

**TOWN OF BEDFORD
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
January 10, 2018
BEDFORD MEETING ROOM
10 MEETINGHOUSE ROAD**

1. ROLL CALL: A meeting of the Bedford Town Council was held on Wednesday, January 10, 2018 at the Bedford Meeting Room, 10 Meetinghouse Rd. Present were Councilors Chris Bandazian (Vice Chair), John Schneller, Catherine Rombeau, David Gilbert, and Melissa Stevens. Also present was Town Manager Rick Sawyer. Kelleigh Murphy (Chairwoman) – via phone. Councilor Duschatko had an excused absence.

Vice Chairman Bandazian opened the meeting at 7:00pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Led by Councilor Schneller.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None.

Vice Chairman Bandazian moved the first item under New Business up in the agenda.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. Approval of 2018 Budget adjustments due to use of SB38 Funds

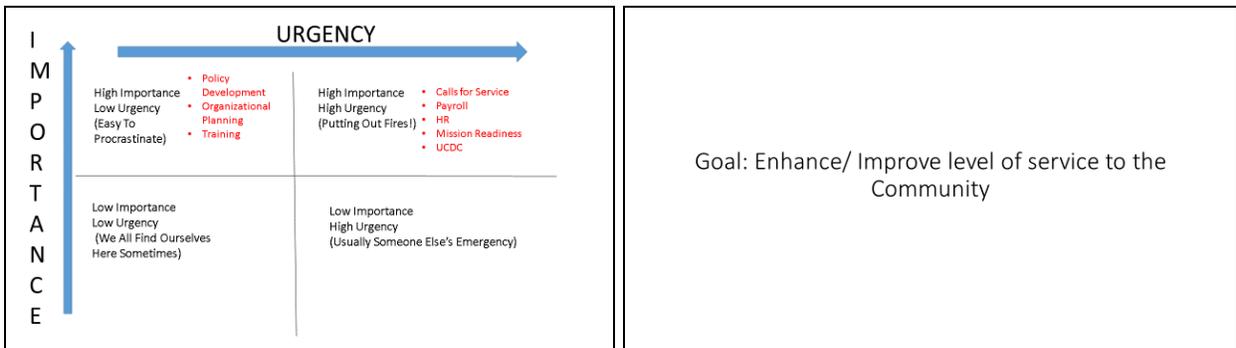
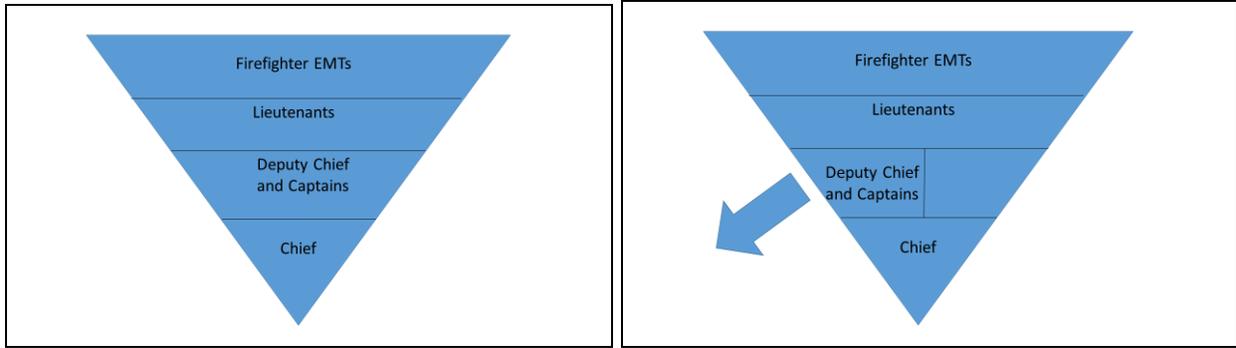
Theresa Young, Finance Director explained how the use of the SB38 funds (\$487k) results in a \$0.12 reduction in the tax rate and how it affects the 2018 budget, the 2017 fund balance, and the capital reserve funds. The SB38 funds will be spent as follows:

- \$348k for two dump trucks (\$174 each)
 - \$ 40k for a Hot Box
 - \$ 40k for the purchase of a pickup truck
 - \$ 59k for 2018 road maintenance expenditures
- \$487k**

