

**Camden Budget Committee
Minutes of Meeting
March 19, 2015**

PRESENT: Committee Members: Chair Ed Collins, Vice Chair Patty Eddy, Kate Bates, Anita Brosius-Scott, Sonny Goodwin, Richard Gross, Rick Knowlton, Morgan Laidlaw, Brett Lerner, John Lewis, Robin McIntosh, Steve Melchiskey, Deborah Oliver, Matt Orne, Etienne Perret, Joe Russillo, Frank Stearns, Richard Stetson, Jean White, Town Manger Patricia Finnigan, Finance Director Carol Sue Greenleaf, Select Board members John French, Leonard Lookner, Martin Cates, Donald White, James Heard, and Recording Secretary Janice Esancy

ABSENT: Dave Nazaroff

Chairman Collins called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Scheduled for discussion this evening are the following proposed budgets: Cemeteries, Parks & Recreation, General Government, Debt and Capital Improvements

Regarding Cemetery Association,

John Lewis made a motion to recommend \$40,000 for the Cemetery Association budget. Patty Eddy seconded this motion. The motion carries.

Regarding Cemetery Maintenance,

John Lewis made a motion to recommend \$50,000 for the Cemetery Maintenance budget. The motion carries.

Regarding Opera House Auditorium,

Questions were raised regarding the revenues from the Opera House Auditorium. There were concerns about the revenues staying flat because the budget request has a 7.3% increase over last year. Opera House Manager Kerry Hadley reported that the Opera House is shifting from primarily being a rental venue to being primarily a producing venue. This year's budget request recognizes this shift and asks for more dedicated staff to oversee the added functions with this change of direction.

Opera House Chair Marc Ratner stated the Opera House contributes to store businesses, restaurant businesses and brings more people into town, so it may not be a profitable Opera House venue but it is an economic driver for the Town.

After further discussion, Anita Brosius-Scott made a motion to recommend \$246,896 for the Opera House Auditorium budget. Robin McIntosh seconded this motion. The vote was 17-3 and the motion carries.

Regarding Recreation,

John Lewis made a motion to recommend \$161,239 for the Recreation budget. Morgan Laidlaw seconded this motion. The motion carries.

Regarding Parks,

Anita Brosius-Scott made a motion to add \$800 for recycling bins for the town parks. Morgan Laidlaw seconded this motion. The motion did not carry.

John Lewis made a motion to recommend \$216,454 for the Parks budget. Morgan Laidlaw seconded this motion. The motion carries.

Regarding Debt Service for Parks & Recreation,

John Lewis made motion to recommend \$7500 for 3001-4465 for the Village Green pavers and, at the Town Manager's request, recommend \$0 for 3001-4465 for Parks & Rec all terrain vehicle. Kate Bates seconded this motion. The motion carries.

Regarding Capital Improvements for Parks & Recreation,

Steve Melchiskey made a motion to recommend \$0 for the 3004-4460 for the Riverwalk engineering and design line in capital improvements. Brett Lerner seconded this motion. The motion carries.

Morgan Laidlaw made a motion to recommend \$25,000 for a new 2 wheel drive truck. John Lewis seconded this motion. The motion carries.

John Lewis made a motion to recommend \$10,000 for Public Landing Restroom renovations. Frank Stearns seconded this motion. The motion carries.

Regarding Administration,

Manager Finnigan stated the major changes in this budget are staffing, wages and benefits. The major change is in the Assessing Office. The former assessor retired and the town contracted this work with Murphy Appraisal and the Rockport Tax Assessor Kerry Leichtman to meet the tax commitment deadline and explore a different approach to that work.

The town used this opportunity to restructure the position and determine the feasibility of sharing an Assessor between Rockport and Camden. Beth Doan was the Administrative Assistant for Codes/Assessing/Development and she is being moved to the Assessing Dept. She will be working primarily as the Assessor's Agent's Administrative Assistant which will leave the Administrative Assistant position in the Codes office vacant. The Town Office also has an office assistant position vacant. Part of the reason for the increase in salaries is now Beth's salary is in the Assessing line and not the Planning and Development line.

Steve Melchiskey made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Sonny Goodwin seconded this motion. The motion failed.

John Lewis made a motion to recommend \$126,711 for the Full Time line in salaries for Planning and Development with the intent of taking out \$50,000 for the Development Director position. Frank Stearns seconded this motion. The vote was 7-11 and the motion fails.

John Lewis made a motion to adjourn. Sonny Goodwin seconded this motion. The vote was 7-11 so therefore the motion fails.

After further discussion,

Rick Knowlton made a motion to recommend \$745,456 for the Administration budget. Kate Bates seconded this motion. The vote was 16-4 therefore the motion carries.

Anita Brosius-Scott made a motion to recommend \$281,403 for the Planning and Development budget. Robin McIntosh seconded this motion.

Robin McIntosh (attached) read a letter for support to keep the Development Director position which is currently vacant to remain funded. Anita Brosius-Scott also read letter (attached) from Oscar Verest in support of keeping the Development Director position funded.

Some of the highlights of the comments made:

- What has Camden lost since we lost the Development Director, don't believe Camden has gone backwards because of this
- Say brought new businesses to town but what about the businesses that have been here for years, such as Lord Camden Inn, Wayfarer, Grand Harbour Inn, banks and numerous other shops downtown, these are not because of the Development Director.
- Not impressed with the Development Director, but will support the Town Manager and give her the opportunity to turn this around
- The Development Director position provides the motor to effectuate the future of the town

After further discussion, the Chair asked for the vote on the motion on the floor. The motion carried on a 13-7 vote.

John Lewis made a motion to adjourn at 9:20 pm. Frank Stearns seconded this motion. The motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice L. Esancy
Recording Secretary