

**March 28, 2016**

**Work Session**

Present were: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Otis, Remillard, Gentili, Morgan Allain, Higbee, Nelson and Theberge; Councilor Rozek was absent

Others present City Manager James Wheeler, CAP Director Rob Boschen, School Superintendent Corinne Cascadden, Public Works Director Michael Perreault, Library Director Denise Jensen, Health & Welfare Director Angela Martin Giroux, Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, and Barbara Tetreault from the Berlin Daily Sun

**Tri County CAP**

Rob Boschen reported that the request for funds from CAP amounts to \$3.35 per person from Berlin who is served by CAP, not including transportation. Mayor Grenier added that funding is used to leverage other funding. He stated that he would like to see a representative of CAP come to the Council on a regular basis. Mr. Boschen asked to be contacted by e-mail prior to the meeting. Councilor Remillard expressed concern that funding is spent on Berlin residents and Mr. Boschen assured her that CAP spends much more than the appropriation on Berlin's residents. Councilor Theberge asked about transportation and whether a bus is the most preferable mode of transportation. Mr. Boschen replied that they get the vehicle that state or federal funds will pay for. Mayor Grenier made the point that the County participates in CAP funding as well; he asked if there are other participants. Mr. Boschen assured him that there are several entities and nonprofits involved in funding CAP.

**Review Questions from School Budget**

In a memo, Corinne Cascadden provided the Council with answers to questions they had at the March 9 budget presentation. She reviewed the memo with the Council.

What classes have less than 5 students at BHS?

There are none. Spanish IV has 1 student; however it is included in Spanish III for a total of 7 students.

What is the cost of the 2 requested positions?

K-12 Curriculum Coordinator salary and benefits: \$92,051

Behavior Specialist Teacher salary and benefits: \$81,476.46

What is the cost of step increases FY17?

\$74,059.74

What is the age of the building roofs? When were they last repaired?

Brown School: 1913, 1956 addition; roof reframing & resurfacing 1997; rubberized coating product and roof drains lowered 2013

Hillside/Middle School: 1925, new gym 1928, re-roofing and structural upgrades 1998; rubberized coating product and roof drains lowered 2014-15

Berlin High School: 1972, CTE wing added 1976; rubberized product and roof drains lowered 2013-14-15

How does cost per pupil compare to other k-12 districts?

District Name	Total Students	Cost per Pupil
Milton	543	\$14,700.37
Berlin	1183	\$15,179.51
Conway	1831	\$15,312.72
Lisbon Regional	331	\$16,008.53
Gorham Randolph Shelburne Coop	427	\$16,039.00
Oyster River Coop	2054	\$16,843.99
Gilford	1209	\$18,097.01
Littleton	705	\$18,614.44

Lincoln-Woodstock Coop	319	\$19,091.12
Sunapee	413	\$22,619.13

#### **Recommendation of Award of Hutchins Street**

Mr. Wheeler presented the Council with a recommendation to award the Hutchins Street Project to AB Excavating at their low bid of \$936,758.94. He noted that there is federal funding available totaling \$779,067 and the remaining funds can be spent from existing Drain Line Replacement line item (\$46,043.77) and from Street Rehabilitation (\$52,811.30). The Council is being asked to re-appropriate funds from the salt storage shed account and re-appropriate to Hutchins Street. Councilor Remillard moved to award a contract to AD Excavating subject to the approval of DOT for \$936,758.94; Councilor Nelson seconded and the motion carried.

#### **Position Replacement Request**

Angela Martin Giroux reported that she has received a two week notice from a full time nurse. She is requesting authorization to hire. Depending on whether the position is hired from in house, there may be a need to hire a per diem or a full time nurse. Councilor Remillard moved to approve replacing an RN position in the Health Department; Councilor Morgan Allain seconded and the motion carried.

#### **Budget Discussion**

##### Library

Denise Jensen reported that much of the increase in the Library budget is per union contract. Mayor Grenier asked about \$40,000 building improvement request. Mr. Wheeler explained that the Library building has many needs and at the top of the list is a new boiler with an estimated cost of \$33,000. There was some hope that there could be money from Carnegie, LCHIP, NH Preservation Alliance; however there is not a lot of money out there. Councilor Remillard mentioned that a pellet boiler should be considered.

##### Health Department

Angela Martin Giroux indicated that the Health Department budget request is \$573,871.11 which is a small increase from last year. She would like to have two part time positions which would then increase patients and there could be more people on call. Councilor Remillard confirmed that the "Stand by Allowance" is to pay a nurse to stand by in case there is a call.

Councilor Theberge acknowledged that the City pays for nursing licenses which is a contract item. Mayor Grenier commented that projected Health Department revenues are not as much as anticipated. Ms. Giroux stated that the patient mix changes constantly and currently there are more Medicaid patients and the return is not the same as with private pay or Medicare.

Mayor Grenier asked if the revenues could be increased in the coming budget and Ms. Giroux stated that she would have to review the projections.

Mayor Grenier asked if the City's costs are covered when providing services to non-residents. Ms. Giroux reported that there is no difference in cost from a resident to non-resident; she will look into adjusting fees for non-residents to cover costs. Mayor Grenier thanked Ms. Giroux and her staff for the work they do.

With regard to the capital request, Ms. Giroux indicated that the nurses are currently working in one big room with one electrical outlet in the room. She would like to re-configure the health department space so that there are cubicles and more quiet space where nurses could work.

##### Welfare Department

Ms. Giroux did not anticipate an increase in the welfare budget. She stated that there has been a shift in Welfare applicant with less people moving here from elsewhere. For a city our size, the welfare statistics are great. The mandatory job search and work program contribute to keeping costs down.

There was some discussion about burials with the Welfare Department paying for about 7 per year at a cost of \$750 for cremation. The Cemetery Trustees would provide for space to bury cremains; however they did not want to waive the need for a vault at a cost about \$250. Mayor Grenier noted that after a length of time, the City should pay for the vault and complete the burial.

There being no further business, Councilor Nelson moved to adjourn; Councilor Morgan Allain seconded and the motion carried. The meeting ended at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Susan Tremblay  
Administrative Assistant