Use of 2017 Appropriations-Updated from 12/13/17

	Amount to Fund with 2017 Surplus Appropriations	Eligible Cuts from 2018 Budget	Council Action - Authorization to Overspend the following:		Lines identified with available surplus appropriations		
			Account	Description	Account	Description	Available
Fire vehicle	25,000		10030664 57210	Vehicles	10010336 52210	Health Insurance	170,000
Local Roads LED lights	66,000	66,000	10050772 57215	Machinery and Equipment	10010204 53130	TM Prof Services	25,000
Finance Time and Attendance	30,000	30,000	10010314 53130	Professional Services	10010252 56910	Unallocated Reserve	25,000
TBD	174,000	174,000			10030664 51405	Fire Overtime	50,000
	-	-			10030664 52320	Fire Retirement	25,000
Totals	\$ 295,000	\$ 270,000					295,000

Note: The Charter allows Council to authorize budgetary transfers between departments (CS-6). Due to the source of 2017 surplus (namely insurance) the recommendation is to overspend line items in lieu of budgetary transfers to prevent altering the historical budget data.



Deputy Chief Hunter explained the need for a Training Fire Captain position and stated that this position would benefit the operations side, the administration side, and the prevention side as well as the training side. This position would be supervised by the Deputy Chief of Operations and Training and has no direct responsibility for supervising anyone. The Training Fire Captain would also be the UCDC (Unit Controlled Drug Coordinator) and would be responsible for making sure they have accountability of all of their controlled substances on the ambulances; all of the narcotics. They have a system in place that takes care of that on a daily basis and is audited on a monthly basis. The UCDC is required to be a paramedic level.

Councilor Rombeau wanted to Deputy Chief Hunter to breakdown the new role in terms of tasks. Deputy Chief Hunter stated that it would be about 50/50 as far as the UCDC and training responsibilities.

Councilor Stevens mentioned that people in Town were not happy about taxes. She wanted to know if they could upgrade someone who is already there instead of adding another person to the department. Chief Wiggin stated that's what they are doing, but they need someone to replace that individual once they move up to that capacity. It will most likely be a paramedic internally in the department that would move up into that position, but they still need to fill that position on the floor. Councilor Stevens wanted to know if there was a possibility where the person could perform the duties they are already performing, give them a new title, give them a pay raise, and give them the new responsibilities. Chief Wiggin thought it would be very challenging, because that person is in shift rotation and works 24 hour shifts. The new captain position will be a daytime person working Monday through Fridays when staff and daytime personnel can be

serviced. Deputy Chief Hunter stated that that's what they have been trying to do and what has been the band aid for a decade. He thought the realization is that it doesn't work anymore; it's not optimal. Mr. Sawyer explained that there are only three people in the command structure, the Chief, Deputy Chief, and the current captain. There is no other person in the command structure that could take on those responsibilities or have a title change. Deputy Chief Hunter thought they had exceeded their capacity and doesn't think they have the capacity for those types of tasks any longer. Chief Wiggins acknowledged that the tax rate was a concern. The tax rate on the Town side has gone down, but it was the road bond that the townspeople wanted. Councilor Stevens thought that this wouldn't be the year to do it, but next year would be the year to do it, because they wouldn't be seeing the effect of the road bond. She thanked the Chief for explaining how the shifts work and how this role is not possible for someone who works as a paramedic and is on 12 hours and then be there Monday through Friday to perform those tasks. That's the clarity she needed in order to see how it all works out.

Councilor Rombeau wanted to confirm that the department has grown significantly since the reorganization after the MRI study. Deputy Chief Hunter stated almost 100% in the line staff. Councilor Rombeau also mentioned the new fields of training.

Chairwoman Murphy stated that at the last meeting she advocated to putting the position back into the budget. She thought the position was a long time coming and there really isn't anyone in the department that they could promote or put in the position and give them the extra responsibility. She understands the sentiments of the Councilors and she would continue to advocate for this at the next meeting. It's definitely something she's in favor of.

Vice Chairman Bandazian thought the detailed memo was extremely helpful in getting a deeper understanding. The Council will take it up at their next meeting on the 24th.

4. PUBLIC HEARING

a. First public hearing on the proposed 2018 budget

Mr. Sawyer explained that the changes the Council made tonight further reduced the budget by \$0.12 for a proposed rate of \$4.39, which is an increase of \$0.26. He pointed out that \$0.33 of that is from the road bond itself.

Vice Chairman Bandazian explained the budget process, which started over the summer with the Town Manager delivering a proposed capital improvement budget to the Town Council in September and then delivering the budget to the Council in October. The Town Council had a budget workshop and have continued to work on it up until this evening. This is the first of two public hearings. The next one will be on January 24, 2018. After the 2nd public hearing, the Town Council will move the budget as it is determined on the 24th to the Town ballot and be voted on at the Budgetary Town Meeting on March 14th.

MOTION by Councilor Rombeau to open the public hearing. Seconded by Councilor Stevens. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0.

