

1 CONWAY MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE AGENDA
2 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER
3 KENNETT MIDDLE SCHOOL
4 CONWAY, NH
5

6 January 10, 2024, AT 6:30 PM
7
8

9 The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM. The following Budget Committee members were
10 present: Steve Angers, Bill Marvel, Ellin Leonard, Dave Jensen, Bob Drinkhall, Vice-Chair Frank
11 Jost, Chair Peter Donohoe, Stacy Sand, Randy Davison, Michael Lacey, Quentin Lewis, Ryan
12 Shepard, and Jim LeFebvre.

13 ,
14 **Absent-** Terry McCarthy and Steven Steiner
15

16 **Pledge of Allegiance-** Chair Peter Donohoe led the Pledge of Allegiance.
17

18 **Approval of Minuets**
19

20 ***Jim LeFebvre motioned to approve the January 3, 2024, Conway Budget Committee minutes;***
21 ***seconded by Bob Drinkhall.***

22 ***Vote in favor 11-0-2***
23

24 **Town** – Center Conway Fire Pct., Registration/Tax Collector, Engineering & Code Compliance,
25 Finance, Insurance, TANS, Revenue, and Police. Administrative items.
26

27 **Center Conway Fire Budget Presentation**
28

29 Chief Glen Merril- there is a misprint in the tax revenue. The correct number is \$444,900.
30 And the total income for that is \$460,900. We took on Redstone Fire Dept, so they are now a
31 part of us, and their budget is included in ours. Looking at the budget increase from last year it
32 is an increase of \$131,820. When you add both budgets, we are only over #13,120, which is a
33 2.85% increase.
34

35 B. Marvel- it looks like you spent \$21,000 on the Center Conway building last year and were
36 adding \$18,000 for the Redstone building, are you anticipating doing more to Center Conway?
37 Did your building cost less last year because you did not have as much maintenance?
38

39 G. Merrill- Yes, we did not spend as much as we put the \$18,000 not knowing what it is going to
40 cost for Redstone, which is what they had in their budget, so we left it.
41

42 J. LeFebvre- can your dept absorb all the equipment from Redstone and eventually do away
43 with the facility?

44 G. Merrill- that is not our plan right now. The agreement we had was that they wanted to keep
45 the station relevant. It is in the Center of Town and is central. As far as their equipment they
46 have older equipment that I would like to upgrade.

47

48 S. Sand- looks like there is a new line station coverage.

49

50 G. Merrill- yes with the added calls, we have added in a part-time person to help with
51 inspections, etc.

52

53 **Registrations/ Elections/Tax Collection Budget Presentation**

54

55 Louise Inkell- Town Clerk Tax Collector- the biggest lines have to do with elections. We went
56 from last year having one to having four elections for Town and State. There are additional
57 expenses needed for coverage, programing the machines, advertising. There was a slight
58 increase in conferences and dues to accommodation for rooms and mileage.

59

60 S. Sand- did you have any additional staff this year?

61

62 L. Inkell- in 2023 yes, it is full-time hours and we do share them with Finance dept to function as
63 extra coverage if needed.

64

65 B. Drinkhall- what are the overdue taxpayers?

66

67 L. Inkell- we are about \$750,000 prior to the tax bill going out. If anyone would like to volunteer
68 for the Presidential Primary on January 23rd give me a call.

69

70 **Engineering & Code Compliance Budget Presentations**

71

72 Paul A. Degliangeli – Town Engineer- it is anticipated that we will start my replacement
73 on May 1st after the April Town Meeting, we have already begun to advertise the
74 position. Here you have for the first time a separate function for that dept. All my
75 salary is in the executive budget. We decided to hire him to fill that position May 1st so
76 that I would have time to mentor that person for a position that I have held for over
77 three decades, we put that in there at the Selectmen’s request.

78

79 Paul A. Degliangeli- these past three decades, code compliance has been a part-time
80 position, and that person was charged in the Building Dept, which has two and two-
81 thirds people in it.

82

83 B. Marvel- was the hiring of this full-time position for the purpose of the new building
84 inspections program?

85

86 Paul A. Degliangeli- traditionally we had a Zoning person who was part-time, and they
87 just came into the office 20 hours a week. A little over a year ago we hired an individual
88 who was supposed to be 50% Zoning Compliance and 50% Building inspection. Zoning
89 issues has not been a priority for the Town in the past and we were working on a

90 complaint basis. The Town and its issues have changed significantly in the last four
91 years. I received a report last week that he has issued fifty-four zoning violations in the
92 last four weeks, and we have been at this pace since we started.

