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PRESENT: J. E. Ziolkowski, Chairman; L. M. Smith, Vice Chairman; E. B. Beattie, Selectman; L. A. Ruest, Town Administrator

2018 PROPERTY TAX RATE: The Board reviewed the unofficial preliminary 2018 tax rate information from the Department of Revenue Administration with regard to applying an amount of the Fund Balance, as well as applying an overlay amount, to set the tax rate. A tax rate of \$20.45 was recommended, a reduction of sixty-five cents from the previous tax rate.

MOTION: To apply the amount of \$430,000 to lower the tax rate, using \$35,000 as overlay, leaving a Total Retained Fund Balance of \$558,938 or 4.99% of General Operating Expenditures Retained in Fund Balance.

**MOTION: E. B. BEATTIE
SECOND: L. M. SMITH
UNANIMOUS**

In advance of the budget work sheet review, J. Ziolkowski asked each Selectman to identify his goal with regard to the 2019 budget. He stated that he sees the Town municipal budget as a small business and is looking to apply small business practices. He stated he understood that the Selectmen have no control over school budgets that represent the greater portion of the property tax bill. In the end, he would like the Town municipal budget to be neutral, or less than the prior year's budget.

In addition, J. Ziolkowski would like to take certain existing Capital Reserve Funds held by the Trustees of the Trust Funds, as well as other Special Funds, held by the Town Treasurer, and utilize the balances in a different way from that voted. It was explained that the legislative body created these funds by majority vote and that efforts would need to be made to seek assistance from the Department of Revenue Administration and Counsel with regard to dissolving, and possibly recreating, funds. The Board requested that L. Ruest contact the Department of Revenue Administration for input and direction in this regard.

L. Smith stated that the Board of Selectmen do a good job managing and holding costs of the municipal budget, and have been doing so for a long time, however, there is work to be done and holding off may become more expensive in future years. He noted that September figures relating to inflation are 3.3% and that the Board will be going through the municipal budget line by line for the portion that represents 15% of the overall tax effort.

E. Beattie stated he has reviewed the municipal budget and feels he has a good feel of it and finds the Board of Selectmen have done a good job at holding the percentage of increase year to year. In the end, he hopes to achieve a fair effort of the best to fulfill the obligations of the Town, but not wasting money.

UPDATED 2019 BUDGET WORK SHEET PAGES: L. A. Ruest referred the Board to updated worksheet pages to replace those in the full set.

Review and discussion of each page of the budget worksheets took place at this time. Some items were asterisked for further discussion and other items were identified as pending with

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questions needing to be answered by Department Heads at the next budget work session scheduled for October 18.

		<u>Operating Budget</u>			
Remove		3,000	4140-390	Preservation of Old Records	
	Adjust	2,500	4140-390	BMS Annual Support Fee	
Remove		990	4150-312	Utility Assessment	
Remove		17,000	4150-312	Vision to Avitar	Apply to Town Communication Fund
		4,000		Vision Annual Support Fee	
		1,550		Annual Web Hosting of Assessing	
Remove		1,500	4150-342	Web Site Update	Apply to Town Communication Fund
Remove		1,500	4150-342	Web Site Tech Assistance	Apply to Town Communication Fund
Remove		2,300	4150-620	Quickbooks Software Update and Upgrade of Microsoft Office (9 users)	Apply to Town Communication Fund
Remove		1,500	4150-740	Replacement Computer/IT	Apply to Town Communication Fund
Remove		1,500	4194-390	Town Clock Annual Maintenance	
Remove		6,000	4240-390	Upgrade of Building Permit Software to Avitar	Apply to Town Communication Fund
Remove		10,000	4312-570	Janvrin Subdivision Drainage Improvements	
Remove		2,000	4312-630	DOT Material/Crushed Stone/Gravel	

The amount of the September, 2018, Consumer Price Index was identified as 3.3% for CPI-Units and 3.7% for CPI-Wages.

Discussion took place with regard to the proposal to add a fifth full-time police officer beginning in July, 2019. R. Dirsa will be asked to meet with the Board to review the specifics again.

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J. Ziolkowski recommended that the warrant article creating a special fund as approved by the voters relating to ambulance revenues being used to fund future fire vehicles and equipment be changed to have the ambulance revenues as offsetting revenue to the general fund.

J. Ziolkowski acknowledged that the winter road maintenance contractor and official of Selectmen being one in the same person cause conflict in trying to reduce the budget. He recused himself from the Board at this time to speak as the Winter Road Maintenance Contractor.

On behalf of Environmental Landscape Management (ELM), J. Ziolkowski acknowledged the 2018 September CPI-U of 3.3% increase per Agreement terms. He stated he is inclined to present a proposal to the Board of Selectmen where ELM would give back to reduce the proposed 2019 municipal budget in this regard. He requested that his offer be discussed in non-public session to give consideration and possibly re-negotiate terms of the existing Agreement. It was noted that this Agreement is a major contract of the Town that comes up for bid in 2019. Question was raised as to whether consideration of this is allowable in non-public session. L. A. Ruest was asked to check with counsel for direction.

AVITAR ASSOCIATES – SOFTWARE UPGRADES – THREE-YEAR PRICING: The Board reviewed the cost information relating to upgrades to assessing, building inspection and auto registration software, to include annual support and other associated costs. Discussion took place with regard to utilizing the Town Communication Revolving Fund for these upgrades, removing them from the proposed 2019 budget.

HEALTHTRUST – 2019 RENEWAL RATES paperwork was provided to the Board.

2018/2019 TIMELINE FOR THE 2019 BUDGET, WARRANT ARTICLES AND TOWN MEETING was provided to the Board.

DEPUTY TOWN CLERK APPOINTMENT: The Town Clerk has recommended Abigail Tonry as Deputy Town Clerk.

MOTION: To appoint Abigail Tonry as Deputy Town Clerk on a six-month probationary basis.

MOTION: L. M. SMITH
SECOND: E. B. BEATTIE
UNANIMOUS

ROAD AGENT RETIREMENT: The Board discussed ideas to recognize the retirement of the Road Agent.

The work session adjourned at 2:12 p.m.