

Place: Raymond High School Media Center

Call to order: 7:00 p.m.

Members present: Colleen West Coates, Doug Vogel, Ed Miller, Ed French, Sandy Ellis, School Board Representative John Harmon and Selectmen's Representative Tim Auclair.

Pledge of Allegiance

Note: Chairman Gail Columbus did not attend the meeting due to illness. Vice Chairman Colleen West Coates served as Acting Chairman for this meeting. Both Mrs. Columbus and Mr. Tuttle were excused from the meeting.

Acting Chairman West Coates opened the Public Hearing (continued from 01-11-07) at 7:03 p.m. There being no public comment, Acting Chairman West Coates closed the public hearing at 7:04 p.m.

Review of the Town of Raymond Operating Budget for 2007

Acting Chairman West Coates stated the Town Operating Budget for 2007, submitted by the Board of Selectmen is \$6,813,456. Budget Committee Members were invited to comment.

MOTION: Doug Vogel made a motion to reduce the total operating budget to \$6,632,272. Tim Auclair seconded for discussion. Discussion: Doug Vogel explained how he reached this number. He reduced each line except police and fire. He stated his number would be a 2.4% increase from the 2006 budget. Acting Chairman West Coates stated that is a \$181,184.00 decrease from the Board of Selectmen's budget. Doug Vogel disagreed stated it's a \$144,859 decrease. After a brief discussion on what the numbers were based on, Mr. Vogel withdrew his motion and Mr. Auclair withdrew his second. **MOTION WITHDRAWN**

MOTION: Doug Vogel made a motion to reduce the total operating budget to \$6,668,597. Tim Auclair seconded for discussion.

Discussion:

Doug Vogel stated this is a decrease of \$144,859 from the Board of Selectmen's budget. He stated the reduction includes the decrease in insurance by the Selectmen. Any raises greater than 2.4% would require a reduction in a line item. Most people in this town are only getting a 1% pay increase. The Town needs to do better. He reviewed some of the areas he would recommend cutting.

Ed French stated that it looks like we are looking at too much of a cut. We have pay increases and general increases in costs that have to be considered. People did say they do not want to see services cut and this is too much.

Ed Miller stated that he thought Mr. Vogel was on the right track. In the past the town has had money left over. There are a few warrant articles that will pass, increasing the taxes. He stated he didn't think that anything would cut services drastically.

John Harmon stated the operating budget from the Selectmen is offset by the fund balance and he would be comfortable with the Selectmen's budget.

Ed French asked Mr. Auclair what these kinds of cuts would do to the town.

Tim Auclair stated that depending on where the cuts were made, it could have a significant impact on personnel.

Finance Director Colette stated that there has been a 20% increase in retirement.

Tim Auclair stated that trash may be an item that would have to be cut which would have ramifications.

Acting Chairman West Coates stated that she cannot support this motion. At last Thursday's meeting it was evident that a large amount of people do not want any money cut from recreation.

VOTE ON THE MOTION TO REDUCE THE 2007 BUDGET TO \$6,668,597:

Doug Vogel and Ed Miller voted in favor of the motion.

John Harmon, Tim Auclair, Ed French, Sandy Ellis and Acting Chairman West Coates voted against the motion.

MOTION FAILED

MOTION: Doug Vogel made a motion to reduce the 2007 Budget to \$6,707,450.00. Tim Auclair seconded for discussion. **DISCUSSION:** Doug Vogel stated this is a decrease of \$106,002 from the Board of Selectmen's budget. This proposed number is similar to the last motion but it's a 3% increase vs. a 2.4% increase from the 2006 budget. He suggested that \$6,500 be cut from the recreation department.

Ed French stated this is the same math. This is a 2.5% increase if you take out the water figures.

Doug Vogel stated the town did an outstanding job and were on track in 2006.

Town Manager Bates stated that we are down a lot of employees and the snow will still need to be plowed.

Doug Vogel stated the employees of the town are always helpful and he always gets the same good service. These recommendations for cuts are not based on not filling positions that are out there.

Tim Auclair stated that one big number to look at is the \$56,000 for the trash. If you wanted to single that out that is a big cut right there, however, it's a service and you maybe changing the way trash is picked up.

Acting Chairman West Coates stated that the price of bags could be raised and it's possible that the Selectmen could cut services.

Doug Vogel stated that each budget has a consequence and the goal is always to do better.

Ed French stated that understanding that the Selectmen decide where the budget will be, the people are going to want to know why they want it. He stated he is not supportive of the motion.

Doug Vogel stated the budget should be based off of what people can afford. It should be based on people's ability to pay. If we have to cut services then let the Selectmen do the best they can.

Ed Miller stated he agreed with Doug Vogel 100%.

Finance Director Collette stated with out using the fund balance there is no tax increase.

Acting Chairman West Coates stated that no matter what we do to the budgets the Selectmen make the decisions. We have to take responsibility for cutting services or the budget. We are talking about a zero increase on the town side. It's unfair to punish the town for any State increases. She stated she could not support the motion.