MOTION by Councilor Rombeau to close the public hearing. Seconded by Councilor Gilbert. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0.

Vice Chairman Bandazian summarized that the budget is funded with revenues that come from both taxes and other sources and those include enterprise funds. The total amount shown of \$29,960,724 is funded by a number of sources including tax revenues, vehicle registrations and enterprise funds.

b. Charter Amendment – Section C3-6, Salaries and Compensation

Vice Chairman Bandazian explained that the current amounts are \$1,500 per Councilor per year and an additional \$500 for the Chairperson since 1987. This is the first proposed amendment. Last year with the support of the voters, the Charter was amended to allow a procedure where a change could be adopted without the Town having to pay for a special meeting. This is the first time they are able to consider a proposed increase under that new procedure. The proposal is to increase those amounts from \$1,500 to \$3,000 per year for Councilors and increase the additional compensation for the Chairperson from \$500 to \$1,000.

MOTION by Councilor Gilbert to open the public hearing. Seconded by Councilor Stevens. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0.

MOTION by Councilor Gilbert to close the public hearing. Seconded by Councilor Stevens. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0.

Councilor Stevens stated that this didn't sit well with her. The money doesn't keep her there. They have been asking the department heads to squeeze their budgets and every little penny the Council has asked them to go back again and again to find information for projects unsure of whether or not they want to go through with them, because they aren't sure they want to spend the money and here they are doubling their compensation. She doesn't like it.

Councilor Schneller mentioned that he sat down with the BTA board; they have 108 active members all of whom are opposed to this. He agreed with Councilor Stevens' comments entirely.

Councilor Rombeau was concerned that she would be impacted by it. She was having a hard time putting her energy behind it.

Chairwoman Murphy explained that she is the one who brought it up. In doing the study of neighboring communities, Bedford is so far off the mark from where their compensating their other elected officials. In her opinion, what is proposed is reasonable. It doesn't keep her there or motivate her to keep running; it's not really a

factor. She knows the amount of time that everyone on the Council puts in on a weekly basis and thought it was a drop in the bucket towards the amount of time that people are spending and didn't see an issue with it at all. She supports it.

Vice Chairwoman Bandazian was uncomfortable voting himself a pay raise. He agreed that this probably isn't the best year to do it when they have a road bond increase.

Councilor Schneller stated that he coaches two sports teams in two seasons and he puts in substantially more time with that than he does with Town Council and none of the coaches get paid. To him, it's a labor of love and he does it, because he thinks he can have a positive impact on the community, not because he's getting paid.

Mr. Sawyer pointed out that they can't change the motion or what would go on the ballot, so it would take place next year.

Vice Chairman Bandazian stated that they could make a motion that would most likely get voted down. Councilor Gilbert stated that they could wait until the next meeting when Chairwoman Murphy and Councilor Duschatko would be present. Vice Chairman stated that they could vote to table. Chairwoman Murphy stated that if it's the will of the Council not to put it on the ballot, she's in support of that.

MOTION by Councilor Rombeau that the Bedford Town Council not place the Charter amendment to Section C3-6, Salaries and Compensation as proposed (or as revised) on the 2018 ballot. Seconded by Councilor Gilbert. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0.

5. NEW BUSINESS

b. Presentation by AARP & SNHPC on Becoming an Age-Friendly Community

Derek Shooster, Associate Planner with the Southern NH Planning Commission (SNHPC) and Todd Fahey, State Director of AARP New Hampshire came forward to present.

Mr. Shooster explained that in 2016, the SNHPC embarked on a program called Becoming Age-Friendly. It was grant funded through the Tufts Health Plan Foundation and received program support through AARP NH, NH DOT, as well as several dozen stakeholders. They did assessments of 14 communities in the region including Bedford. Their goal with the program was to assess age-friendly characteristics across four focus areas: transportation & connectivity, housing, recreation & social engagement, and business & economic development. They published their findings from their research with the communities (attached) and in the fall of 2017 they embarked on phase II of their age-friendly program. They are in a position to work with up to three communities and 14 businesses on creating age-friendly strategic plans at no cost to the communities or the businesses. They ask the towns in the region for a letter of intent or interest to work with them on creating those age-friendly strategic plans. He thought

since Bedford is in the midst of potentially updating its master plan, an age-friendly strategic plan could guide the development of chapters in that effort. Additionally, AARP has its age-friendly network of livable communities.

