

**Town of Hill
Budget Committee
2025 Budget**

10/9/2024 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Bruce Blazon (Chair), Marshall Bennett (V. Chair), Betty Hanks, Frank Simeone, Tom Angeley, Joann Irving, Bill Machado, Shaun Bresnahan (Sec/Ex-Officio), Wendy Rosa-Fuller (Ex-Officio)

Members Absent: none

Public: Michelle Munson, Carol Asher-Snow, Dr. Brian Connolly

Library was scheduled to meet with Budget Committee to review budget, but did not attend meeting.

Reviewed minutes from 8/26/24 meeting; Bruce made motion to accept minutes as submitted, Frank seconded motion. Motion passes unanimously.

Bruce asked if there were volunteers to partake in Fire Chief Qualification Committee. Joann and Frank both would like to participate. A vote was taken and Joann Irving was nominated by a vote of 7 yes and 2 no.

Bill Machado has come to the meeting and would like to be appointed to Budget Committee. Marshall made a motion to appoint Bill; Tom seconded the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

Dr. Connolly and School Board members presented a review of the 2023-24 school year expenses. At the end of the fiscal year there was approximately \$108,643 unspent which will be returned to offset property taxes. In addition because of a cyberattack on the Newfound School system tuition wasn't billed until April of 2024. This left a large sum of money in the School account and generated approximately \$30,000 in interest which will all so be used to offset taxes. Summary of the largest expense changes from what was budgeted:

10.1100 Regular Education; under-spent by \$99,743; This was because fewer children attended Newfound than budgeted for.

10.1210 Special Education; under-spent by \$7,349; position wasn't fully staffed.

10.2122 Guidance; under-spent by \$5,133; Position wasn't filled because of medical leave.

10.2140 Psychological Services; over-spent by \$11,866; Newfound contracts this service out and there was a significant increase in price.

10.2152.330 Speech Services; over-spent by \$7,947; Staff was out on medical leave had to hire a substitute.

10.2190.330 Behavioral Services; under-spent by \$4,252; position wasn't filled.

10.2321.111 Admin Salary; under-spent by \$6,934; this line covers SAU personnel attending SPED conferences at Newfound for Hill students. Superintendent attended all conferences.

10.2620 Operation of Building; under-spent by \$5,649; Grant paid for most of the phone and internet access. Electricity rates and fuel oil cost were less than budgeted.

10.5221 Transfer to Food Services; New cook is very good at minimizing cost which has reduced the amount needed to cover expenses.

\$15,000 was transferred into Capital Reserve Funds as approved at annual School Board meeting.

There was a brief discussion about the SAU not having an unreserved fund balance; Dr. Connolly learned at a recent conference that Hill is the only school district that doesn't have unreserved fund balance. This would need to be approved at annual school Board meeting since it would result in less money available for off setting taxes. This would provided for better cash flow.

Bruce asked Dr. Connolly about interest income. Normally the SAU doesn't care enough of a balance to generate interest. The cyberattack on Newfound was a benefit for Hill.

Joann asked about the 2025-26 adequacy grants and what will Hill be getting? Dr. Connolly has been told at least as much as this year with the possibility of 2% more.

Dr. Connolly said it is too early to predict what the final impact of the 2025-26 budget will be. He doesn't go into the process with the mind set of increasing the budget. What ever the final costs are will determine the bottom line.

Dr. Connolly asked Bruce about Capital Assessment of Town Facilities and if he could help with this. He replied that many firms do this kind of work. It can help determine the remaining life of critical systems and identify ways to become more energy efficient. If the School and Town did this as a joint project cost could be minimized.

Bruce asked Wendy of there was any plan by the School Board to have an alternate member participate on the Budget Committee if she can't attend. Wendy said they have discussed and a member will be available to cover for her if she can't attend.

Bruce asked Shaun about the special appropriation that maybe requested by selectmen. A brief overview of the need to do an emergency replacement of a septic system since the property owner can't afford it. Sewage is leaking onto an abutters property. The selectmen will request a date to meeting Budget Committee.

Discussion about requesting the Water Works to present there budget. Marshall felt that residents are paying the fee's to support water and it appropriate to review the budget. Shaun felt that the appropriation is on the MS-737 so there should be a review. But since this is a

dedicated account the Budget Committee isn't in the position to make changes; this would be for public review only.

Wendy makes a motion to request Water Commissioners to present budget at a meeting; Frank seconded the motion. Motion passes unanimously. Bruce will contact Stephen Thomson.

Updates to meeting calendar:

10/16/24 – Police, Parks & Rec, Fire, *Library*

10/23/24 – Highway, Transfer Station, Town Clerk/Tax, Selectmen, Fire Dept (2)

10/30/24 – School

11/6/24 – Town Budget, *Water*

Marshall makes a motion to adjourn at 7:38 PM; Tom seconded the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted
Shaun Bresnahan; Secretary