine moved to adjourn; Pam seconded. Passed unanimously, meeting adjourned at 23:10.

Respectfully submitted, Cindy Kudlik