Mr. Fahey distributed a couple of handouts. He stated that the whole world is graying and the World Health Organization sees the graying of the population globally. The World Health Organization has an initiative about how to become more age-friendly for all ages. AARP is the US affiliate for the World Health Organization. They are not selling anything and it is not a revenue generator. A big piece of their social mission is doing this work in community. There are about 200 communities enrolled in their age-friendly work nationwide. The age-friendly network is a protocol for becoming very deliberate and intentional about how they do community so it is most hospitable and welcoming to residents of all ages, from 8 – 80. There are 44 communities in Maine that are on their way to becoming age-friendly. Of all the communities doing this nationwide there are about 60 million people impacted by these efforts. It is self-directed. There has to be a will of the towns to want to do this. They've had some really great findings. New Hampshire and the service area of SNHP has been very receptive to this. All but one or two towns have indicated some willingness to become involved. They are going to try to choose three communities: one rural, one suburban, and one urban to become age-friendly. There needs to be capacity and commitment, because it will take some time. He mentioned that it's not only the Built Environment, it's also the Social Environment as shown on the handout. In working with SNHPC, the SNHPC knows the communities and the built environment well and the processes they go through. AARP offers a protocol and some shared learnings that the town can tie into to figure out things that can make the community more age-friendly. They warmly invite Bedford to be interested and to submit a letter of interest to at least be considered for part of this program. AARP.org/livable has a ton of material on it and things towns can see and do, but it will require some capacity and commitment of the Town to want to go down that road for the benefit of its residents.

Mr. Sawyer wanted to know what the 'commitment' means.

Mr. Shooster explained that they are trying to have the strategic plans ready by the end of the 2nd phase of the grant, which is the end of May. Realistically that may mean two to four meetings with the community. It doesn't necessarily represent from the Town Council or Planning Board, but that would help. They have had representation from Parks & Rec from the Town of Bedford, cemeteries, the different sports leagues, educators, the library, and the churches. There are a number of ways participation from the community can happen, but whether or not it's something the Town wants is something that they hope is made clear in the letter of intent from the town. Mr. Fahey thought it depends. If they want to become a World Health organization age-friendly city, it's a longer process, three to five years. Somebody is going to have to spearhead that and somebody is going to have to be involved to really make all of the domains come together in a way that fits a town like Bedford. It may just be a focus on certain domains. He thought there will have to be somebody to make sure there is some progress on this or maybe not. It depends on how far they want to go with it. If they are

going to deal with all eight domains, it's going to require a fair amount of commitment and somebody spearheading that and volunteers stepping up to help. Mr. Sawyer asked about the financial requirements for hosting a meeting, supplying food or getting the advertisement out, etc. He wanted to know if that was part of what AARP is providing. Mr. Fahey stated that there are potentially 13 communities vying for three slots. They can still support four for some period of time. So they could support them in their social media channels and do things to work with the towns, because that's what they do. Mr. Shooster stated that he personally manage the social media accounts for SNHPC becoming an age-friendly program as well as coordination with different local publications including some from the Town.

Councilor Rombeau wanted to know if they were looking for a dedicated person from the Planning Board, Council, etc. Mr. Sawyer thought probably all of the above and citizen reps that aren't on boards. Councilor Rombeau mentioned creating a citizen committee who would attend the meetings. She was fascinated by the assessment.

Vice Chairman Bandazian mentioned that the Planning Board recommended that the Town Council submit a letter of interest and noted that it dovetails well with the Town's Master Plan process.

Rebecca Hebert, Planning Director, stated that they participated with SNHPC in the community assessment and this being the 2nd phase of that work, the Planning Department is interested in continuing that work with SNHPC and AARP. They are about to embark on a Master Plan update, which is roughly and 18 month to 2-year process. The 2nd phase of the AARP/SNHPC age-friendly project would precede the Master Plan rewrite, but it would help to inform the Master Plan and maybe help to bring a thread of information throughout of the chapters in the Master Plan, which would highlight age-friendliness and how they could improve the community for all ages. There is a lot of overlap between the livable communities that AARP talked about and the Master Plan chapters. She thought it would coincide nicely with the work they are about to start.

