

POWNAL BUDGET COMMITTEE

Meeting Date: April 27, 2011

Meeting Time: 7:00 PM

UNAPPROVED

Members Present: John Green, Mary Ann Hodsdon, Scott Kaplan, Andy Wyatt

Members Excused: Jan Pieter van Voorst van Beest, Bill DeWitt, Carlene Harvey

Selectmen Present: Fred Fauver

The meeting opened at 7:05. Four of the seven members were present and a quorum was established.

Secretary's minutes:

Andy Wyatt made a motion to approve the secretary's minutes as amended. Scott Kaplan seconded the motion. Pass

The changes are as follows:

Over view was changed to overview.

Bullet two page one was changed to read: If the bond passes, and Pownal continues to be part of RSU5, Pownal's share will be 12.6 percent for 15 years. Kelly is checking to see if Pownal will continue to be responsible for 12.6% of the bond for 15 years if Pownal withdraws from RSU5.

Under Questions raised by budget committee members:

* Would Pownal school costs be less if Pownal had not joined the RSU? The bill providing penalty payments for schools that have not joined an RSU, is still in legislation.

Questions raised by budget committee members:

* Would Pownal school costs be less if Pownal had not joined the RSU? There are no figures available from the state that will answer that question. The bill providing penalty payments for schools that have not joined an RSU, is still in legislation.

* Is the RSU board considering changes in the Regional Planning Committee (RPC) agreement?

* RSU5 would not be eligible for a new high school for at least ten years and the state is currently not considering funding the building of new schools.

Public Comment: None

Selectmen's Input: None at this time

Scheduling questions: Will the Budget Committee meet with the selectmen to review any budget items where there is a difference of opinion? There is nothing scheduled at this time, but should such a difference arise, the budget committee and selectmen will plan to meet before town meeting.

Mallett Hall Budget:

The largest increases to the proposed Mallett Hall 2011/2012 budget are those areas which involve fuel costs; electricity and heating. Other items in the budget are maintenance items: painting, roof repairs, elevator servicing, janitorial service and supplies, replacing anti-freeze in the sprinklers and various ongoing contracts and repairs.

Selectmen are asking for quotes for converting the current propane system to natural gas for the town buildings at Pownal Center. If the Mallett Hall furnace is converted to natural gas, heating costs should be reduced, and pay back costs are estimated for five plus years. If the furnace is converted to natural gas, the costs of furnace cleaning and repair will not exist for the current equipment. Conversion is a one-time cost. If natural gas prices remain stable, fuel costs will be less. The conversion proposal will be in a separate warrant at town meeting.

Andy Wyatt presented a draft of the budget committee report for 2011. Budget Committee members brought up additional items suggested to be in the report:

* School budget for RSU5; The RSU5 budget impacts the municipal side of expenses. The town is "putting off" municipal repairs, changes and purchases to keep costs down. Townspeople should be aware of the financial burden placed on the town of Pownal by the costs of RSU5.

* Valuations for CMP, the gas pipeline and the cell tower need to be set by the Public Utilities Commission. Pownal cannot gain tax income from the utilities until those evaluations are set and published.

* Can or would the selectmen put a warrant in town meeting as a straw vote to see if townspeople would like to withdraw from RSU5?

Members asked Andy to expand the RSU5 and Cumberland County budget areas. Other areas to expand are the Capital Projects budget and bond commitments. The two current requests for capital projects – the town truck and the fire truck will totally deplete the capital projects fund and the budget will have to be substantially increased before any new projects can be considered. What bonds are currently in place, and what bonds are being considered in the near future?

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ann Hodsdon