

**New Hartford Board of Finance  
Special Meeting  
Wednesday, April 6, 2016**

**Present:** Chairman Jim Fitzgerald, Members Dan Charest, Steve Tuxbury, Reggie Smith, Jr., Bart Baxter, Ben Witte, Alternate Bob Nilsson, Region 7 BOE Chairman Molly Sexton Read, BOE Vice Chair Rob Jerram, BOE member Noel Gauthier, Supt. of Schools Judy Palmer, Director of Finance and operations Rich Carmelich, Local BOE Supt. of Schools Brian Murphy, BOE Chair Sue Lundin, Curriculum Specialist Erika Sacharko, First Selectman Dan Jerram, Selectwomen Alesia Kennerson & Laura Garay, Admin. Asst. Christine Hayward, Bookkeeper Annie Witte, Treasurer Gordon Ross, Republican American reporter Kathryn Boughton, Donna LaPlante, Kelly Odell Longhi, Irene Brown, John Burdick, Maria Moore, Tom Buzzi, Rebecca Carter, Pat Spaziani, Amy Damboise, Cindy Duval, members of the public, Recording Secretary Penny Miller.

**Absent:** Bill Coates

Chairman Fitzgerald opened the meeting at 7:01 pm and introduced the board. This is the annual budget hearing for the Board of Finance where the local boards and Region 7 come together to present their 2016/2017 budgets to the public.

**Seating of Alternates:** None

Chairman Fitzgerald said the increase in the grand list is a plus 0.41% or \$2,688,229 from last year. The revenue is a minus – 4.9% down about \$272,121. The revenue required from taxes is increasing about \$483,695 or 2.62% increase. The change in total expenditures is about \$211,565 total a 0.88% increase. The proposed budget increase is currently at 2.62%. The local Board of Education is up about \$18,572 or 0.23%. Region 7 is up \$105,399 or 1.08%. Last year was a significant hit for us at Region 7. This year it has improved slightly. Total education increase is 0.70% or \$123,971. What this means is that the mill rate required is 0.6374% or \$63.74 per \$100,000 of valuation. The tax increase is estimated at 2.19%.

At the April 12<sup>th</sup> Board of Finance regular meeting the board will take all feedback from tonight and take action on all schools, capital and town. They will approve the budgets to send to the Board of Selectman and then to the annual town budget meeting on April 20<sup>th</sup>. Monday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, is Region 7's district meeting on their budget. May 3<sup>rd</sup> is the referendum in New Hartford. Supt. Palmer said that Region 7 hasn't voted yet to go to referendum but that is the plan. On May 3<sup>rd</sup> we typically have two separate questions on the ballot. One question is for the combined town and New Hartford Board of Ed budget and the other for the Region 7 budget.

Chairman Fitzgerald read the legal notice that appeared in the Hartford Courant on March 24, 2016 (copy filed with the minutes).

**Presentation of 2016-17 Northwestern Region #7 Board of Education budget (filed with minutes)**

Ms. Sexton Read gave a preview of how they go about making up their budget and the timeline of soliciting information from the towns that have children in the school. They are proposing an increase of 1.72% it's the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest in the last 6 years. They believe it reflects a strong supportive budget which allows them to continue offering the programs that they have while being respectful and responsive to the financial needs of the towns. These are ways they can measure the student's performance. The PSATs are given to all the students not just those that are college bound. Our average scores are higher

than the state and national scores. The testing results compared to the Berkshire League in neighboring communities shows Northwestern Region 7 is in the top 2 or 3 across the board.

**Net Current Expenditure per pupil** - The Per Pupil Expenditure, compared to other schools in the Berkshire League, shows that even though we score high in standardized tests we are in the bottom four in terms of what it costs for that education per student. It demonstrates the ability to do more for less.

**Enrollment – Member Towns:** It won't be until 2017-2018 that we start to see a decline in student enrollment. The school has some out-of-district regular education students from Hartland, Winsted and Torrington. They have special ed. students who come from out-of-district and there are out-of-town students that attend the Vo-Ag program.

**Object Breakdown** - This pie chart shows that the majority of the money is spent on salaries. The increases are in the salary, purchased services (special ed. costs within the building), purchased services (special ed. costs with students that are out-placed) and transportation lines.