93
94 S. Sand- I think you mentioned that you expected the inspection program to cover the
95 salaries of the new employees, does it also cover the salaries at the fire station for
96 them to conduct the inspections?

97
98 Paul A. Degliangeli- that was the first time I was hearing that just 20 minutes ago, and
99 I am a little confused, as that had not been an issue before. There is revenue that the
100 Fire Chiefs are getting through this program. We are looking at the various depts, that
101 we have, and it can be said that the entirety of the building dept, and the planning and
102 zoning dept exists to support development, and therefore our goal is to generate
103 revenue through fees, permits, etc. that covers the costs. We increased applications
104 fees, we have increased permit fees, we added the rental compliance program.

105
106 B. Drinkhall- from the inspections, the deadline was January 1st, how many have
107 applied?

108
109 Paul A. Degliangeli- we have issued 104 licenses; we have twenty in the que pending,
110 were about a tenth of the way there.

111
112 Discussion got off topic regarding the budgets and discussion was had about the new
113 rental program, fees, and costs to support the program and what owners have to bear
114 as costs.

115
116 S. Angers- can the Town put a lien on the properties who refuse to pay the fee after a
117 certain amount of time? Most people do not pay attention to liens and will only pay at
118 time of closing to not hold up the process.

119
120 Paul A. Degliangeli- we do not have authority to go after the fines thru a lien. We
121 collect them through going to court.

122
123 B. Marvel- I noticed there is nothing in our revenue line for the Fire precincts for the
124 inspections if someone could investigate that and get back to the Board. Is there a set
125 fee that they would get for each inspection?

126
127 Paul A. Degliangeli- that was the agreement we asked them to invoice us at the end of
128 the year and then we talked about being invoiced quarterly. There have been very few
129 inspections.

130
131 **Finance Budget Presentation**

132
133 Kathleen Golding Finance Director- the proposed budget is increase by 3.37%. The wages are
134 the normal increase made yearly, there is an addition of a new position to absorb the dissolving
135 Conway Village Fire District and in doing that we are planning to take one of their office
136 positions and move it into our dept. We will be taking in all their billing and funds, there is a lot
137 to learn. Meetings and conferences I kept level. The line for information technology is the same
138 as we are in the third year of the four-year contract. I put in \$23,800 for the audit, as if we get a

139 single audit then the auditors must audit all funds coming into the town in excess of \$750,000.
140 The bank fees listed are for the whole Town and the credit card fees are absorbent. The earned
141 benefits line is for our retirees and what they will be owed when they do retire.

142

143 J. Lefebvre- you say the credit card fees are absorbent, how many cards are out there?

144

145 K. Golding- 6 card holders I believe.

146

147 **Insurance Budget Presentation**

148

149 K. Golding- these are services contracted through Primex that covers workers comp,
150 unemployment, property liability. We had a decrease in workers comp and unemployment, yet
151 an increase in property liability, due to claims this year.

152

153 S. Sand- can you go across Twon borders and gain insurance.

154

155 K. Golding- no, I have never heard about that, no one has ever asked about that.

156

157 S. Sand- I was listening to a drive time interview on the radio and they were talking about the
158 warrant article for the skate park, and that they were trying to become part of the Town so that
159 they could save on their insurance costs and they said it would be a minor addition to the Town
160 at about \$300.

161

162 K. Golding- I know it is a potential and I have not asked Primex about the money.

163

164 **TANS Budget Presentation**

165

166 K. Golding- I typically budget \$2,000 every year just to cover the interest on any TANS we might
167 have to take. This year we did have to use it because the reval was submitted late and it took
168 DRA awhile to get us back and set our tax rate. So, in the two weeks' time of taking that TAN, it
169 cost us \$4,213 in interest. We will not have the reval next year so there is no reason the tax rate
170 paperwork cannot be set on time.

171

172 P. Donohoe- who has the most amounts of precincts?

173

174 K. Golding- us hands down.

175

176 S. Sand- last year they talked about what we were going to get back from the utilities by doing
177 the reval early, which was the whole purpose, cause now we have lost \$4,000.

