

LONDONDERRY BUDGET COMMITTEE

Minutes for March 21, 2024

The Budget Committee meeting is at 7:00 PM on March 21, 2024, in the Sunnycrest Conference room, 268B Mammoth Road, Londonderry, NH 03053

Present: Patrick Cassidy –Chair, Joseph Gagnon-Vice Chair, Kate Burbidge – Secretary, Jason Goldman, Member at large, Sarah Meier, Member at large, Shaun Faber -Town Council Liaison

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by P. Cassidy.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / MOMENT OF SILENCE

P. Cassidy led the Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

4. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

a. Budget Committee Reorganization/Election of Officers

- i. Election of Chair – K.Burbidge motioned for Patrick Cassidy to be reinstated as chair, with J.Goldman as the second for the motion. Motion was passed 4-0-1, with P.Cassidy abstaining.
- ii. Election of Vice Chair – K.Burbidge motioned for Joseph Gagnon to be reinstated as Vice-Chair with S.Meier as the second for the motion. Motion was passed 4-0-1, with J.Gagnon abstaining.
- iii. Election of Secretary – J.Gagnon motioned for Kate Burbidge to be elected as the new Secretary, with S. Meier as the second for the motion. Motion was passed 4-0-1, with K.Burbidge abstaining.

b. Liaison Assignments

- i. Schools (Primary/Secondary) – David Plaza, Primary, Jason Goldman, Secondary
- ii. Town Council (Primary/Secondary) – Sarah Meier, Primary, Jason Goldman, Secondary

- iii. Town Hall – Kate Burbidge
- iv. Department of Public Works – David Plaza
- v. Police Department – Joe Gagnon
- vi. Fire Department – Ryan Cronin
- vii. Capital Improvement Plan – Patrick Cassidy

c. Discussion of Election Results

P.Cassidy said that the town mostly voted the same way the Budget Committee voted; the way we vote does matter to the town voters and the numbers back that up, with the exceptions being Article #16 on the Town Warrant Articles for pickleball, which the Budget Committee voted 4-3, in favor of, but didn't pass, and Article #2 for Moose Hill Expansion on the school side. Which the Budget Committee voted 6-1, in favor of, but didn't pass. People come out for the issues, not necessarily the people, based on the vote count, with the most votes going to the two Moose Hill articles, the water article, and pickleball. P. Cassidy said there is a potential question for Justin around when tax increases occur, based on reassessments, in terms of when rates increase and decrease based on said assessments. P.Cassidy said it's possible people got sticker shock with their property tax bills when they were mailed in December 2023.

K.Burbidge brought up the Citizens Petition Warrant Article #22 on the Budget Committee being no longer advisory, and if we could discuss it; while it didn't amend the Town Charter, it did pass, and could be something for us to consider. P.Cassidy said that it potentially came from previous budget seasons where the committee didn't have as much "teeth" and opinions/suggestions weren't taken seriously from the Budget Committee to the Town Council and the School Board. P. Cassidy mentioned this past year we were very involved, and both the Town Council and School Board did take our suggestions seriously. P. Cassidy brought up that John Farrell (Chair of the Town Council in previous budget season) allowed us to make suggestions and weigh in alongside the Town Council on what we would like to see done about potential warrant articles and other considerations. J.Gagnon asked what would it mean for the school budget, if this recommendation only covers town budget? P.Cassidy said he doesn't see what gain there would be in budget committee being responsible for developing the default budget. In the end, given our positive experience this past budget season, he suggested we should still touch base with Mike Malaguti and see what this might mean, as any discussion about a charter revision is a much larger conversation with additional people who this will impact. K.Burbidge said that she would like to see what additional scope/responsibilities it could include as well, and if, given the additional workload, would Budget Committee positions then become paid?

- d. Discussion of Spring Agenda/Goals
 - i. What tours do we need this year?