**Salaries** - The increase in the salaries is 1.51%. Because the daily rate for substitutes was lower than neighboring towns, the school increased this line in hopes of attracting more substitutes. The STEP program, alternative afternoon education program for students who are struggling with the day program, has been increased slightly. In order to keep the increases to a minimum we have reduced other line items. There is a 0.5 position in the business office. The hours of the guidance secretary was reduced from a 1.0 to a 0.8 FTE position, reduction in one full-time teaching position and reductions in mentor and summer work lines. The School Resource Officer (SRO) was moved from this line to the Purchased Services line under the Board of Ed. He is an employee of the Town of Barkhamsted and the school reimburses them for his salary. Staff salaries with attrition refers to when teachers retire or leave the district when it comes time to replace them we look to find less expensive and equally qualified teachers.

**Benefits** - When we negotiate contracts with all of the unions one of the places we work hard is in the benefit category seeking to find benefit offerings that are cost effective to us while still offering appropriate benefits to our employees. We have been given an increase by Connecticare and they are budgeting for a decrease in this line realizing this is one place in the budget where we can absorb the increase without passing it on. They have gone out to bid on the dental contract as the initial quote seemed high.

**Excess Cost** – There is a grant that the school receives from the State of Connecticut called an Excess Cost grant. If you have a student with special needs and the program that they need costs more than 4-1/2% your regular per pupil expenditure then you are eligible for an Excess Cost grant. The way we budget for this anticipated grant is we assign our estimates to those lines as an offset. You won't see it in the budget but what you will see is the amount we put in the budget is reduced by these amounts based on anticipated excess cost grant.

**Professional/ Technical Services** – In the 300's is the School Resource Officer's salary has been move to. There is an increase in our legal fees for upcoming teacher contract negotiations. There is an increase in the special education technical services line because we anticipate receiving less of an excess cost grant. If a student requires expensive services but doesn't reach that 4-1/2% threshold then we don't receive money from the state for them. There is a new state mandate to provide support for children with dyslexia. We have decreased the teacher workshop account.

**Property Services** – There has been some small increases in Water & Sewer, Refuse Collection, copier contract & Equipment Repair for Special Education. We are flat funding electricity because we have used less and will continue to monitor that and to keep costs down.

**Other Purchased Services** – this is the other place where special education costs appear. These are the out-placed students. The increase in these tuitions we also have to transport those students to those programs. We have built in two students going to magnet schools next year. For students wanting to

attend Oliver Wolcott transportation is provided. Because of the being part of the fuel consortium they receive lower transportation fuel costs.

**Supplies** – Some new textbooks have been ordered in Math and Social Studies. There are also increases in maintenance repair parts & supplies, Ag Ed repair parts and Culinary Arts supplies. The science and middle school textbooks have already been purchased. A lot of attention was paid to details in each line item. There were lines that had money assigned to them that weren't being used. They were eliminated to keep it as low as possible.

**Property** – There is \$5,500 for computer replacement. There are no large capital projects. As we pay down our capital our interest payments go down. Because we are a regional district the budget includes everything that is done and every piece of money that is spent or borrowed.

**Other Objects** – is the interest they pay on money that has been borrowed in the past. As the principal is paid down the interest payments are less. There hasn't been any new borrowing since 2012.

**Other Funds** – is the principal side of the borrowing.

**Revenues** - On the revenue side there are a variety of sources. A smaller number of students are anticipated coming from Hartland & Torrington next year. A few more special education students from out-of-district are anticipated coming. A slight increase in Vo-Ag students is anticipated for next year. It is anticipated that the school will receive \$7000 less from the state transportation grant. The Ag-Ed numbers are smaller so that grant will be smaller. Overall they will be \$8,500 less than last year in revenues. The Applied Surplus is the money not spent and they are required to return that to the 4 towns. This is returned to the towns as an applied credit on their bill for the following year. Based on the numbers they are anticipating that surplus next year will be a little less than before. The assessments are that budget with the applied surplus from the previous year. On October 1<sup>st</sup> the students are counted by each town that they come from. Barkhamsted is going up by 21 students, Colebrook is up 1, New Hartford is up by 10 and Norfolk is going down by 4.

**Surplus to Reduce Assessments** – shows each town assessment without the surplus, their share of the surplus and the bottom line is the bill left to be paid.

Ms. Sexton Read continued that Region 7 is an award winning school that they are very proud of. They appreciate the support of the four towns.

#### **Public comment and input on R7 BOE Budget**

Alesia Kennerson, Gillette Road, asked for clarification what specific line item the School Resource officer get moved to. Mr. Carmelich said Line 334-Board of Education went from \$2,100 to \$52,100. Because he isn't part of our payroll he was moved here.