178

179 K. Golding- I do not have that number.

180

181 Paul A. Degliangeli- that information is on the website in the budget presentations.

182

183 R. Davison- I would suggest we look at other banks with a higher interest rate. Northway is a
184 local bank, but TD Bank is a national bank, and the rates are very good with the amount of
185 money this Town brings in I would think the interest received would be high.

186

187 D. Drinkhall- how much did we borrow?And how much was in the fund balance?

188

189 K. Golding- we borrowed three million in total, and you cannot use fund balance to carry cash
190 flow.

191

192 **Revenue Budget Presentation**

193

194 K. Golding- this budget hopefully will go up during the year and not down. We report
195 these as estimated revenues when the tax rate is set and that is the actual amount
196 used. So, I always try to be conservative with these numbers. I have a total estimated
197 \$5.1 million in revenue. I did reduce the land use change tax. Yield tax I kept the same.
198 PILOT, as you can see, we have only brought in just over half right now, but there is
199 still some outstanding, so I kept that level. Motor Vehicles registration is where our
200 stable revenue source is and building permits. I had budgeted last year for \$355,000
201 and we totaled in at \$631,000 and that is a partial year as well. In the States Rooms
202 and Meals tax we are receiving \$942,939. Last year we received \$870,000. Highway
203 Block Grant funds are where they typically are, we also did receive additional HBG
204 funds and additional bridge aid as well. Income from planning and zoning I believe
205 those will be increasing over the year. Solid waste and recycling did not make it this
206 year. Sales of Town Hall property is through the roof, the town sold six properties, I
207 cannot promise that same revenue in 2024. The library is predicting \$15,000.

208

209 J. LeFebvre- the PILOT agreements can you go over that in detail?

210

211 K. Golding- it is an actual agreement with the Town from these nonprofits that are exempt from
212 tax, they make an agreement with the Town to pay a portion of the tax, that agreement is
213 brought to the BOS, and the non-profit agrees to pay us those payments in lieu of taxes.

214

215 J. LeFebvre- what is the detail in the income from the Polce Dept?

216

217 K. Golding- the school pays us back for the SRO officer, it is details, reports, pistol permits,
218 alarm permits, fingerprints.

219

220 R. Davison- does tickets the police issue come back to the Town?

221

222 K. Golding- parking tickets do, moving violations do not.

223

224 Police Chief- we have a unique situation in NH where the State controls the Police Academy and
225 all Police Officers in NH go to the academy in Concord. The Towns pay their salaries while there,
226 but they can live down there, they eat there meals down there and get certified, so the moving
227 violations go to fund that.

228

229 **Police Budget Presentation**

230

231 Police Chief Mattei- we have five major line items and within those five lines we have forty-one
232 individual line brackets. Our total budget was \$17,000, which is a 0.38% increase. Wages went
233 up \$52,000 and that is the normal increase. There is a \$28,000 decrease in our dispatch line.
234 Last year I asked for a dispatch position, and I have not been able to fill that position, and I am
235 still down a position, and I removed that from the budget as I do not think I will be able to fill
236 that position. I did have one dispatcher move into patrol, so I think for the first time in 5 years
237 we are fully staffed in patrol. One officer left for the academy on Monday so we will be short
238 for 16 weeks. The union is also asking for Juneteenth day to be added in and if that passes that
239 is where that increase is allocated. The health insurance line decreased because we switched to
240 a high deductible plan, so we will see how that goes. Retirement is a \$7,700 decrease due to
241 drops in salaries. The computer line went up, equipment had a \$1,500 increase. Our taser lease
242 is up in February, so we will be leasing the same taser, but will all new software, hardware,
243 infrastructure. Telephone line was decreased by \$3,500 due to a switch in fiber optic and
244 changing things around. My legal line was overspent due to a lot of 91 A requests that we did
245 win. The laws are changing frequently throughout the year and our staff is very up to speed on
246 that. Our part-time records clerk we hired last year helps with that.

247

248 B. Marvel- are you going to talk about the addition tonight? I have had all these bright ideas to
249 save money and been proven unworkable, but one thing I thought of was your firearms strigae
250 and evidence storage, you have to keep for a longtime per statute, but it seems to me an
251 unfunded mandate. Is there any State money available for that?

252

253 Chief Mattei- no, I do not think there is, and it differs from dept to dept.

254

255 S. Angers- is it going to put a hardship on you to wait a year to let the interest rate settle down
256 and the tax increase.