Councilor Schneller didn't want to detract from Mr. Fahey's efforts and cause and what he's doing, but what he hears is taxes going up. He thought making Bedford a better community might have some cost. He stated that not one senior citizen has approached him to accomplish some of the things Mr. Fahey and Mr. Shooster have talked about and some things he knows will be discussed. He has been approached about reducing taxes by senior citizens. He mentioned a senior center in Winchester, Mass. He thought senior citizens having something like senior citizens having their tax bill go down, they would prefer that their tax bill go down. He knows a fair amount about AARP and not to take anything away from Mr. Fahey professionally, he has very little use for AARP and less use for the World Health Organization. Mr. Shooster stated that some of the considerations of age and planning for people of all ages in a community takes into account universal design, which he didn't think any of the communities in the region subscribe to. Universal design considerations take into account design for people of all mobility, all immobility's, and different abilities. With a lot of the housing stock that

they currently have in Southern NH and Bedford, it's a lot of 2-story and 3-story single family homes. He's heard concerns from Police and Fire about phone calls they get because of elderly residents tripping down flights of steps. Universal design considerations, if it's something that a community is more proactive about making sure new development takes into account, can greatly reduce the number of phone calls of that nature. Additionally, considerations like access to open space, efficiency with smart phone apps in order to pay taxes, different considerations across those focus areas are more efficient in many ways and would counter that they mean a tax increase. He thought a number of communities in AARP's livable community network if you look at the trend in their tax rates since they've joined, you may say a different story. It doesn't necessarily mean they are asking for more money to accomplish thoughtful goals towards being a more age-friendly region.

Mr. Fahey stated that it is very noble and decent work. He wouldn't come before the Council with a proposal that would raise the tax rate as he has an elderly mother who lives in Bedford. He thought there was a lens that they could look through and say it's automatically going to require increased dollars, but even the examples that he gave them were efficient and not a tax burden. He didn't see this as an issue that he saw as divisive about how they do their communities. They simply provide a mechanism that many have thought to be a very good one. It's all driven by the will of the Town. If they want to do things that drive the tax rate up, they can, but if they simply want to augment the app they they've created to make communication more robust, this might be a mechanism to do that.

Mr. Herbert stated that the recommendations of the Master Plan are often more subtle with regards to age-friendliness. One recommendation may be to build a senior center, maybe not. The strategic plan would come before the Master Plan and help inform the Master Plan and the Master Plan would have a robust public process and the recommendations from the Master Plan are the results of that discussion with the Town residents and the public. She didn't think that the recommendations of the strategic plan would directly translate into the Master Plan without community discussion and a public process.

Councilor Stevens wanted to know if there was any funding such as grants that could be available to the Town like putting in sidewalks or is the funding portion of that not taken into account. Mr. Shooster stated that there are a number of grant opportunities that will give higher preference to communities that have strategic plans or processes in place and identified goals in their Master Plans for things like public health improvement.

Councilor Schneller wanted to know if this was a vote that had to take place tonight, because there was a more senior Councilor that wasn't present and thought he would lend some beneficial comments to the discussion.

Vice Chairman Bandazian wanted to know how time-sensitive this was and Mr. Shooster responded that they have set a January 19th deadline for responses.

MOTION by Councilor Gilbert that the Bedford Town Council authorize the Town Manager to submit a letter of interest to be a Pilot Community for the Age Friendly Strategic Plan. Seconded by Councilor Stevens. Vote taken – Motion Passed –5-1 (Schneller-nay).

c. Action on Merrimack Sewer Agreement

Mr. Sawyer explained that this is an extension of the 20-year agreement that first started in 1996, so it expired a year ago. The staff has worked with Merrimack, the Town attorney and the Water & Sewer Advisory Committee to bring the proposal forward. It's their recommendation along with the Water & Sewer Advisory Committee to have the Council approve the 20-year extension.

Jeff Foote, Public Works Director, thought it was important to note that the cost associated with the recommendation has no impact on the tax rate or the property taxes; all of the revenue raised is through the enterprise sewer fund.

Councilor Rombeau wanted to know if there was a clause that they stay in the agreement even though the 20 years had already passed. Mr. Foote thought there must be an evergreen clause. Councilor Rombeau wanted to know if there were any changes in the year and a half since the agreement ended. Mr. Foote stated that there were two things that changed. Originally when the subdivision was approved along with the inter-municipal agreement, it was specifically for the Greenfield Farms subdivision. The proposed agreement allows the discussion to expand the area if the two parties agree. They also changed the way the suspended solids and the BOD's (biochemical oxygen demand) are measured to be consistent with what their larger agreement with Manchester includes.

Vice Chairman Bandazian wanted to know if the issue with corrosion had been resolved with Merrimack. Mr. Foote that's one of the items that the Town is and has been for the last 20 years is to continue work Merrimack as those issues develop. They've implemented measures to reduce the corrosion, but they are always going to have some measurable corrosion. They are just trying to minimize the frequency of repairs and maintenance.

MOTION by Councilor Schneller that the Bedford Town Council authorize the Town Manager to execute the 2017 Merrimack/Bedford Inter-municipal Sewer Agreement as presented. Seconded by Councilor Gilbert. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0.

