

Winthrop Town Council Budget Review Meeting: 6:00 PM, May 9, 2016

Attending: Sarah Fuller, Chair; Barbara Buck, David Bubier, Linda Caprara, Richard Henry, Linda MacDonald, P. Nielsen, L. Carson, M. Burnham, L. Graves, M. Main, K. Shumway, M. Arsenault, G. Geyer, G. Rosenthal, R. Fortin, J. Pietroski, J. Diket, E. Sienko, R. Frost, E. Conrad, W. Dennis, S. Thomas, C. Swanson

School Superintendent Gary Rosenthal delivered a Power Point overview of the 2016-2017 School budget proposal. He said the budget contains a net \$182,000 increase, representing a .30 mill rate increase. He distributed three handouts that described program highlights and budget detail. He offered to discuss the proposal in detail with councilors individually or at a Question and Answer session at a later date.

The Town Manager began the Council's municipal budget review with a summary of the packet materials, and an invitation to the Council to discuss items they felt needed attention.

Dam Committee Chairperson Wendy Dennis responded to prepared questions about the Maranacook Dam repair project. Wendy described operational details, and estimated future costs associated with its operation and upkeep after the project. Councilor Henry suggested that \$40,000 be added to the Capital Improvement list as the first step of two years effort to raise \$76,000 for the dam repair. He also suggested we remove \$76,000 worth of projects from the Capital Improvement list and pay for those items from existing bond proceeds. The Council agreed by consensus to Councilor Henry's suggestions.

Councilor Caprara stated she can support some of the Town Manager's recommended salary adjustments for department heads, but she opposes others. The Town Manager explained his efforts to carry out the Council's directions from August 2015. The Council requested information comparing the salary levels of the affected positions with MMA averages.

The Council considered that municipal and school increases combined represent a mill rate increase of over 4%. The Council discussed various strategies to lessen the overall increase. One approach was to ask each department to make 1% expense reductions. Another was to set targeted goals.

The Council asked the Town Manager and Department heads to take a hard look at the package to find additional savings. The Council will meet again Monday, May 16, 2016 at 6:00 PM to review results.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.