

**Nottingham Budget Committee Meeting**

**12/10/20**

**Official Minutes as of 12/17/20**

**1 Call to Order**

2 Members Present: Tim Dabrieo (Chair), John Decker (Vice Chair), Michelle King, Tom  
3 Leveille, Michael Koester, Sandra Jones, Shawn Green, Tom Butkiewicz, James Stevens, John  
4 Morin (Select Board rep), Karyl Martin (School Board rep)

5 Absent:

6 Others: Lorraine Petrini

7 Chair opened the meeting at 6:30pm.

**8 Town Update**

9 Mr. Morin said that next Monday they will announce the new police chief. A road standard  
10 policy was passed on Monday as well.

**11 Presentation of Proposed Town Budget**

12 There are some encumbrances outstanding for the town budget this year however there will still  
13 be a large surplus this year; probably \$100-200K. For the upcoming budget, there will be 2%  
14 increase from last year which is about \$80K.

15 There is a merit compensation pool for the town employees but it's not projected ahead of time  
16 where they will go. The town clerk has proposed expanding office hours. She is looking for a  
17 deputy town clerk as well and there is a long training curve with training. Dr. Butkiewicz asked  
18 if it is necessary to expand it to 24 hours a week from 16 hours. Mr. Green asked if she is very  
19 busy. Mr. Sterndale said they need a 2<sup>nd</sup> person capable to do the motor vehicle registrations  
20 specifically and that employee is trained by the state to do the registrations. Mr. Morin said the  
21 clerks are doing a lot of work after the hours they close their hours to the public. Ms. King asked  
22 about appointments. Mr. Sterndale said they are making appointments so that people are not  
23 congregating. They may find that people do things more online in the future. Mr. Stevens is in  
24 favor of training a 2<sup>nd</sup> person. Mr. Dabrieo asked what work the town clerk has to do if someone  
25 renews online. Mr. Sterndale said the clerks are doing the work. Mr. Decker said it probably  
26 more work for the clerk because they have to mail the information after. Mr. Stevens asked if the  
27 \$30k was adequate for the workload or if it should be increased. Mr. Sterndale said that some of  
28 the money from last year was for the election as well. Dr. Butkiewicz asked what the fees are for.  
29 Mr. Sterndale said these are statutory fees and it's passed to the town clerks for compensation.

30 There is only a town meeting this year; there are no elections this year. The tax collector would  
31 like the capability to accept credit cards and ACH payments; there are software expenses in the  
32 budget which include a one-time fee and recurring fees. There will be a user fee for those who  
33 want to pay with these options. Dr. Butkiewicz asked about the \$8k fee. Mr. Sterndale said it's a  
34 module linked to the accessing and building software.

**Nottingham Budget Committee Meeting**

**12/10/20**

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35 Line 76 and 77: the town contracts Avitar who determines the values of properties. Those two  
36 lines items will be combined into one.

37 Line 82 Legal had increased from \$34k to \$70k in 2020 because of one large lawsuit as well as 3  
38 other lawsuits. It has been lowered to \$55k in this proposed budget.

39 Line 86 Health and dental insurance went up 6-7%. There are 2 plans offered to employees  
40 which will continue for the next year. Mr. Green asked if there is an employee wellness plan. Mr.  
41 Sterndale said there is a plan.

42 Line 92-93 Police and fire dept retirement has increased substantially. The other employees can  
43 contribute to the 457 program. They can contribute as much as they would like and the town  
44 matches up to 4%. Dr. Butkiewicz asked about fire and police moving to this plan. Mr. Sterndale  
45 said the fire and police must stay in the state pension plan.

46 Mr. Dabrieo said that Dr. Monica Henson, superintendent at the SAU, said that there will be an  
47 actuarial who will present at joint SAU meeting.

48 For the planning and zoning sections, there is a contracted planner as well.

49 Mowing was moved to rec dept line. Mr. Stevens asked about maintenance line. Mr. Sterndale  
50 said they need a handyman for the town. Mr. Stevens said they should allot more dollars to the  
51 maintenance before the projects become larger.