Tom Buzzi, Niles Rd, asked what the thought process was behind replacing the principal rather than going a year without one. Ms. Sexton Read said we had a retirement of our middle school principal and from feedback given by a variety of people asking whether or not it might be an opportunity to not fill the position and realize those savings. The Board of Ed made a decision that we thought it was a critical position to the functioning of our school. It can feel like those administrators are removed from the classroom and we could do without one or two of them without impacting the students. The loss of that position would have an impact on the students because all of the work done by that person would have to be done by teachers and department chairs. Teacher evaluations and PPTs still have to happen and an administrator needs to be part of it. We thought the impact would be devastating. Mr. Buzzi asked what the administrative structure is now. Ms. Sexton Read said we have one superintendent, one director of finance, two principals and two housemasters (assistant principals). We have four building administrators between the two schools, one superintendent and one director of finance.

Maria Moore, Town Hill, asked if they had a curriculum director. Ms. Sexton Read said they do not. The principals, superintendent and assistant principals do it.

Donna LaPlante, Stedman Road, asked which teaching position was going to be reduced. Ms. Sexton Read said it hadn't been identified yet. The students are currently registering for the fall and they need to look at their requests and the available staff. Once the schedule has been done we will decide which teacher. Ms. LaPlante asked is there a possibility that it could be an Ag teacher. Ms. Sexton Read replied that it is a possibility. Ms. LaPlante continued if you do that will you need to reduce your revenues because you are not going to be able to add more tuition students. Ms. Sexton Read said they could absorb more students than are projected even with reduced staff.

Tom Buzzi, Niles Road, you assess and whatever excess comes back it's applied to this year or is it a return pro-rated on last year's payment. It would seem that if the town paid more last year and their assessment came back you would give it towards this year's bill. Is it a percentage or a lump sum? Mr. Carmelich said there is a year in between. The surplus that you see is from 2014-15. We can't return it in this year because we don't know what the surplus will be until June 30<sup>th</sup> and by then the budget is already done for this year. The surplus that occurred in 14/15 is being applied to 16/17 budget. That surplus is based on the assessment ratio from 16/17. The surplus was created in 14/15 based on one assessment ratio and is returned in 16/17 based on the assessment ratio for that year. Barkhamsted may be benefiting from a little more surplus because their assessment ratio is going up. Mr. Buzzi said with New Hartford being 50% of the budget we are always at the most risk. Mr. Carmelich replied that isn't accurate. Mr. Buzzi said with New Hartford assessment at \$500,000 we are into it for roughly \$250,000 every year. Are we getting \$250,000 back every year? Mr. Carmelich said yes. If you were at 51% when you generated the surplus in 14/15 and now you are 50.5% you will still get the \$250,000 back in the form of a surplus credit with some slight variations.

Kelly Odell Longhi, O'Keefe Lane, asked about the number of assistant principals. Ms. Sexton Read replied there are two assistant principals in the high school and one principal in the middle school.

Irene Brown, Cedar Lane, said the state has a mandate on the number of students and if we cut a position in the general area we will handcuff ourselves and can't add more students. Ms. Sexton Read said she believes the statute reads there is a cap on the lab portion. Whatever reduction in staff all the implications of that reduction will be taken into consideration before anything is done.

BOF member Tuxbury would like some clarification regarding the statement where you had said the number of students that were in the building on October 1<sup>st</sup> are those that are registered. Ms. Sexton Read said it is the number of students that are registered in the school on that date; they don't have to be physically present to be part of the count.

BOF member Nilsson said you had mentioned if you didn't fill the principal's position you would have had some added responsibilities and you would need to pull out some teachers and other people to help out. Was it necessary to hire a principal at that salary level when you could have hired someone at a lesser rate? Ms. Sexton Read said it was the board's decision and we believe it is in the best interest of our school. I over simplified this and am not well versed in the certifications that are required for parts of this role. I was trying to make the point that if we remove those administrators it would have an immediate effect on our students. Mr. Nilsson continued on your electricity we received a letter from Mr. Carmelich about the consortium. Is there any oversight on that? For my business I am paying the same rate as you do. Who is overlooking that? Ms. Sexton Read said in terms of the solar power we have at the school. Seven or eight years ago we entered into a power purchase agreement with a financing company and they own the panels on our roof. We buy the power generated by those panels. It was signed off at a time when electricity costs was going up 8%/year. The initial rate was well below the market rate at that time. In the agreement we had an escalator built into the agreement. We are paying less for the power generated off our panels than we are for the power coming off the grid. Mr. Nilsson asked who decides on what you pay. Mr. Carmelich said there are 20 school districts that are members of this consortium. They meet and have a consultant that goes out to bid on our behalf when

the contract is up. The consultant goes out to bid, looks at all the pricing and gives us advice on the timing of it. Shipman and Goodman Attorneys also review the contracts and legal stuff.

