

Approved **with correction**

**Grafton Budget Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**December 5, 2019**

**Members present:** Ed Grinley (Chair), Catherine Mulholland, Pam Curran and Jennie Joyce (Select Board ex-officio)

**Also present:** Cindy Kudlik (minute taker), Dotti Ernst and Russell Poitras

Meeting called to order by Ed Grinley at 18:10. Pam stated that the 11/26 minutes say she may be out of town for the public hearing on January 17<sup>th</sup> and she will be available that day. She also questioned ~~having a new~~ **giving the resurrected Old Home Day** committee ~~and giving them~~ a \$500 budget **when we are cutting other budgets**. She suggested taking that money from the Rec. Committee's revolving account instead. Ed explained that it can not as there is no extra money there, there are only 3 people on the committee and besides all the work they do, they also gather donations for the fireworks. Jennie moved to accept the 11/26 minutes; Catherine seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Budgets Reviewed**

*Ambulance Department:* Down \$3,450 from last year; from \$44,450 to \$41,000 with \$20,000 being Gross Basis coming from the Revolving Account. Dotti explained that they are no longer requesting a warrant article to have \$10,000 moved to the Capital Reserve account, it will just come from the Revolving Account and the Treasurer will need to purchase a CD after the transfer is made. \$10,000 had been approved by the voters in 2018 but the transfer was never made so \$20,000 was moved in 2019. The Selectmen used to do it automatically but now are requiring the Ambulance Captain to make a written request so there is a paper trail for the auditors. Dotti did do that this year.

Ed asked what the CLIA line item is for. Dotti stated that it is a fee that goes to the state for processing blood lab work.

Ed asked why the Medical Supplies line item request went from \$2,000 to \$5,000. Dotti stated that there are several factors affecting medical supply costs. First, when Canaan does a transport for a call we responded to but couldn't transport, they restocked whatever supplies we used prior to them taking the patient. Because we now have more EMTs responding, Canaan transports less, therefore we must restock our own supplies. Also, DHMC won't give Grafton Ambulance an account for supplies and we had been getting them through other mutual aid towns that did but that is no longer an option. Narcan and Epipens are very expensive and we can't shop around for better pricing as we must purchase from approved suppliers. There is a set fee for calls depending on what level of responders provide care (BLS, ALS or Paramedic) regardless of what supplies are used; supplies aren't itemized for billing.

Discussion regarding CAG billing. CAG is paid 7% commission for insurance payments but by law they must submit 100% to the town and then we must send them payment for their 7%; they can't take it right

off the top. Ed had a printed report of the Revolving Account that Sue ran for him. Dotti said she had asked the Treasurer for that same information but never got it because she was told those records are all handwritten and Dotti Campbell doesn't know Quickbooks. Dotti stated that she needs that information in a timely manner to verify CAG payments and locate errors. She has found errors such as deposits for the Rec. Committee being deposited in the Ambulance Revolving Account and missed transfers to cover debit card charges. Ed suggested the insurance billing shouldn't be part of the budget because it's not taxpayer money. It is only a percentage of income, but if there is no income from insurance billing, there are no required payments to CAG.

There was further discussion regarding which monies come out of the Operating Budget and which come from the Revolving Account. Dotti explained that she made her own payment request form and this is always clearly stated when she submits a payment request. Unfortunately, when the Treasurer writes a check this same information isn't included on the memo line, making verification difficult. CAG and Paramedic Intercept charges always come from the Revolving Account, other things are determined by the Captain as the year progresses so she doesn't go over the Revolving Account budgeted amount.

Stipends/Incentives were discussed. Dotti stated it was originally set up to get people to go on calls, that no one wants to work for free or leave their paying jobs to go on a call. She said she modeled it after the Canaan FAST squad's pay per call depending on the responder's level of training and the Selectmen approved it at \$35 per call for EMTs but she went with a lower number. Dotti stated that some volunteers get a stipend and some don't want money so she keeps track of the amount "earned" for when they sometimes asks for equipment. Ed stated that the Selectmen agreed to equipment but not cash. Dotti stated that some responders won't go on a call if they're not going to be paid every time. Another member gets \$5 for each call when he drives, but he takes gear because he can't show income due to receiving disability. Russell asked if this was normal practice. Dotti responded that paying responders is but giving them different options probably isn't. She said she also takes a stipend for doing all the billing. When asked why only she and Kathy Lund show up as being paid stipends, she said some other people she just "writes off". Because 1099s are issued for those being paid by check, this money must come from the Operating Budget, not the Revolving Account. Dotti stated the Selectmen asked her to turn in quarterly payment requests for stipends with supporting run info and she does.

The Call Coverage line item was explained that it is to cover the contract with Canaan through the end of June when it expires, plus a bit extra in case we would need to pay someone from outside the town to cover for events such as the annual conference in Sunapee.

Jennie moved to accept the 2020 budget as proposed at \$41,000 with \$21,000 to be raised by taxation and the Gross Basis \$20,000 to come from the Revolving Account; Catherine seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

*Town Clerk:* Up \$5,250 from last year; from \$36,250 to \$41,500. The Selectmen reduced the License Fees to NH line item from \$1,600 to \$1,500 and the License Fees to TC line item from \$18,500 to \$17,500 which brought the bottom line down to \$40,400. There was some discussion regarding fees and stipends. Ed stated that the Selectmen are putting an article on the warrant regarding fees per the DRA's instruction as this was never brought before the voters. Ed proposed changing the License Fees to TC line item to \$0, changing the bottom-line total to \$22,900. Jennie moved to accept the budget as amended, Catherine seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

*Tax Collector:* Up \$800 from last year; from \$19,000 to \$19,800. The Selectmen reduced the Supplies line item from \$1,200 to \$1,050 and the Wages line item from \$6,300 to \$6,000 which brought the bottom line down to \$19,350. Ed stated there is the same issue regarding fees with the Tax Collector budget as there is with the Town Clerk budget. He proposed changing the Lien Processing Fee line item to \$0, changing the bottom-line total to \$14,840. Jennie moved to accept the budget as amended; Catherine seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Ed instructed Cindy to send letters to all of the department heads to apprise them of the committee's decisions and to include details of any changes made to their proposals. Jennie suggested including the RSA's referred to with the letters to the Town Clerk and Tax Collector. (\*minute takers note - for information only: the RSA regarding Tax Collector fees is 41:33; the RSAs regarding Town Clerk fees are 41:25 and 262:165)

**The next meeting will be at noon on Wednesday, December 11<sup>th</sup> at the Town Hall.**

Jennie moved to adjourn the meeting at 20:17; Catherine seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cindy Kudlik