

Chairman Wood called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Raymond High School. Members present: Greg Bemis, Jack Barnes, Frank Bishop and Timothy Auclair. Also present: Town Manager Richard Bates.

Chairman Wood led a salute to the flag.

Continuation of the budget workshop in preparation for final presentation to the budget committee.

The Selectmen went over the changes that Selectman Auclair had made to the Town Managers Budget. (See attached worksheets for changes made.)

The first department that was gone over was the Library. Department Head Charlene Brox asked the Selectmen to reconsider the cut that was made to the books and material lines. All other changes can be worked with. She stated that the Town of Raymond was at the bottom of towns with populations at 10,000 or more when it comes to funding the Library. They had not increased the line for books in years and with the price of books going up the increase is needed. Selectman Barnes asked the board to look at this later and to not make a decision yet. The Board agreed. Selectman Auclair stated that due to the electricity being so high he had to cut the budget somewhere. Town Manager Rick Bates stated that the electricity issue was looked at and because the library is open more hours than other offices in the Town it causes higher electric bills. The big costs are caused by the elevator and the air conditioners.

The Board went over the Public Works department: Cemetery, Government Grounds and Buildings, Highway, Street Lights, Solid Waste, Park Maintenance, and Water. In going over the Cemetery Department Selectman Bishop said that instead of increasing the overtime line, it needed to be decreased. Selectman Auclair stated that the cuts in overtime were in other departments. Selectman Auclair cut \$10,000 from Highway overtime due to the fact the two employees that were calculated in the overtime worked for other department. Selectman Auclair's reasoning was that if they help plow the roads then they will have to accommodate that into their work week. When those two employees are plowing they should be getting straight time. An alternative to that is for the Department Head Dennis McCarthy to higher more part time drivers. Mr. McCarthy stated that over the years it has become more difficult to find drivers for the plow trucks. Selectman Bishop suggested that he call the union groups and hire someone from there. Mr. McCarthy believed that it would be more expensive to hire someone from the union but that he would look into it.

In the Solid Waste department Selectman Auclair took out the expense of the waste pick up because he believed that the profits from PAYT should be covering this expense. He suggested that the town increase the cost of the large bags by \$.25. Where the large bags are three times the size of the small ones and are now only \$.50 more, it would be realistic to increase the cost to \$2.25. Not all of the selectmen were in agreement with Selectman Auclair. They tabled this issue to a later time.

Town resident Gary Williams came forward to state some concerns he has. He believes that the town shouldn't cut services but add them. He doesn't want to see his taxes to go up but he understands the reality of it and is ok with it as long as he continues to get services. He thought it was wrong the Selectman Auclair was the only one making suggestions about the budget. He wants to know if the town will be adding services before exit four is developed or after. His comment on Solid Waste was that he was against PAYT but has been participating in the program. He believes that if the town raises the cost of the large bags it will cause people to get angry and get rid of the program. He believes that it is cheaper to pay overtime than hire people off the street. The town would incur more cost by letting someone off the street driving the plow trucks because the town may get inexperienced drivers that cause damage to the trucks. It will be hard to find good drivers because the town doesn't pay enough to plow. He finds it ridiculous to cut service like Fire and Police. He wants the town to add to their budgets. He's aware that the town has opened negotiations with the Police Union but he wants to know what the town is doing for the rest of its employees.

Selectman Auclair, Selectman Bemis, and Chairman Wood thanked him for coming down and voicing his opinion. All they have heard from residents is that they don't want their taxes to go up. This is the first time they have heard the resident voice the opposite. Chairman Wood stated that the selectmen didn't want to increase the budget this year for services because they didn't want to be seen as spending the money from Exit 4 right away. The Selectmen will look at increasing services when they start to see revenue coming in from Exit 4's development. Selectman Barnes asked him to follow the budget process.

Selectman Barnes asked Town Manager Rick Bates about the lighting of the voting booths for the election coming up. Mr. Bates stated that not all of the booths would have lights in them but the handicap booths would.

Next department was the Police Department. The Selectman went over the Police, Dispatch and Animal Control budgets at their last meeting and there were no changes. Chief Salois asked the board how the replacement of vehicles would be handled. Should it be put into the CIP or should it be in the operating budget.

Selectman Barnes made a motion that the Police Department cruisers remain in the operating budget and not in the CIP. Motion was seconded by Selectman Bemis.

Discussion was held.