Councilor Stevens wanted to make sure they thanked Jeff, Rick and Theresa for they work they did with the SB38 money. The work that they did, did not go unnoticed.

Vice Chairman Bandazian thanked Public Works for the excellent work done on the roads during these challenging times.

d. Consideration of an Elderly Exemption Adjustment

Mr. Sawyer explained the unanticipated impact the revaluation would have on residents that currently receive elderly exemptions. Every single person that is on the Town's elderly exemption list saw their tax bill go up. The rest of the community, 70%, saw the amount they pay stay the same or go down with. He is recommending that the Council moves forward with the 18% option as a result of reading the Assessor's work and seeing that the average impact to those on the elderly exemption list was an 18% increase.

Bill Ingalls, Assessor went through a Powerpoint presentation.

Potential Increase to Senior Exemption Amounts

Result of 2017 Update

Background

- The Town, through the Bedford Assessor's Office and with the assistance of Vision Government Solutions, conducted a statistically based valuation update effective the 2017 tax year.
- Residential single family homes increased an average of 16%, some areas higher
- Residential condominiums increased an average of 24%, some areas higher
- Overall average increase was 15% and the majority of all taxable property in Town (65%) experienced a decrease in taxes as a result of the update

Background, cont'd

- Upward sales price pressure on lower valued property in Town, both single family and condominium. There is rarely, if ever, a single family home for sale under \$200,000 unless substantial investment is needed
- Majority of seniors receiving the exemption (89 out of 105 at present) live in single family homes valued at \$250,000 or less
- Average increase of 18% combined with an exemption based on a lower tax rate
- Created a gap wider than anticipated or expected with an average tax increase of \$353.93, and a median or midpoint increase of \$361.13

Background, cont'd

- Many of us might not consider such increases as large, but for those on limited incomes who wish to continue to live in their homes and maintain their independence it can represent a real burden.
- In some cases, hard choices need to be made. I have offered general suggestions to a few individuals, but I do not believe it is an actual function of the Assessor's Office to tell people what to do and where to live.
- The last adjustment to Senior Exemption amounts was in 2007.

Councilor Schneller wanted to know if the 18% was commensurate with the average property value increase. Mr. Ingalls stated that it is commensurate with that and it makes them mostly whole and perhaps the impact of the tax rate isn't too bad.

Councilor Stevens wanted to know if Mr. Ingalls had an idea of how many elderly people there are in Town who might apply. Mr. Ingalls stated that it was hard to say. They never did a census to find out how many they have of a certain age, but he could create a reasonable estimate. Councilor Stevens was trying to let people out there know that this wasn't a number that was just being thrown out there; he has a really good grasp on who is in Town and who is eligible. Mr. Ingalls stated that he has a pretty good grasp. He will also be doing his annual presentation on BCTV on tax credits and exemptions and has updated the links on his website. His office will do house calls. They will go out and visit. No one needs to feel that just because they can't get out of their house that nothing will ever happen for them.

Vice Chairman Bandazian was in favor of granting some relief, but there are some competing factors; one of which is that this is a tax increase for elderly who don't quite qualify along with everybody else. Also, the structure of this has been generous of the income side. He agrees with making that generous, but on the other hand he didn't want taxpayers to be funding the inheritance of the heirs of residents. He thought they struck a good balance, but it's not an increase he takes lightly.

MOTION by Councilor Gilbert that the Bedford Town Council adopt an increase to the Senior Exemption in the amount of 18% for each age category as shown by "Scenario # 2" from the presentation by the Assessor's Office to take effect in tax year 2018. Seconded by Councilor Stevens. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0.

e. Request for tax abatement, 24 Pimlico Court

Mr. Sawyer thought that the taxpayer knew and has paid taxes for many years in Town and knew that they owed taxes, but there was an administrative error where the address for the tax bill was changed. The tax bill didn't come back and they claim they didn't get it. That's why he's recommending the change. When they didn't get a bill on this property and got a bill on another property they probably should have figured out something was wrong. The property owner put it before the Council. They don't feel they should have to pay the interest on the tax bill.

Councilor Schneller supported the recommendation of both the Town Manager and the Finance Director to waive the interest. It was pointed out that the Town Manager and the Finance Director had different recommendations. The Town Manager recommends waiving the interest and the Finance Director recommends not waiving the interest.

Ms. Young stated that she didn't feel there were any extenuating circumstances that she could find that say they should do it and then why wouldn't they do it for everybody else who said they didn't receive a bill. She understands that the Vision system did

automatically change their mailing address. They didn't request the mailing address change. The fact is that the bill went out and never came back. It went to somebody at the address. Mr. Sawyer pointed out that they never lived at this address; they live at a different address in Town. This is a rental property for them. They did a name change on the deed and when the update was done in the system, the system automatically defaults the address to the property address. Someone has to manually remember to change it back to the mailing address and in this case that manual reversal did not occur by the staff. Ms. Young stated that that's the Vision Assessing system.

