

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE  
December 4, 2006**

A meeting of the Municipal Budget Committee was called to order at 6:30 PM in the Meeting Room at the Conway Town Hall with the following members present: Chairperson Melissa Stacey, Robert Drinkhall, Betty Boucher, Maureen Seavey, Pat Libby, Charlotte Waterman, Phil Dighello, Doug Swett, Etienne Vallee, Rick Paquette, Kirk Smith, Bill Aughton, Mark Hounsell, Crow Dickinson, Bill Jones and James LeFebvre. Also present were Earl Sires and Dena Libner.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Bob Drinkhall moved, seconded by Phil Dighello, to approve the Minutes of October 18, 2006. In favor: 9; Abstain: 4 - Kirk Smith, Rick Paquette, Bill Aughton and Mark Hounsell.**

**Bob Drinkhall moved, seconded by Phil Dighello, to approve the Minutes of October 30, 2006. In favor: 9; Abstain: 4 - Kirk Smith, Rick Paquette, Bill Aughton and Mark Hounsell.** Maureen Seavey stated that she wanted it noted that she was not serious with her comment concerning Pat Swett's resignation; she had been kidding. Chairman Stacey stated that it was a good question to have been brought to everyone's attention.

**Betty Boucher moved, seconded by Mark Hounsell, that we accept all three candidates. In favor: 11; Opposed: 1 - Doug Swett; Abstain: 1 - Pat Libby.** Chairman Stacey stated that the members were now faced with filling the vacancy left by Pat Swett's resignation due to her appointment to the School Board and that three letters had been received about same: Crow Dickinson, Bill Jones and James LeFebvre. Chairman Stacey asked the members how they wanted to proceed as each gentleman was present. Betty Boucher stated that she would like to hear from each candidate why they would like to be on the Budget Committee and what they would bring to the Committee. Crow Dickinson stated that he lived on Brownfield Road and as everyone knew had recently become unemployed; all members had previously received a letter from him; he had been a Selectman in the early 1970's and the Selectmen's representative on the Budget Committee; in the legislature and County for the last 32 years; dealt with the County budget; familiar with the budget process; and hoped the Committee would give him consideration for the vacant post. James LeFebvre stated that officially he has been a resident since 1987; lives off West Side Road; has worked with the military; he would bring a bit more private sector concerning living here as a taxpayer; and wanted to bring down the 69.95% of the budget contributed to the School; wanted to look at the School budget mandates; and find what can be cut that will make a difference. Bill Jones stated he was a taxpayer living in Birch Hill; has been on the Budget Committee; involved in the Birch Hill Water District; at last meeting, he suggested advertising this vacancy; knows it is a tremendous responsibility to take on; there are unknown expenses to consider: maintenance on the school, transportation costs; this is an opportunity to set the default budget; need to seriously look at all of

the budget, specifically where can we cut and save without losing programs; need to convince people to carry a little more of the burden; he was anxious to serve again; knows responsibility and time commitment involved and able to defend what is done at the public hearing; this Committee is a loud voice for this community.

Mark Hounsell stated looking at the 3 candidates is amazing; the Town expertise that Crow Dickinson has; Bill's record serving on this Board are known and appreciated; and looking at James LeFebvre's Resume there is no question on his ability to do this. Mark would like to have it considered to putting all 3 on the Committee.

Crow Dickinson stated that there were vacancies for the fire departments that might be something to look at; using those umbrellas for the three candidates. Mark Hounsell stated that he was actually thinking along those lines. As to whether it is procedurally correct, Mark did not know; this is certainly an opportunity for this Committee to expand its numbers with capable people.

Chairman Stacey stated that her only question would be if they needed to live in the district or does the Board of Commissioners need to designate their representative. Mark Hounsell responded he couldn't imagine anyone objecting, but there may have to be some follow up.

Doug Swett stated that he spoke with one of the Commissioners and they were looking at sending someone. Chairman Stacey stated that Joe Marada was on the Committee, but due to health reasons, he resigned. Doug further stated that he had expected someone to show up. Doug questioned when the terms would run out and how many seats would be available. Chairman Stacey stated that 6 seats were coming up in April. Doug stated that he thought the Committee should go by the old system. If the district elects someone, would appreciate them stepping forward.

Maureen Seavey stated that she would have a hard time picking from all three unless the vote was done by a secret ballot. Rick Paquette stated that he was confused how the procedure worked. Chairman Stacey stated the Committee could fill the one vacant seat, and two of the district seats.

Mark Hounsell stated that sometimes you have to make government work. Dilemma for this year: first there is the School budget, a new school and the Middle School. Think of the work load; many hands make light work. This way all three can be put on at this time. Chairman Stacey stated her only concern was filling all three seats, then having to kick two off. Bob Drinkhall stated he agreed with Maureen Seavey about voting on all three and questioned the provision for alternates. Earl Sires stated he didn't have the answer, but could find out. Phil Dighello questioned whether they would have to live in that district. Chairman Stacey read Section XXI - Budget Committee of the Town Charter to the members. Phil Dighello stated he would like to have an interpretation; do the Commissioners need to appoint if the representative is not living in their particular district. Chairman Stacey stated that letters were sent out to all precincts back in October and Mark Hounsell stated that he had a letter dated September 6<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Stacey stated that since we are

allowed to appoint, why can't we fill the vacancies. Doug Swett stated he didn't want to do that until he speaks with the Commissioners. Bill Aughton stated that he was very relieved with the suggestion. Given the time frame and lack of response from the districts, the Committee should move in that direction. Crow Dickinson stated that there were actually four vacancies.

