



Office of Board of Selectmen

143 Main Street, P.O. Box 310, Belmont, New Hampshire 03220-0310
Telephone: (603) 267-8300 Fax: (603) 267-8327

Selectmen's Budget Review Workshop Minutes
Wednesday, October 17, 2023, 10:00 am
Belmont Mill
Corner Meeting House Room

Present were Chairman Ruth Mooney, Selectman Jon Pike, Selectman Travis O'Hara, Selectman Claude Patten, Jr., Selectman Sharon Ciampi, TA Alicia Jipson, Assessing Admin Colleen Akerman, Fire Chief Deb Black, Fire Department Admin Assistant Becky Beaulac, Parks & Recreation Director Danielle St. Onge and Building & Grounds Supervisor Patrick Golden.

Via Zoom were Town Planner Karen Santoro and DPW Director Craig Clairmont.

Fire Department & Emergency Management:

Fire Chief Deb Black and Fire Department Administrative Assistant Becky Beaulac presented the budget.

Chairman Ruth Mooney said she reviewed the budget and has concerns about monies coming out the ambulance fund. We need to be careful because there is an ambulance on order and we don't want to be behind on things because it will be time to replace the next ambulance once we receive the new one. Chief Black said the ambulance on order has an estimated delivery of March 2025. Budget-wise they are okay but she is working with other area chiefs to increase the ambulance payments for Medicaid. There was discussion about how Medicaid/Medicare sets rates and how insurance makes payments. It was noted that coverage provided to Canterbury had an increase from \$5,000 to \$10,000. It was not out of line to ask for the increase and they were very receptive. The balance of the Capital Reserve Fund was reviewed and does not include the \$60,000 for the pumper refurbish or the \$50,000 deposit for the ambulance.

Selectman Jon Pike asked to see the write-offs for the ambulance payments so that money isn't wasted trying to bill out invoices with no movement.

Two new firefighters were just hired but they are still down an Assistant Chief and one firefighter. FEMA has said that a grant can't hurt you, so they will be able to fill some of the overtime as long as they are actively searching to fill the position/s. The department is doing more training on shifts so as to not have overtime costs for training.

Selectman Pike asked about the reduction in fuel costs this year. One of the vehicles is no longer a diesel and the new one is more economical. They are also using the second cruiser for inspections rather than taking a fire truck, which is more economical.

TA Alicia Jipson recommended holding off on approving the Fire Department budget because of the anticipated changes to medical, etc.

Emergency Management:

Some funds were expended this year for updated pagers that allow for more monitoring.

Chairman Mooney moved to approve the Emergency Management budget of \$5,000 as presented; seconded by Selectman Travis O'Hara. The motion passed unopposed (5-0).

Selectman Pike asked to get a status update on the generator at the schools. Chief Black will get an update from Lieutenant Murphy and update the Board.

Parks & Recreation and the Beach:

Parks & Rec Director Danielle St. Onge noted the Board previously approved a move to a full-time director. Chairman Mooney said she fielded some concerns this year about the young people hired for camp. Director St. Onge explained they did not have a camp director but she is working to find an experienced adult for next summer.

The full-time position will include taking on the Seniors group and coordinating programs. The program budget was increased to include programs for the Seniors. Many budget lines have been reduced because they have not been used, and they are going to cap the summer program to 45 campers for 2024. There will be a decrease to field trip costs. Selectman Sonny Patten asked about the program coordinator. That position was increased to help with the Senior programs. The mileage request was increased because the director was using her own vehicle and qualifies to receive reimbursement for driving to the beach, etc. Next year there are more events and activities proposed. There was some discussion about the tennis court and changing it into more of a multi-user court to include pickle ball. They also plan to partner with other towns to offer field trips such as for Celtics games.

Chairman Mooney moved to approve the Parks & Recreation and the Beach budget of \$192,953.60 as presented; seconded by Selectman Travis O'Hara. The motion passed unopposed (5-0).

Patriotic Purposes:

The only increase in this budget was for fireworks. There is a new company owner and they will no longer give the same municipal discounts.

Chairman Mooney moved to approve the Patriotic Purposes budget of \$19,000 as presented; seconded by Selectman Sharon Ciampi. The motion passed unopposed (5-0).

General Government Buildings:

Building & Grounds Supervisor Patrick Golden said their goal this year was to keep the budget as flat as possible. The biggest increase is for wages for part-time help. Parks & Rec will be hosting more events and additional help will be needed. He thanked the Board for the new mowers; they are fantastic. They do not need a new truck this year but will need one soon. They would like to partner

with DPW to see if they can work out getting a truck the DPW would be retiring. They borrowed the Fire Department's side by side to use in Town this year and it worked great. There were no conflicts with the Fire Department. There were some increases for vendors used for inspections and utilities but it is mostly wages. Selectman Sonny Patten thanked them for keeping the budget down because a 5% increase is good. B&G Supervisor Golden said they are careful about monitoring the heat based on building usage to save as much as possible. There is an increase for sprinkler monitoring. The last test was documented in 2014 but it needs to be done every year.

Selectman Pike moved to approve the General Government Buildings budget of \$495,586.87 as presented; seconded by Selectman Patten. The motion passed unopposed (5-0).

It was noted that health and dental rates will need to be updated.

Insurance:

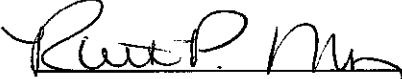
The Insurance budget includes unemployment, workmen's comp, property liability and deductibles.

Selectman Patten moved to approve the Insurance budget of \$286,100.00 as presented; seconded by Selectman O'Hara. The motion passed unopposed (5-0).

The Board briefly reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule including the Property Assessment informational session.

Adjournment:

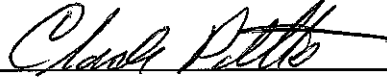
Selectman Ciampi moved to adjourn at 11:08am; seconded by Selectman Pike. The motion passed unopposed (5-0).




Ruth P. Mooney, Chairman



Jon Pike, Vice Chairman



Claude B. Patten, Jr., Selectman



Travis O'Hara, Selectman



Sharon Ciampi, Selectman