

## **BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**January 24, 2024**

## **MEMORIAL BUILDING**

**7:00 P.M.**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Ken Jacques, B. Manning, Tim Cook, Darrin Patten, Whit Smith, Justin Hastings, and Jeff Milne.

Ex-Officio Poul Heilmann

Also, present Steve Dzubak

Chairman Jacques requested a roll call, all members present.

Minutes of January 16, 2024, Darrin Patten moved to accept as amended, B. Manning seconded the motion Board unanimously approved. Whit Smith abstained due to being absent from the meeting.

Budget committee was scheduled to meet with Dallas Patten, Fire Chief to discuss his budget requests, due to the weather Dallas is not able to attend. Budget numbers the Fire Dept have requested are shown on the budget sheets each Committee member has in front of them. Chairman Jacques questioned the Fire Vehicle Repair line, he understood it to be for replacing of an exhaust system on one of the trucks. Darrin Patten responded that was correct and it is an expensive repair. Short discussion of the reduction of the amount requested for Office Support/Ref from \$3,000 to \$1,500. Why were they requesting less? Poul Heilmann shared that he believed it to be that in the past few years the department has done a lot of work to organize the office and now that is none and they no longer need as much in that line. Chairman Jacques asked if anyone had further questions about the Fire Dept budget.

The committee moved through the budget line by line. Questions came up again with regard to the Ex Computer line, what makes up the \$40,000 for this year; replacement of the work stations in the office is scheduled for this year. Further discussion about what was included in that line for last year to over spend it by \$13,000; roughly \$8,000 for designing of the new website, laptop purchases for the highway dept and the supervisors of the checklist were a few of the larger items. The legal line will be staying at \$40,000. Discussion of the situation driving that number, is there an end in sight. Steve Dzubak, a member of the ZBA, shared that to this point the case has yet to receive a final decision from the court. Discussion of the Ex Engineering line of \$27,000; \$26,000 of that is for the engineering, permits, and other fees for the repair of McDaniels marsh culvert. Why is that not included in the Warrant Article? Can the monies received from the State designated for bridge/road repair be used for engineering? Tamara will find out from the State. Does the Committee feel that repairing the culvert needs to be done now, it has been on the State's Red List for years. Would it be something to put off for another year?

Discussion of the PL Circuit Rider/Reg. Prep line has increased due to an increase in the hourly rate and the number of hours of service. Chairman Jacques and Darrin Patten questioned whether the services that Town was receiving were equal to the amount we are paying. The general feeling is that we are not. Can we move to a "call them when we need them" type of set up? The hourly rate is substantially higher. Decision to continue utilizing the UVLSRP will be made by the Planning Board.

Discussion of the GB Building/Prop Maintenance and Non-Recurring Projects lines. Why are there two lines for very similar expenses? If there were items specific to Non-Recurring projects, they need to be charged to the appropriate line. The Committee requested that the Buildings/Grounds Committee, specifically Don Hill, forward a list of items the Committee would like done this year, so the Office knows what to charge to the line.

The committee reviewed the warrant articles. The purchase of the Police Cruiser warrant should be funded using money from the Unreserved Fund Balance, Tamara will change the wording. The Article for repair of the McDaniels Marsh culvert, could it be a non-lapsing article? Ken Jacques shared that Whit Smith had found possible grant money to use for the repair of the McDaniels Marsh culvert. Ken Jacques asked Whit Smith to find out more information about the grant money before the next meeting, February 7<sup>th</sup>. Could the Town repair the culvert and be reimbursed using grant money? The consensus is that is not allowed. Tamara will reach out to Mike Hansen to inquire as to how long he will leave open the estimate he provided the Town.

Discussion of the amount in the Fund Balance: \$407,438.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm

Submitted by,  
Tamara Butcher