Councilor Schneller thought it was a software problem, not a taxpayer's refusal to pay their taxes problem, because they paid their taxes. Mr. Sawyers stated that there is that responsibility even if they don't get a tax bill. Vice Chairman Bandazian stated that the same event that caused them to go in in December and pay the bill they didn't get a bill for was an event that happened in June.

Councilor Gilbert wondered why the tenants in the rental property couldn't give it to them. He's a landlord and whatever his tenant gets, he gets. That's on the owner to make that happen; not the Town. Mr. Sawyer stated that that's the thought of the tax collector as well.

Councilor Rombeau understood the concern of setting precedent, but there is a slight difference of the address change in the system. Mr. Sawyer stated that that's the only reason he's recommending the change.

Ms. Young stated that they have a 2nd residence and they have paid that timely this year and many years.

Vice Chairman Bandazian mentioned the cost and funding was \$105.03 and an alternative proposed motion is \$105.02.

Councilor Schneller wanted to know if the Town had done their jobs correctly, they would have paid this amount. Nothing would have given rise to this amount existing. Mr. Sawyer stated that that was the opinion of the person requesting the abatement. Ms. Young felt the Town did their job correctly; a tax bill was issued according to the address that was reported. The assessing system is a great system and tracks a lot of information, but to have to remember to manually change an address back. She wished that didn't happen, but it did. The tax bills went out and they've always pay their tax bills on two residences. They paid their tax bill on their other residence timely and not the other home and they don't have the tax bill back. That's her issue. Everything was done appropriately. They have no receipt of it coming back. They have no chance to send it off to them. They check every address for any tax bill that comes back. Mr. Sawyer believed that if they had gotten their tax bill they would have paid it and this wouldn't be before the Council.

Vice Chairman Bandazian wanted to know if this is something that would potentially repeat itself with the system that they have in place. Mr. Ingalls stated hopefully not and

it is their intention to be even more vigilant to see that it does not, because it is something that can be dealt with at the time. Mr. Sawyer stated that it is a personnel matter that they need to make sure doesn't happen in the future.

Councilor Rombeau thought that if they waive it, they could think of it as an investment in future troubleshooting or playing closer attention. Ms. Young stated that the system shouldn't do that. A person shouldn't have to manually change an address back for something that was never requested to be changed in the first place.

MOTION by Councilor Rombeau that the Bedford Town Council waive the interest costs accrued as of January 10, 2018 for parcel 12-8-3-79. Seconded by Councilor Schneller. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0.

f. Action on the Fire Union Collective Bargaining Agreement

No action to be taken.

g. Other New Business

6. OLD BUSINESS

a. PFC Update

Mr. Sawyer mentioned that there was a public information meeting being held on Thursday, January 11, 2018 at 6:00 PM at the Riddle Brook Elementary School. The NH Dept. of Health and Human Services will report on the blood testing study. The NH Dept. of Environmental Services will be there to give an update on the private well studies that are going on, which includes the original 61 homes on Green Meadow Lane, Back River Road, Smith Road and also on the additional 32 properties on Back River Road that are on bottled water that haven't had any kind of solution proposed for them although the water line that is being discussed about being extended to the 61 homes runs right through those 32 homes as well as the properties along South River Road south of the hotel area that are on wells and are supposed to be connected. Merrimack Village Water District will also have a representative there to speak about their anticipated treatment of wells 4 and 5 in their system that service the Greenfield Farms and Cabot Preserve. The meeting will be broadcast live and On Demand after.

b. Other Old Business – None.

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Public Session – December 13, 2017

MOTION by Councilor Gilbert that the Bedford Town Council approve the minutes of the December 13, 2017 Public Session. Seconded by Councilor Stevens. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0.

b. Special Session – December 21, 2017

MOTION by Councilor Schneller that the Bedford Town Council approve the minutes of the December 21, 2017 Special Session. Seconded by Councilor Rombeau. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 5-0-1 (Councilor Gilbert abstained as he was not present at that meeting).

8. TOWN MANAGER REPORT

- 1) The registration period for open elected positions is January 24th through 5 PM February 2nd.