257

258 Chief Mattei- the fact is we have been surviving and will continue to survive. We have talked
259 about that and even if interest rates come down what do the building costs do? and I do not
260 know the answer to that.

261

262 P. Donohoe- if I am correct and if this passes then the payment will not start until 2025, and the
263 interest will be reflective of that period in time.

264

265 J. LeFebvre- if we did not go forward with the bond what do you need to function?

266

267 Chief Mattei- we would have to do the windows and we also just recently had a roof leak. There
268 is some money in play to do minor renovations.

269

270 P. Donohoe- I want to recognize the effort put forth by members of this board and Selectman
271 Shepard for their efforts in Concord and their efforts.

272
273 P. Donohoe- we do have a default meeting scheduled for the 18th.
274 D. Jensen- historically back when Lily was the Finance Director, she would present a default
275 budget to the Board, and shed present what was fixed and what was adjustable and all that
276 stuff. I do not see why we need to sit down with Kathleen given how smoothly everything went
277 last year. If she presents it to us much like Lily did with notations as to what is fixed and what is
278 not, the Town is capable without us nannying.
279
280 P. Donohoe- I cannot agree more, John and I both talked about that. I think I can have a day
281 meeting with Kathleen and get this done. I am all for it.
282
283 D. Jensen- I agree that the personnel and assistance that have been recently put in place are
284 mature enough that streamlining is absolutely.
285
286 ***D. Jensen motioned that we return the default budget process from the Town to its previously***
287 ***executed method where the Finance Director presents a default budget in complete stage to***
288 ***the assembled full Budget Committee; seconded by Frank Jost.***
289 ***Vote in favor 13-0***
290
291 S. Sand- if we are going to do this, we need time to review it. I do not like just getting a budget
292 without first reviewing it.
293
294 D. Jensen- most of this is not arguable for changes. There are very little conversations about. It
295 is Kathleen following the law, as the default is defined by budget law. It is not a choice and
296 there is no room for anybody to hide anything.
297
298 ***J. LeFebvre motioned to amend the original motion to make it a 1-year test run; seconded by***
299 ***S. Angers.***
300 ***Vote in favor 13-0***
301
302 D. Jensen- to clarify we are asking Kathleen to present the default to us on the 22nd and that we
303 would have the opportunity as the Board to review it with her before voting to accept it.
304
305 **Old Business**
306
307 S. Angers- the answers we received are we going over them at the next agenda? I want to know
308 if we will have the opportunity to go over this with John.
309
310 P. Donohoe- yes, we will.
311
312 S. Sand- I would like to see more than just hourly wages; I would like to see the salary and
313 overtime wages.
314

315 R. Davison- the School Board did set the default budget, on the School Board Committee the
316 article that we put on placeholder for the boiler at the High school we will not be moving
317 forward with. We settled the contract for support staff so that will be moving forward.
318

319 J. LeFebvre- So to be clear from your comment the Conway School District system is looking at
320 spending \$42 million if they pass their warrant articles.
321

322 Discussion was had back and forth between the group regarding what the school budget is and
323 what if any cuts they are making and if anything came of the work session that was had. R.
324 Davison answered the questions to the best of his abilities. Discussion was had on what the
325 school board can do about solving the problems and whether it is enough or more needs to be
326 done. Members of the Board discussed addressing the School Board and asking them are they
327 going to make cuts and if so, how they are going to do that, what is their plan.
328

329 New Business

330
331 D. Jensen- we learned something new tonight and the fact that the revaluation possibility was
332 going to raise lunch money, we were told a whole lot of money and it turns out that was BS,
333 and I think we need to address that, and I'd like to address who was involved in that.
334

335 P. Donohoe- does the Board want to instruct me to speak with the Town Manager to ask that
336 question and get answers to it?
337

338 ***Frank Jost motioned to instruct Chair Donohoe to speak with the Town Manager to ask about***
339 ***the reval and get answers, seconded by Dave Jensen.***

340 ***Vote in favor 13-0***

341
342 B. Marvel- I was confused as to the \$300,00 and if that was the assessment or the taxes. That
343 figure of \$300,00 is what I remember, and that was the whole reason for doing it this year.
344

345 Public and Media Questions and Comments

346

347 Adjournment

348

349 ***B. Marvel motioned to adjourn the December 10, 2024, meeting; seconded by F. Jost***
350 ***Motion carries 13-0***

351

352

353 Respectfully Submitted,

354 *Alicia Gipson*

355 Recording Secretary