Selectman Bishop stated that if it was in the CIP it would probably be funded. The town, to his recollection has never voted down the article on the CIP. It was stated that if the cruisers became part of the Operating budget then it would also become part of the default budget. Chief Salois stated that the cruisers were of great use to the town. After the police department retires one another department in town gets it. These departments never have to budget for their cars because they get the ones from the Police Department. So in the end it saves the town money.

Motion was passed four to one. Selectman Auclair opposed the motion.

Selectman Barnes asked the Chief Salois if the officers have body protection. The Chief stated that all police officers are required to wear body armor. The armor is replaced every five years due to perspiration from the officer's breakdown of the armor. The Police Department replaces armor every year. The armor costs about \$799.00 each.

Fire Chief Kevin Pratt came forward to talk about his budget. The selectmen went over his budget last week and there were no changes tonight. Chief Pratt asked the selectmen to reconsider their cut to his Emergency Management Contracted Service line. He stated that this year they needed to use that line but because there was no funding the money had to come out of the wage line. He had originally put in \$8,000 into the Fire Department Contracted Services in case there was a Pandemic and the town had to purchase the shots which cost \$1.00 per shot. The town would have to buy 10,000 shots to cover all of the residents. When it went to the Town Manager he cut it to \$2,000 and took the funds out of the Fire Department and placed it into the Emergency Management Department. From there the Selectmen cut it to \$0.00 at their last meeting. Chief Pratt asked that they put some amount into that line to keep it open. He would only use the funds from that line if absolutely necessary.

Selectman Bemis motioned to leave the \$2,000.00 in the Emergency Management Contracted Services line. Selectman Barnes Seconded. Discussion:

Mr. Bates stated that the line doesn't need the \$2,000.00 to be a place holder. It can be some lower amount.

Selectman Bemis motioned to amend his previous motion to \$1,000.00 in the Emergency Management Contracted Services line. Motion was seconded by Selectman Barnes. There was no discussion on the amendment. Motion passed unanimously.

Selectman Barnes asked Chief Pratt if the Fire department had protection for the firefighters. Chief Pratt stated that the equipment that the fire department had protected the firefighters. He has applied and received grants to help pay for new fire gear.

Selectman Bishop asked how many fulltime firefighters and call firefighters were in the department. Chief Pratt stated that there were four fulltime firefighters including himself and the Deputy Fire Chief and that there are 33 call firefighters.

Next department was the Recreation Department. Selectman Auclair stated that he did not recalculate Recreation wages but had made other changes. Recreation Department Head Michelle Gordon gave the selectmen information they had previously asked for (see attached sheet).

In the Executive Budget Selectman Auclair cut the Selectmen secretary hours to four hours instead of the eight that the Town manager had. The Selectmen went over the

changes Selectman Auclair suggested for the Town Clerk/ Tax Collector and the Town Office.

Selectman Barnes asked Mr. Bates when the audit will be done because residents had been asking him about it. Finance Director Grace Collette stated that the town had received the draft audit report and that the residents that wanted a copy of it had gotten one. Last year the town received the final audit report in November. Selectman Barnes asked Ms. Collette if waiting this long for the audit report was common with the rest of the state. She stated that it was due to town now complying with GASB 34.

In the Building department Selectman Auclair left the contracted service line alone but felt that it was unneeded. He had talked to Ernest Creveling the Community Development Director and found out that there were three people in the office that could do building inspections, not including the Part Building Inspector that the town currently has. Mr. Bates was unsure that this was true and would talk to Mr. Creveling about it.

The Selectmen went over the Welfare budget. Selectman Barnes stated that the Welfare Director Denise O'Grady was doing an excellent job but feels that she gets a bad rap because all of her time is put to Overtime wages. Mr. Bates explained that it was because she had a full time position in the Public Works Department. Her overtime rate for Welfare is less than her regular rate in public works. He also stated that the town would find it extremely hare to find a Welfare Director at her pay. He suggested that maybe the town give her a stipend rather than an hourly rate.

The Selectman wanted to rap up this meeting. They set a date and time for a special meeting to finish going over the budget. The next meeting would be Wednesday, November 1, 2006 at 6:00 p.m. in Torrent Hall.

Selectman Barnes announced that Governor Candidate Jim Coburn would be coming to the Raymond Town Office on Wednesday, November 01, 2006 at 9:00 a.m. He also stated that Governor Lynch would be coming to the Town Office on Thursday, November 2, 2006 at 10:30 a.m.

The Board thanked Selectman Auclair for his work and also thanked Finance Director Grace Collette for coming to the meeting.

Selectman Barnes motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Selectman Bemis. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Wood adjourned the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

April Rives
Executive Secretary