Chairman Fitzgerald asked Dr. Palmer said looking at the assessment that you had at the budget workshop of \$105,399, increase 1.08% - has the \$101,716, 1.04% increase - has that not been approved yet? Are you doing that tonight? Mr. Carmelich responded what we will approve tonight is a budget to go to regional hearing. We will have the hearing, get more input and then we will have another opportunity to add to or reduce the number. Mr. Fitzgerald asked if they will be having another budget meeting where the board is meeting to approve the budget before our April 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mr. Carmelich said no. Dr. Palmer said once this presentation is over we will have a regular board meeting where we will set the budget to go to the budget hearing on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Tuxbury said with the analysis done by Mr. Palmer and your negotiations coming up is there any way to get better notice on when people are leaving, except for maternity leave. The earlier you know you can help us out on these line items. When you have over-budgeted line items and you have large spending on other line items that weren't budgeted it makes us question as to whether you need this or not. Dr. Palmer said as a board and administration we are committed to looking at tightening this up at all times. The lines cited by Mr. Palmer are based on actual beings. Presentation ended at 8:00 pm.

**Presentation of 2016-17 New Hartford Board of Education budget (filed with minutes)-started @ 8:02.**

Supt. Murphy said we have spent a lot of time over the past year trying to make a responsible budget. The proposed budget for next year is an increase of 0.23%. Mr. Murphy went through the Budget Summary and spoke of some of the changes. In the Regular Education line there is a decrease of \$48,694.60. The Curriculum Director's salary was moved from this line down to School Offices. Health Education is down \$4,807.00 because a nurse was hired at a lower pay rate. Improvement of Instruction is going up \$6,300.000 because of the Gifted and Talented Program proposed for next year. The Board of Education line is going up significant at 65.3% because of legal fees associated with the negotiation of the teacher's contracts this fall. We negotiated with Dattco a favorable contract with them for next year for the bus leases. Total surplus is \$18,572.40. This budget is with Bakerville School open next year and the funding for Bakerville. Contractual salaries and health benefits makes up 72% of our spending. We are not filling the position of Technology Integration Specialist for next year for a decrease of \$31,000. We do have the STEM program as a pilot program next year from K-6 and it will be imbedded in our media specialist curriculum. We realized a decrease in our special education. Right now we have one student for out-placement. Heating oil we are part of a consortium. This year we got oil at \$2.54 and now it is \$1.95. As far as staffing we are not filling a grade 3 teaching section because of declining enrollment. We did add a grade 1 and a grade 5 teacher for next year to meet the needs of our students. Increases to personnel changes – we do have two tutors in our budget to meet the needs of our special education students. The talented & gifted program will be held after school for the top 5% of our 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students. The first time in our budget is the CREC Magnet School Tuition. Many of the 18 students attend the Reggio Magnet School in Avon. Contract negotiations average is 2.5%. The average in the state is 3%. We do see a decrease in enrollment over the next several years. On the special line items starting on page 15 - Instructional Assistants is going down because of the reduction in the amount of Title I and II grants we will be receiving. There has been an increase in Homebound Instruction to meet the needs of our students. The nurse substitute line ensures that we have a nurse in the school every day when the nurse is absent. The Purchased Services / Teacher & Student Recognition is for two students who are chosen as Superintendent Award winners each year. Library equipment has gone down along with Library & Reference Books. Legal fees are going up because of teacher negotiations next year.

**Service Contracts** - The service contracts are shown on page 34. A savings was realized in propane. The HVAC contract is being looked at to possibly change the company to save some money. On Employee

Benefits – the Tax Shelter Annuities went up because of two administrators who will receive the tax shelter annuity next year.