52 The electricity lines are difficult to get into this format. They are budgeting a bit less than last  
53 year. They buy the electricity from the panels but it's less than the default electricity cost. There  
54 will likely be a reduction in the heating line since the boilers are new from last year. Dr.  
55 Butkiewicz asked if they have had an energy audit for the building. Mr. Sterndale said they did  
56 that a few years ago but they could do this again. In 2024, they can buy the panels at a reduced  
57 rate for \$120k and get all the power for free. Dr. Butkiewicz asked about Line 154 dumpsters.  
58 Mr. Sterndale said that is for the trash generated from the community center. Dr. Butkiewicz  
59 asked about working with the school or recycling center to get a better cost. Mr. Sterndale said  
60 they may be able to work together next year. Mr. Dabrieo asked about putting locks on the  
61 dumpsters. Mr. Sterndale said they would put locks on them in the spring.

62 The phone lines are being consolidated. The police need their own static IP for compliance so  
63 they can't combine.

64 There was discussion about liability insurance. Dr. Butkiewicz asked if there were any programs  
65 or changes the town could make to lower premiums, similar to how one could install an alarm  
66 system to lower their home insurance premiums. Mr. Sterndale said there were not.

67 There will be an update for the police compensation after the new police chief is announced. The  
68 overtime is cover for vacations and training as well as for meetings, etc. There are 7 full-time  
69 officers now. The office admin had an increase to her salary. There is a contract prosecutor to  
70 handle tickets, etc. The DARE program has been switched to the LEAD program. They were not

**Nottingham Budget Committee Meeting**

**12/10/20**

**Official Minutes as of 12/17/20**

71 able to conduct the program this year but hope to next year. The new cruiser will be delivered  
72 this month or next. They replace one cruiser a year and they last 4 years. There are 4 cruisers.

73 Fire dept. is looking to hire one more person. Per diem staff is being used to fill in open slots.  
74 The stipend is divided amongst the volunteer fire dept. based on hours.

75 Line 216: most of that will be spent for a dry hydrant on Kennard Road.

76 Line 225: Building inspector is part-time at 26-28 hours. The part time admin person would be  
77 increased to 10 hours a month.

78 The highway dept. is fully staffed. There has been a lot of roadside mowing which helps with  
79 visibility and gets sunshine on asphalt to melt snow/ice. There was more street sweeping done  
80 this year as well. Mr. Leveille asked about the overtime and if that can be reduced. Mr. Sterndale  
81 said it is weather driven and the budget has remained the same for this for several years. There  
82 will be fewer seasonal plowers this year. The dept. has proposed replacing dump truck, loader  
83 and grader. They are trying out a contractor for this year for grading; this will save a  
84 considerable amount of money over buying a grader. The grader is in the CIP and it would be  
85 taken out of the capital reserve fund or leased over 6 years.

86 Phone and internet is needed at the highway building to talk with vendors and other departments.  
87 The highway dept. orders parts, etc. through the internet. There will be an internet time clock for  
88 punching in and out.

89 Line 270: Public Works. This is used for analysis of what is left at the gravel pit and engineering  
90 for Kelsey Road. There are culvert problems on Berry Road and bridge engineering needed on  
91 Cooper Hill Road.

92 There will be some asphalt projects completed this year. The cost for Ledge Farm Road is  
93 prohibitive at the time; to finish the rest of the road is \$1M. The engineering is complete and  
94 perhaps there will be a grant in the future.

95 The volumes at the recycling center have increased. It's more expensive to haul materials. Mixed  
96 paper is a wash. The best benefit of recycling is that you don't have to throw it in the landfill at a  
97 cost. Dr. Butkiewicz asked about cutting down on man hours at the recycling center. Less  
98 manual handling of materials such as cardboard and plastic, even if it brings less revenue, might  
99 simplify operations and save taxpayers money. Dr. Butkiewicz requested copies of existing  
100 recycling reports to further investigate this.