VOTE ON THE MOTION: Ed Miller and Doug Vogel voted in favor of the motion. Sandy Ellis, Ed French, John Harmon, Colleen West Coates and Tim Auclair voted against the motion. **MOTION FAILED**

MOTION: Ed French made a motion to reduce the Town Operating budget to \$6,758,981. This is a \$54,475. decrease and includes the insurance. Doug Vogel seconded. After a brief discussion Mr. French withdrew the motion and Mr. Vogel withdrew his second. **MOTION WITHDRAWN.**

MOTION: Ed French made a motion to reduce the Town Operating Budget to \$6,761,481. This is a \$51,975. decrease and includes the insurance. Ed Miller Seconded. **VOTE ON THE MOTION:** Ed French, Ed Miller, Sandy Ellis, Colleen West Coates and Tim Auclair voted in favor of the motion. Doug Vogel and John Harmon voted against the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

ARTICLE 2 – Police Contract

MOTION: Doug Vogel made a motion to recommend. Sandy Ellis seconded. Ed Miller voted against the motion. The remaining members voted in favor of the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

ARTICLE 3 – Police Non Union

MOTION: Doug Vogel made a motion to recommend. Sandy Ellis seconded. Ed Miller voted against the motion. The remaining members voted in favor of the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

ARTICLE 5 – Selectmen’s Scholarship

MOTION: Doug Vogel made a motion to recommend this item be reduced to zero. Ed Miller seconded. **DISCUSSION:** Doug Vogel stated that we shouldn’t give away money to people out of the operating budget. This will never become self funding. Tim Auclair stated it will be self funding at some point and this is a trust. Doug Vogel voted in favor of the motion. The remaining members voted against the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

ARTICLE 11 CIP

MOTION: Ed Miller made a motion to recommend. Doug Vogel seconded. Voted unanimously in the affirmative. **MOTION PASSED.**

ARTICLE 12 CIP

MOTION: Sandy Ellis made a motion to recommend. Doug Vogel seconded. **DISCUSSION:** Tim Auclair stated these CIP funds were consolidated for clarification purposes. Voted unanimously in the affirmative. **MOTION PASSED.**

ARTICLE 13

MOTION: Sandy Ellis made a motion to recommend. Ed French seconded. Voted unanimously in the affirmative. Doug Vogel abstained. **MOTION PASSED.**

ARTICLE 14 – Social Service Agencies

MOTION: Sandy Ellis made a motion to recommend. Tim Auclair seconded. **DISCUSSION:** Ed Miller stated he is not in favor of this. Nothing to do with the agencies it’s just that I do not think it’s our place to tell taxpayers who to give money to. Doug Vogel stated these agencies do a lot of good work. It would probably hurt these organizations but I agree that the government should not be giving money. Tim Auclair stated that he agrees to a degree but I think you can address this at deliberative session by changing the ones that you have a problem with. John Harmon stated that he personally does not agree with it and he has seen the list grow, people do support it every year. Sandy Ellis stated that the School district uses several of the services offered by these agencies. Ed French stated that there are people that may vote for this because the Budget

Committee recommends it. Colleen West Coates stated that some of these agencies do bill insurances and some do not receive anything in insurances.

VOTE ON THE MOTION: Doug Vogel, Ed Miller and Ed French voted against the motion. Colleen West Coates, Sandy Ellis, John Harmon and Tim Auclair voted in favor of the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

ARTICLE 15 Brown Road Repairs

MOTION: Doug Vogel made a motion to not recommend. Sandy Ellis seconded.

DISCUSSION: Doug Vogel stated that this would barely cover the cost of the study. The road was enhanced and that caused a problem. Colleen West Coates stated that there is no one here from the Town to explain the situation. Tim Auclair stated it was the opinion of the person that spoke at the last public hearing that the Town caused the drainage problem but there is a different point of view. Town Manager Bates stated that the problems have existed for many years and the Public Works Director does not believe because the road was enhanced, the drainage problems were caused. Ed French stated that based on the discussion at the Selectmen's meeting it was an existing problem for many years. Ed Miller stated that we could be opening a can of worms because other residents could do this. **VOTED ON THE MOTION:** Doug Vogel, Sandy Ellis, Ed Miller, Ed French and John Harmon voted in favor of the motion. Colleen West Coates and Tim Auclair voted against the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

ARTICLE 16- Mosquito Control Program

MOTION: Sandy Ellis made a motion to recommend. Tim Auclair seconded.

DISCUSSION: Ed Miller stated that Mr. Barnes had said that w would get matching State funds and we did not. He stated he does not believe this is effective. Tim Auclair stated that it does do something and the Town is obligated to protect the public. **VOTE ON THE MOTION:** Sandy Ellis, John Harmon and Tim Auclair voted in favor of the motion. Colleen West Coates, Ed Miller, Ed French and Doug Vogel voted against the motion. **MOTION FAILED.**

The members held a brief discussion on whether to vote on recommending or not recommending the article regarding elderly exemptions. Acting Chairman West Coates polled the board as follows: Should the Budget Committee vote to make a recommendation on the exemptions? Doug Vogel – Yes Sandy Ellis, Ed Miller, Ed French, John Harmon, Colleen West Coates and Tim Auclair voted No.

Announcements

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 23, 2007.

Adjournment

MOTION: Sandy Ellis made a motion to adjourn. Ed Miller seconded. Voted unanimously in the affirmative. **MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:25 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Bette Patterson
Recording Secretary