P.Cassidy stated that we did tours of DPW, Fire Department, Police Department, and school tours; he asked the group if we thought we should do them again or skip a year. J.Gagnon said he thinks it would be beneficial to do them every year since the tour leaders bring up what they will be asking for in the upcoming budget season, that doing the tours helps us talk about budget requests in a well-informed manner, and that it allows us to do further relationship building between department heads and the committee. The group agreed and decided to do the tours every year.

P. Cassidy said the tours could be part of the April, May, June, August, September, and October meetings. He reminded us that we traditionally skip having a meeting in July, which the group agreed we should continue to do. He reminded the group that tours for the schools are generally the last week of August, just before school starts.

The committee decided to do tours for the Police Department, Fire Department, DPW, Library, SAU Office, and potentially the Lions Hall; P.Cassidy said he would send out the emails to set up the tours. Meetings could start at 6:30pm, with tours occurring afterwards. Try for Lions Hall in April along with 91A discussion with Michael Malaguti.

- ii. Are there guest speakers we would like to hear from?

P.Cassidy said we may not need to hear from Justin and Lisa again since most members have been through budget season.

P.Cassidy mentioned that last year Mike Malaguti came to the meeting to discuss 91A; J. Gagnon suggested that he come back again and have him come to the next meeting since the committee has three new members. P.Cassidy said he would reach out to Mike to see if he can come to the April 18th meeting. Kristen mentioned there's a new 2023 addendum added that clarifies the scope and boundaries in the digital age, so would be great for him to attend.

- iii. Is there committee business for the year we would like to discuss?

Kirsten Hildonen attended the meeting and discussed the new Outlook email that is coming for all Londonderry emails, as well as 91A rules associated with emails. She also went through the process, timing, and expectations.

J.Goldman asked if we could provide department heads with some questions about the budget ahead of the 2024-2025 budget season. He said one of the questions he would like to ask is “How do you plan to innovate this upcoming budget season to provide a better service within your budget, to reduce your budget, or to offset your budget?”. P.Cassidy said it’s a good idea and we should develop list of questions for the upcoming budget season to send out to department heads sometime in the fall. P.Cassidy said he would collate the list of questions and we can email him.

K.Burbidge asked a question about burn rates with budgets. P.Cassidy said department heads do currently track this and we could consider getting this as a quarterly report from department heads. P.Cassidy said our intent would not be to control or preside their budgets, but inform us of budget status.

P.Cassidy reminded the committee that liaison reports are for meetings pre-November budget season.

J.Goldman brought up our current meeting in the Sunnycrest Conference Room and said he would prefer we meet in the Moose Hill Conference Room; P.Cassidy said he liked and preferred the Sunnycrest Conference Room, as we don’t always get a lot of public comment and it’s easier to converse and discuss committee items. J. Gagnon agreed, saying he also feels discussion is easier and more free-flowing in this environment. The committee agreed to use the Sunnycrest Conference Room as the primary meeting space, with Moose Hill as the secondary space when we have speakers or presentations. P.Cassidy said he will need to ensure that livestream works in Sunnycrest to ensure people at home can watch – P.Cassidy will confirm the livestream is accessible.

P.Cassidy reminded the committee of the Community Grants coming sometime in the fall.

5. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

- a. Minutes for February 22nd, 2024 Committee Meeting accepted 4-0, with S.Meier abstaining since she was not in attendance at the February meeting.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Shawn Faber, Town Council Liaison, said he enjoys closeness of the room and thinks the vibe in the budget committee meeting was great.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by J. Gagnon, second by S. Meier, all in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Member	For	Against	Abstained	Absent
Patrick Cassidy	X			
Joseph Gagnon	X			
Kate Burbidge	X			
Ryan Cronin				X
Jason Goldman	X			
Sarah Meier	X			
David Plaza				X

8. MEETING SCHEDULE

- a. **Thursday April 18, 2024 at 7:00 P.M. in Sunnycrest Conference Room**
- b. **Thursday, May 16, 2024 at 7:00 P.M. in Sunnycrest Conference Room**
- c. **Thursday, June 20, 2024 - TBD**