101 Line 282 Equipment Maintenance. Mr. Stevens asked about this. Mr. Sterndale said this was for  
102 fixing the bobcat.

103 Social services has not been updated in the budget yet.

**Nottingham Budget Committee Meeting**

**12/10/20**

**Official Minutes as of 12/17/20**

104 Recreation Dept. is hoping to have more programs again in 2021. There will be no lifeguards at  
105 the beach unless there is rec camp there. The beach sand will be maintained and raked so that the  
106 beach will be maintained in size or become larger.

107 The library is hoping to be back to normal next year.

108 The budget is up by 2%. Mr. Morin and Dr. Butkiewicz commended the BOS budget.

109 Dr. Butkiewicz noted the library has the lowest cost for phones; other departments should look  
110 into which service the library is using. He asked about printing for the town report; are there  
111 many extra copies left over each year? Mr. Sterndale said they are cutting back on printing.

112 The town dept. heads can be invited to a future BC meeting.

113 Mr. Koester asked about utilities and the default budget. Mr. Sterndale said he thought it was the  
114 dollar amounts that matter for default budget and believes he can't increase the default budget  
115 because of that.

116 Ms. Martin suggested the rec dept. speaking to the rec. revolving fund.

117 **School Update**

118 Ms. Martin had a public hearing for the planning committee to withdraw from the SAU. They are  
119 moving that to a warrant article. There is a special school board meeting to go over the budget.  
120 There is a joint SAU meeting on Monday and then a school board meeting on Wednesday.

121 **Subcommittee Reports**

122 *School Facilities Committee*

123 Mr. Koester said the facilities committee met this afternoon to review the alternate design  
124 concept and discuss how the changes to the original plan would satisfy most of the needs.

125 Mr. Koester continued: the alternative plan retains the kindergarten /preschool classroom  
126 addition behind the library, but omits the addition of both two-story structures that were  
127 proposed to add space to the existing 2-story classroom wing at the north end of the building.  
128 The alternate design adds a one-story music room to the back (east) end of the gym. That  
129 location successfully mitigates any sound disruption to classrooms. The world language  
130 classroom will be where the original design had a new room designated for enrichment.

131 Mr. Koester said we are anticipating the comparative costs between original and alternate  
132 concepts; we can weigh the trade-off of dollars and less additional space. Hopefully we will  
133 have that from the construction manager for the next Facilities meeting on December 22. The  
134 facilities committee is planning to come before the budget committee at our December 29  
135 meeting. We anticipate that both the architect and the construction manager will be available for  
136 that meeting as well.

137 Ms. Jones spoke about how they will distribute information to the town about the proposals.

**Nottingham Budget Committee Meeting**

**12/10/20**

**Official Minutes as of 12/17/20**

138 *School Transportation*

139 There will be a meeting scheduled shortly. Dr. Butkiewicz spoke to Ms. Martin about mileage  
140 reimbursement for spec. ed. and it would be a money saver to the town. He would like this  
141 information told to the spec. ed. parents.

142 *Capital Improvement Plan*

143 There has not been a meeting yet.

144 *Nottingham School Planning Committee*

145 There was the hearing in preparation for the state board. They are moving the article to leave the  
146 SAU to the warrant. Ms. Martin said there may be space at Fernald Lumber or at the town hall  
147 for the superintendent/bookkeeper. Mr. Decker said that combining services and supplies  
148 between the town and the school could save money.

149 **Approve Minutes**

150 December 1 minutes will be approved at the next meeting as well as December 3 minutes.

151 **Other**

152 *Parting Thoughts*

153 Blankets will be sold this weekend at the Nottingham Recycling Center for the 300<sup>th</sup> celebration  
154 fundraising efforts.

155 *Next Meeting: Dec 17 at 6:30pm*

156 **Adjourn**

157 **Ms. Jones made a motion to adjourn at 8:44pm. Dr. Butkiewicz seconded. Unanimously**  
158 **approved by a vote of 11-0.**

159