

MINUTES
2007 Budget Hearing

The 2007 budget hearing was held on Wednesday, February 14, 2007. In spite of the snow storm, the hearing was well attended. Present from the Board of Selectmen were Sharon Davis and James McGarr.

The meeting opened at 7 p.m. for the public hearing regarding the bond over \$100,000.00. Selectman McGarr announced that the Board had to notice this as a bond to publish it within the timeframe in the newspaper, but upon completion of our Town audit, the Board had learned, and felt comfortable with the surplus figure from the auditors. This figure is \$725,000.00. The Board agreed that they would use some of this surplus to offset the warrant article in reference to putting \$200,000.00 into the Capital Reserve set aside for the Municipal Buildings Future Needs fund so it will not be necessary for the Board to bond anything over \$100,000.00 this year. The only funds the Town will have to borrow will be for the betterment figure in article 4 which is offset by the taxpayers, who petitioned for the article, paying the annual payments each year. This figure is under \$100,000.00.

Due to the weather, and with the acceptance of those present, the Board went onto the presentation of the 2007 proposed budget without delay.

Town Administrator Ann Marie Foote read through the budget sheets which had been distributed to each person present. She began by explaining that Town employees were given a 3% increase in pay, with the exception of two employees, who were given wage adjustments due to changes in their job descriptions, and qualifications to do the job. She also wanted to note that the line items for the 3% may seem confusing, but the total figures had to include a 53rd pay week due to the way the pay days follow this year.

When the amount budget for the ambulance service was reviewed, this brought up considerable discussion about the Town having its own ambulance. Chief Tobine explained that with the Town's own ambulance that we could actually save money, and look towards a self-supporting service, offset by the revenue received. The Chief is proposing adding two additional full time personnel the last quarter of 2007 so that the department will be in full service by January of 2008. Until that time, we will keep our contract with Plymouth. The Chief is also proposing the lease purchase of our own ambulance. This cost will be shared with the Town of Thornton, and the Town of Ellsworth will share in the operational costs. Chief Tobine felt confident that his company can handle the calls on weekdays with the additional personnel, and that the call company will be able to handle the nights and weekend calls. A question was brought up about an ambulance that someone in Thornton had offered to donate. Unfortunately that person is very ill, and while the family is still considering it, we do not have any commitment at this time.

Ann Marie complimented Road Agent Butch Bain and his crew on the job that they were doing, and the money that they were saving the Town by doing so much of the previous farmed out work themselves. Chief Tobine mentioned the FEMA grant money that his department had been

awarded for over \$60,000.00 which also greatly benefits the Town in savings for Fire Equipment.

Everyone was invited to have some valentine cookies and candy before they went home. The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Marie Foote
Town Administrator