**Capital Plan** - The Capital Plan has not changed from last year. The Antolini playground is safe and will be completed so that it is ADA compliant. We are looking to purchase computers so that each student has a computer. Kitchen renovations - a study was done previously with plans to purchase a stove & oven at Antolini. We need new doors on the Multi-Purpose room as they don't lock. So during a lock-down we need them to lock. The total amount from last year is a decrease.

**District Highlights (filed with minutes)** – there is the implementation of the new Math Program for grades K-6. The Report Cards were updated for K-6. School Improvement Plans will be updated for the 3 school at the end of this school year. Every year there is a school climate survey for everyone and parents feel it is a great environment. We are all working hard to improve the environment for our students. A DARE program was done in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade and there will be a graduation for these students this year. An Internet safety night was held at Antolini. Student achievement - language arts – smarter balanced assessments – we are all very proud of our scores. Math is not as high as language arts and this is an area we need to work on.

#### **Public comment and input on BOE budget**

John Burdick, Town Hill Rd – the 5 year contract for the transportation was it to align with Regional and negotiate a larger discount? Mr. Murphy said that was our goal of the Transportation sub-committee but Dattco came back with 0% for the next 2 years and then 3.5% for years 3-5.

Maria Moore, Town Hill Rd – has a number of comments. She appreciates the efforts to save paper but this budget is hard for her to follow and she is somewhat learning disabled and it is hard to flip from page to page. Her first comment is on Page 7 you show a 0.23% increase. With the number of students that we are losing – 20 students – the state has a minimum budget requirement that allows the Board of Finance to take off a certain percentage from last year's budget for each of the students that we lose. With the 20 students lost you said the MBR cut could be \$210,000 based on the number of students we are losing for the year. Mr. Murphy said that may be the case it's not mandated. s. Moore continued when we look at the budget at \$7,994,225 we are losing 20 children, legally the Board of Finance can ask for a reduction of \$210,000. The Bakerville School is going to stay open. There are places where cuts can be made. It is up to the Board of Ed where they make them. There are places where cuts could be made, you could keep the school open and not negatively impact the children. The preschool program is for children with special needs and at the very most we have 5 children with special needs and we are creating a program for 15 children with a full-time teacher. A half-time program is adequate. We don't need to provide full day daycare. Another place is the Curriculum Director. We have two full time principals who are not being asked to do the curriculum at the schools. There is \$107,000 that could be cut. The transportation contract by not going out to bid means that this contract hasn't gone out to bid for 13 years. You look at the towns around us they are serviced by All-Star transportation. At the very least we deserve to have that contract go out to competitive bidding. Mr. Murphy responded to the curriculum director comment, noting that two years ago we had two teachers at the highest step doing this and now we have a curriculum director. Our students are second to none. As far as decreasing enrollment we need to look at that. As far as the MBR it isn't mandatory – it is permissive. That decrease would have a negative effect on our children in New Hartford.

Cindy Duval, West Hill Rd – regarding the all-day preschool programs is a lot of parents are interested in full-day pre-school and there is an option for half-day. We hope to retain some of the students instead of them going to CREC. It is a one-year pilot. Regarding Bakerville we haven't rescinded the vote – we are putting it in the budget to let the town vote on it. If the town accepts it and the budget passes then we will make a motion to rescind it. As of right now the motion hasn't taken place. BOE Chairman

Lundin interjected to clarify we have it on the agenda for the next BOE meeting the discussion and possible rescinding of the December 8<sup>th</sup> vote. Tomorrow night we will make a decision.

Christine Sullivan 66 High St. – what has been done for the children that go to CREC – have you reached out to them to see if they are coming back. Mr. Murphy said we haven't reached out to them. With the pilot pre k-program we hope to keep the students here in New Hartford. Ms. Sullivan asked would it behoove us to reach out to them and see if we can increase our enrollment. Mr. Murphy said we could reach out to them.

BOE member Nilsson said you mentioned the addition of a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher was for disciplinary help for the students. When they move from this grade will that teacher also go up to 6<sup>th</sup>? And when that teacher isn't needed anymore will it be kept in the budget? Mr. Murphy said it will be dependent on their progress. Discipline is a very small piece of this. Twenty-five percent (25%) of these students have IEPs and we will have to revisit it next year.

Member Baxter said we saw what happened with Bakerville School and it was dramatic. If the school is closing then you involve the people in the town earlier. Whatever the plan is reach out to the community and involve them. This year's budget has an increase but our goal is to have a 0% budget. Mr. Murphy said we will look at the process and work to keeping costs down.