After the vote, Mark Hounsell, as a Selectman, gave the oath to Crow Dickinson, Bill Jones and James LeFebvre to become members of the Budget Committee. After giving the oath, Mark asked to be recused from the meeting.

**Betty Boucher moved, seconded by Charlotte Waterman, to have Bill Jones fill the vacant seat; Crow Dickinson fill the Center Conway Fire District seat and James LeFebvre fill the Redstone Fire District seat. In favor: 13; Opposed: 2 - Pat Libby and Doug Swett.** Betty Boucher asked how to decide to fill the vacancy left by Pat Swett's resignation. Phil Dighello stated that Crow lives in Center Conway; that he supported putting Bill Jones on as a regular appointment; put James LeFebvre on one of the other two. Crow Dickinson asked if it would be the intention to write to the Center Conway Commissioners stating "hope you will appoint because we elected him". Mark Hounsell suggested what might be written is "due to work load and no response, we are exercising our right". Chairman Stacey stated that she would probably not write, but would talk face-to-face on what to do. Crow stated he would be more than happy to come with Chairman Stacey. Crow further stated that he had a discussion with Carolyn Brown's husband and thought that he (Carolyn Brown's husband) would like to be on the Committee with the Commissioners appointing him.

Betty Boucher questioned if you go to these guys and they say they want to fill the vacancy, what do you do. Chairman Stacey stated then I just increased us from 12 to 15; hope we won't have that problem.

Chairman Stacey passed out paperwork from the School Board to all members.

Pat Libby asked when the Committee would be getting the local standards from the School Board. Chairman Stacey stated that same had been passed out. Pat stated what she had was only for the State. Carl Nelson had indicated they were going to program based budgeting based on State Department of Education. It would be helpful to know what the local standards are. Chairman Stacey stated she would call Carl Nelson and get it. Charlotte Waterman asked where is the CES Cafeteria was. Chairman Stacey stated right next to Kennett; it is Conway Elementary School Cafeteria. Chairman Stacey advised the members not to hold those dates to heart, as they are subject to change; that it was Carl Nelson's schedule. Next meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 here for the School; books should be out on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Meeting for the 20<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday at 6:30 for the Town at the Library.

Chairman Stacey advised the Town Books were set to be ready on the 8<sup>th</sup>, but probably not until 4:30 or 5 PM as Karen was taking Minutes in the

morning. She further reminded all members to check their name off once they got their book.

Bill Jones questioned the status of the School books. Chairman Stacey advised the books will be picked up at the SAU 9 office.

Chairman Stacey went through the dates for meetings: January 1<sup>st</sup> is a holiday so no meeting; January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, the non-profit budgets are due on the 12<sup>th</sup>, Town offices are closed on the 15<sup>th</sup>; 17<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup>; meeting straight through the month of January, missing the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> for holidays. Chairman Stacey further advised that the Committee would be meeting every Monday and Wednesday, alternating between the Town and School. February 3<sup>rd</sup> is booked for non-profits at 9 AM in the Meeting Room at Town Hall. If it does snow, have the ability to meet on the 10<sup>th</sup>. February 13<sup>th</sup> is the last day to submit Petitions. Public hearing on February 14<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM. Betty Boucher asked where the public hearing was going to be held. Chairman Stacey replied at the Conway Elementary School Gym. March 5<sup>th</sup> and March 7<sup>th</sup> are the final hearings. The Committee will have to vote sometime after then. April 10<sup>th</sup> is voting day. This is the schedule as it sits right now; will work on the rest after the end of January; figure out February at the end of January and figure out March at the end of February.

Betty Boucher asked Earl Sires why separate the Police and Library budgets. Earl stated a concern this year; some frustration last few years with the administrative part of budget; decisions that go on during the year that effect the following year budget. Police 8% or 9% increase, cost of living increase 4.1%; number increased by decisions made during the year. Budget up before there is a chance to discuss what or what should not be in the budget. Similarly with the Library as it has an independent board. Earl stated that in his opinion the Police budget needs improvements. This year there is some work needed concerning the relationship with Town, Commissioners and Police Department. Betty asked if separate, will Commissioners budget come to the Committee. Earl stated it may be presented as separate articles so voters could vote on each component. Earl stated he forwarded both Library and Police budgets without recommendation; seemed the right thing to do at the time; might have taken a different approach; all he does is make recommendations. Selectmen make a decision and voter's make a decision. There is a Letter of Understanding between Police, Selectmen and Police Commissioners to request to move money and not to over expend their line of budgeting; Selectmen responsible for bottom line. Phil Dighello stated basically it is the Commissioner's Budget, not yours and Earl replied that was correct.

At this point Maureen Seavey left the meeting and Earl Sires left the meeting.

**Betty Boucher moved, seconded by Phil Dighello, to have Pat Libby replace Pat Swett on the insurance committee. Motion carried unanimously.** Pat Libby stated she checked to see when the insurance committee was to meet and found she wasn't notified about the last one. Someone should be appointed to replace Pat Swett. Phil Dighello stated several people were

not notified; no one from the School Board attended. Pat Libby asked if the date for the next meeting had been scheduled. Chairman Stacey advised the date changed and she was not given a new date.

Betty Boucher asked Chairman Stacey about advising the new members on missing three meetings. Chairman Stacey stated that members cannot miss more than 3 meetings unless the Chairman is notified; otherwise automatically off the Board.

**Bill Jones moved, seconded by Charlotte Waterman, to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 PM. Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Iris A. Bowden, Recording Secretary