Open Town Elected Positions:

- Three Town Council positions (3-year term)
- One Town Moderator (2-year term)
- One Library Trustee (3-year term)
- One Trustee of the Trust Fund (3-year term)
- One Supervisor of the Checklist (6-year term)

Open School District Positions:

- Two School Board positions (3-year term)
- One School District Clerk (1-year term)

Any Bedford registered voter wishing to file for Office must do so by contacting Town Clerk Lori Radke at 472-3550. The clerk will be available during office hours at the Town Office Building, 24 North Amherst Road and until 5 PM. on the last day of filing. As per RSA 669:19 candidates who file on the last day of the filing period shall do so in person before the Town Clerk.

- 2) Family Snowman Challenge – build a snowman in your own yard and submit a picture by February 1st. Be sure to challenge your friends and neighbors!
- 3) Reminder that stickers are required in order for residents to bring their trash and recycling to the Transfer Station. There is no cost and only two stickers are allowed.
- 4) January 11th – Thursday Theater 2-4 PM and 6:30-8:30 PM “Dunkirk” at the Library.
- 5) January 15th – The Town Office Building, Library, and Transfer Station will be closed for Martin Luther King, Jr./Civil Rights Day.
- 6) January 18th – Coffee and Computers: eBooks 101, 1-2:30 PM at the Library (pre-registration).
- 7) January 20th – Ice Fishing, 9-11 AM introductory class with ice fishing 1-4 PM. All equipment and materials provided and a fishing license is not required.
- 8) January 21st – Adult & Senior Movie Matinee 2 PM “La La Land” at the Library.
- 9) Prepayment of taxes – received \$2.8 million in prepayment of taxes with the average payment being \$11k, but they had a payment up to \$140k by one group, and represented almost 250 prepayments. He thought there still might be an issue for NH residents and it may not work out, because it came out that there actually had to

be a tax bill issued or assessment issued for the 2018 tax year and currently NH law does not allow that assessment to occur before April 1st.

- 10) Auction of Town-owned property at 29 Beaver Lane on Thursday, January 11th at 3:00 PM.
- 11) Facilities Study – The committee has narrowed the overall concepts for the future of all of our facilities down to three options that will be presented to the Council once schematic floor plans are completed for the primary buildings and once more detailed cost estimates can be developed and reviewed by a third party. It is expected this next round of work will take approximately two months to complete and therefore will be presented following the March elections.

9. COUNCILOR COMMENTS

Councilor Schneller thanked the residents for buying their Christmas tree from the Bedford Men's Club. They sold about 500 trees. She also thanked Murphy's Tap Room and Chairwoman Kelleigh Murphy. With the closing of Shorty's, the Men's Club wouldn't have had a place to meet, but they will now be meeting at Murphy's for at least the next 3 or 4 months.

Councilor Rombeau encouraged anyone considering running for any of the open positions in Town to talk to any of the members of the Council, School Board or other positions that are open. It was very helpful to her when she was considering running. It's been very gratifying this year. If you are considering it, it's worth throwing your hat in and feeling like you are getting involved and making a difference in Town.

Councilor Gilbert mirrored everything Councilor Schneller and Councilor Rombeau said.

Councilor Stevens thanked the Fire Department and Police Department. Recently she had two different items that she went to them with. One was a mom with a little girl who really wanted to meet FF Sue and they were so gracious to reach out and get back to her so quickly and the comment from the mom was 'this is what makes this community so great.' Those gestures that the Fire Department and the Police Department make don't go unnoticed and are very much appreciated. On the Police Department side, there some parents were concerned about an incidence in Goffstown and Chief Bryfonski got back to her very quickly and assured her that they know what's going on and keeping their eyes out to ensure that the kids getting off the buses are safe. That reassurance really goes a long way to the families in Town. Go Patriots! Let's hope that Saturday is a very good night for everyone.

Vice Chairman Bandazian talked about the Teen Idol competition that the Bedford Rotary is putting on at St. A's. It is an unbelievable performance by some amazingly polished high school students throughout the region. It's at the Dana Center at St. A's at 7:00 PM. He thanked Theresa for coming in to work on New Year's Eve day. She came in to work on that Sunday and stamped in tax prepayments so that all of those people who gave money got receipts so they could document that they did that. He thanked Theresa for providing that service. It was way beyond the call of duty.

Chairwoman Murphy thanked the Bedford Men's Club. They got a gorgeous Christmas tree that lasted forever. She thanked the Bedford Fire Department. She was trying to drag the Christmas tree out of her house and one of the fire fighter's was driving by and got out of his truck and helped her. She thought it was a good story for what makes this town such a great place to live.

10. NON-PUBLIC – RSA 91-A:3

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Councilor Rombeau to adjourn. Seconded by Councilor Stevens. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0.

The public meeting ended at 9:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Boufford