Member Witte - with all 3 schools staying open have you reached out to Oak Hill to give them more floor space? Mr. Murphy said Selectman Jerram and I have a meeting with them tomorrow and we still look toward expansion. Member Witte said even if isn't firm we would be interested to hearing about your meeting. Mr. Fitzgerald said we need to have that information before Tuesday night's BOF meeting.

Chairman Fitzgerald said regarding Bakerville School, the MBR and the \$210,000. At the workshop the superintendent shows us a nice decrease. The school decision has not been rescinded. What type of leeway does the Board of Finance have with this number? You have a disciplinary problem. There is \$18,000 that is still in the budget. If it goes through it will go to referendum. The number is there and we support it.

Amy Damboise, Barberry Drive as far as the 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher she is a NICU nurse and grade 4 has 6 sets of twins. From her medical knowledge a lot of twins have special needs because they are born prematurely. It affects their brains it just isn't a disciplinary problem. As a towns person she has special needs children you need to think about the American Disabilities Act. Parents will fight for their children. Hearing the children has disciplinary problems – this is wrong and they have medical needs that need to be addressed. Their brains aren't functioning the way they should be.

Rebecca Carter, Bakerville Terrace is a mental health counselor. Mr. Murphy said it isn't a discipline issue. Many students have IEPs and 504 plans. These children need additional support – they have mental health needs.

Maria Moore, Town Hill Rd – that is why the BOF doesn't get to tell the BOE what cuts to make. They can tell them they can't continue to have increases when the number of students keeps going down.

Christine Sullivan, High St – the two teachers being added isn't two new teachers but they are shuffling the staff. They are existing teachers.

Donna LaPlante, Stedman Rd through this whole situation talking about budgets there is an interest in saving money in the administration and we deal with it one year at a time. Does the board have a 3 or 5 year plan for the administration. The public feels this where you should be cutting money. You have contracts with administrators if you have a goal and a plan then as the contracts come up they could be tailored. Maybe not cut administrators but cut their hours. Mr. Murphy said it is on our plate. We don't have a 3 or 5 year plan. Ms. LaPlante asked would it be possible to present plans to indicate what you are working on and how you are creating that plan. Mr. Murphy said we can give the board our 5 year curriculum plan and job descriptions.

Carolyn Solak, Burwell Rd – there is a \$20,000 behavioral consult person that was eliminated because of the addition of a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. That was one benefit to adding the 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher.

Presentation ended at 8:54 pm

**Presentation of 2016-17 Town Government budget (filed with minutes)** started @ 9 pm

Selectman Jerram said our budget is an estimate of what we want for our town. The bottom line is \$24,254,608.12. Most departments have little to no change. We have tried to mitigate the tax increases. We have some suggestions. We are talking about an increase of \$110,000. One of the increases is the Communication line by \$5,000. A lot of people don't use email. We need to reach our seniors and those not on the internet. The 2<sup>nd</sup> line item is Pension - \$9,000. We do actuarial evaluations every two years. We have a funded pension fund. Health insurance is up \$12,400. We switched from Anthem to Connecticare Insurance a couple of years ago and overall, we have seen a large decrease in this line item. Salary increase this year is \$33,000. **Public safety** – the Ambulance Association is asking for \$40,000. They have 3 ambulances - two are 2004 and one is 2008. **Highways** are up 3%. We put a little more in drainage. **Planning and Development** is down. The secretary was over funded. **Libraries** asked for more money and when you look at our budget – the libraries are increasing at a faster rate than the general government. They had wanted more and we put it as a 1% increase. **Health & Sanitation** – Regional Refuse is going up \$16,000. They had a problem with PCBs. **Park and Recreation** – Ms. Tellier crafted a budget that said I can do with what I have. Most sporting groups have been doing well and haven't been using the money.

**Debt Service** – we have a few bonds –we pay about \$700,000 in debt service every year. We have done some short term financing. We approved tonight \$1,500,000 in renovations at Antolini School.

**Commission and Other Agencies** – this department went up \$6,000. The single entity is a relatively new line item – West Hill Lake Association. We have added \$8,000 to this line item. Without that line item this department would be negative.

**Capital** is \$405,000. This includes two vehicles – town Jeep 2004 and 2000 International 7400 truck. We will sell that and replace it. We had an auction of 3 vehicles last year and we earned \$15,000.

