

Town of Brentwood Municipal Budget Committee
Minutes of October 14, 2026 Meeting held at Town Office

Members Present: Jim Hajjar (Chair), Michelle Siudut (Secretary), Ched Miller, Gabbie Kelly, Bob Mantegari (Selectboard rep), Kat Niemerowski

Not present, unexcused: Dan Hebert (Swasey rep)

Hajjar called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Minutes

Motion by Mantegari, seconded by Kelly, to approve September 28, 2026 meeting minutes, as amended; passed 6-0

Select Board update- Bob Mantegari

- Plastow ALS presented a proposal to Selectboard. They are asking for a warrant for a 5 year contract. Increases for year one \$15,000; year two \$30,600; year three \$46,824; year four \$63,697; year five \$81,244. Mantegari noted call numbers and cancellation numbers. Brentwood Fire Dept would be who calls PALS; if BFD makes a call, the town is billed. Miller said he attended the presentation in Fremont. Discussion of consideration of cost of ALS vs the rent vs the expenses.

- Budgets approved by BOS will be discussed later in this meeting. Approval of budgets for Waste Collection and Information Systems were tabled. There were many 2025 invoices that were paid in 2026, which has increased projected budgets for next year.

Miller asked if the overall budget is expected to be within the 4% cap; response that BudCom's proposed budget MUST be within the cap. Miller stated it's going to be expensive to clean up the financial mess, and asked where those funds will come from. Mantgari said cuts will need to be made. Miller asked if there has been discussion about cross-department cuts; response that the original request to all departments was to keep budgets flat.

Hajjar said we usually get health insurance rates around November, which will be a large portion of funds available to keep us under the tax cap.

Discussion of salary maximums. BudCom cannot determine wage increases, but Hajjar will show projected numbers at next meeting. Kelly suggested providing an amount for each department to determine what each of their employees get for increases. Department heads could consider forgoing an increase to provide it to their employees.

Mantegari noted some 2025 invoices (ALS rent) were not sent out; incomes were not put in the proper places, and expenses were not paid from appropriate accounts. Kelly wants to be logical about hiring (FT or PT etc) before doing a needs-assessment. Mantegari said a bookkeeper started last week, at 8 hours per week. Kelly was concerned that the position wasn't posted.

Hajjar showed example of Fire Dep revenue line at \$25; last year it was over \$200K. We need to ensure the data has been input correctly before sharing reports and all numbers must be accurate so budget going forward. Hajjar said we need to invest in a finance person to clean up the mess; once things are back on track, the scope of that position can be determined.

Hajjar wants to discuss fund balances, once we get things cleared up. Right now we have bigger issues. Kelly said the interfund balances are her biggest concerns.

Mantegari talked of CDs coming due; Kelly mentioned high yield interest bearing accounts.

- Kelly stated the Finance Committee is accepting applications from interested residents; up to Oct 27.

Swasey School Board Update- Dan Hebert

Not present

With Hebert not being present, Hajjar asked the Committee about sending a formal request to the School Board for information due on Oct 19 - specifically health insurance plans/premiums and a request for the Board to provide the extent of data they presented last year. Kelly asked what that would provide in relation to what we as a Committee can decide. Hajjar said this chart is what enabled him to find errors in the town; that he is looking to be able to review the larger picture. Miller spoke to the actionability of this data- if we understand what is being spent we could potentially allocate some of those funds to other areas. Motion by Mantegari, seconded by Miller for Hajjar to request insurance cost breakdowns, as well as requesting presentation similar to last year's; passed 6-0
Miller highlighted RSA regarding this committee's authority and DUTY.

Old Business

Update on Budget Committee Formal Request for Financial Information. Hajjar only received data from Highway Dept.

Budgets

- a. Welfare (01-4442-35) The salary amount is a stipend. Town Clerk will take over the duties; she has said she will not take the stipend but may use it for training or bereavement. Hajjar suggested establishing a CRF for Direct Assistance; discussion followed. Motion by Miller, seconded by Niemiroski, to approve \$21,168; which is level-funded; passed 6-0
- b. Street Lighting (01-4316-23) Motion by Niemiroski, seconded by Mantegari, to approve \$1, which is level funded; passed 6-0.
- c. Legal (01-4153) Motion by Mantegari, seconded by Kelly, to approve \$30,003, which is a reduction of \$500; passed 6-0.
- d. Joint Loss Management (01-4225-26) Miller asked what this is for; Hajjar explained the law requires this line but we don't use it. Motion by Mantegari, seconded by Niemiroski, to approve \$2, which is level funded; passed 6-0.
- e. Health Officer (01-4419-31) Motion by Niemiroski, seconded by Kelly, to approve \$2, which is an increase of \$1; failed 3-3. Motion by Mantegari, seconded by Miller, to approve \$1, which is level funded; passed 6-0.
- f. Budget Committee (01-4150-10) The increase in this budget is for training. Motion by Mantegari, seconded by Niemiroski, to approve \$452, which is an increase of \$220; passed 6-0.
- g. Debt Service (01-4711, 4721, 4723) Hajjar displayed current bond obligations. Motion by Niemiroski, seconded by Kelly, to approve \$254,103, which is a decrease of \$15,158 or 6%; passed 6-0. Mantegari asked how this would affect the default budget; Hajjar said the debt services line would decrease the default budget amount.
- h. Assessing (01-4150-07) Miller asked if this is for assessing properties; Mantegari said no, it is for someone to process abatements. Miller asked about Utilities line; Mantegari said the assessor

determines the tax on utility poles. Motion by Mantegari, seconded by Miller, to approve \$61,656, which is an increase of \$3,125 or 5%; passed 6-0.

- i. Mosquito Control (01-4299-24-680) Motion by Niemiroski, seconded by Kelly, to approve \$29,600, an increase of \$400 or 1%; passed 6-0.

Hajjar said BudCom is responsible for establishing both the proposed budget and the default budget. The default budget is based on the previous year's authorized operating budget, adjusted (up or down) for debt service, contracts, legally mandated obligations.

New/Other Business

- Discussion about warrant article for finance person vs putting it in budget; concern about this increasing the budget and then having the default approved without funding for that position.
- Trash Committee - next meeting October 20 at Town Office. Kelly discussed some potential ways to save costs such as an oil-burning furnace for town shed.
- The new Finance Committee will have their first meeting on October 29 at 5:30 pm.

Public Comment

None

Motion by Siudut, seconded by Kelly to adjourn at 8:32 pm; passed unanimously.

Upcoming Meetings - Meetings are public and livestreamed on Brentwood's YouTube channel.

Links for documents mentioned in this meeting can be found at:

<https://www.brentwoodnh.gov/agendaView.aspx?aid=14795&categoryid=12621>

Oct 26: Budget Committee Meeting at 6 pm

Nov 9: Budget Committee Meeting at 6 pm

Nov 16: Budget Committee Meeting at 6 pm

Nov 30: Budget Committee Meeting at 6 pm

Jan 14, 2027: Budget Committee meeting at 5 pm

Jan 14, 2027: Budget Committee Hearing at 6 pm

Respectfully,

Michelle Siudut, Secretary