**Projected revenue** – the Oak Hill line is up and we have been reviewing the contract with Supt. Murphy. There is a newer contract than what we have. The big thing is the \$200,000 in the Surplus line. We have correspondence from Chris King and we have a recommendation for a higher number. He is looking at a number closer to \$260,000. Fund Balance - we have about \$2.9 million in the bank. In terms of fund balance to ratio in 2010 we were carrying about 16%.

**Mill Rate** – with the changes the percent is 2.19%. The \$200,000 is driving the budget. We are carrying \$2.9 million in the bank.

**Public comment and input on Town Government budget**

Maria Moore, Town Hill a follow-up on the employees at the town hall last year when the admin asst. was given a substantial increase in the pay with the hours going from 35 to 40 we were told she had a lot of work to do and she needed the extra time to get it down. Have you looked at the other employees and how they are being utilized? You said you found some employees being underutilized. You said you found extra work for those employees but why can't we take some of the work the administrative asst. does and re-allocate it to the underutilized employees and reduce her hours back to 35. Mr. Jerram said she is a confidential employee to the First Selectman and can't be outsourced to the other employees. The amount of hours put into the budget going from 35 to 40 hours was not a raise in pay. She is there way beyond her hours. It is not a perfect estimate. We do have holes and gaps and we don't have extra people. Ms. Moore asked where there is \$500,000 for pavement how has that money been used. The stock answer is a little bit here and there. Why don't we have a pavement management program? Why don't we follow through on that? Under Commission and other Agencies

the selectman said we need to send out a newsletter to keep in touch with our seniors. This budget doesn't list the Commission on Aging. To not list them or fund them is a slap in the face. One of the selectwomen in on that board and should have been working on adding that line item. The final comment is on Capital. If you are looking to buy a vehicle you should go out to a dealer and get a price maybe two or 3 dealers and take the best price. When asked about the price there was not concrete firm price. The policy should be if you can't come in with two firm prices then it isn't in the budget. Mr. Jerram responded with regard to our paving program – we get a lot of positive compliments. We divide our town into 4 quadrants and address the roads in each of those quadrants. There is \$41,000 in the senior line. We may look into purchasing a 2012 vehicle. In regards to the Revenues we are trying to get it under 2%. I am talking to the Superintendent tomorrow about Oak Hill.

Pat Spaziani, West Hill said she had assumed several years ago that a policy was established where the town vehicle was for town use only – is it still in effect. Mr. Jerram replied there is no policy that says that. The Jeep is not taken out of state but wherever it goes it is as a town vehicle. It has had a lot of work done to it. Looking at the *Equipment Maintenance Repair* when the vehicles go over the 10 year line you budget \$90,000 in repairs. The gas for that vehicle is in the Highway Department.

Rebecca Carter, Bakerville Terrace regarding the Admin. Asst. she literally earns the money she makes. Daria Hart, Main Street said there are jobs in every department that are cyclical. For example, in the registrar's office, right now there is a canvas and then it goes to presidential primary and then the referendum. There are different things to work on all the time. Regarding the administrative assistant, it's a misnomer – we don't just have an admin asst. for the 1<sup>st</sup> selectman. She not only helps him but she assists every single office. She is there and she stays there, but she works for all of us. She provides the support and if she doesn't know the answer she gets it for us.

Paul LeClair, Burwell Rd said he hears \$210,000 for the closing of Bakerville School. You had a line in your budget previously for \$90,000 if the school did close. Is the \$210,000 an accurate number for closing the school? Mr. Jerram said we had \$90,000 for the maintenance and that was removed from our budget.

Maria Moore, Town Hill wants to emphasize and clarify she isn't talking about any individual. As everything becomes more electronic there are economies in personnel. Her comment was not to cut personnel in town hall my comment was the fact that a survey was done and she hasn't seen it.

BOE member Charest said the increase for the Admin. Asst. was approved last year and there is no change this year. The overtime approved in 2014/15 was \$4,000 but the actual is \$7,946. This year it is \$5,000. Mr. Jerram said overtime is paid when someone works over 40 hours. The overtime was associated with long-term subs in the Building Department and land use issues. No overtime is associated with the admin. person in his office.

**MOTION:** by Witte, second Smith to adjourn at 9:55 pm.

*Unanimous*

Respectfully submitted,

Penny Miller  
Recording Secretary

**Attachments:**

Legal Notice  
NH BOF Presentation  
Region 7 Presentation & Working Budget  
NH BOE Budget & District Highlights  
NH Town Budget