

Selectboard Budget Meeting Minutes 10-15-19

Present: David Sander, Katie Mather, Bard Hill, Roger Brown, Josh Arneson, Connie Bona, Jessica Draper, Rebecca Mueller, Laurie Dana, Dennis Gile, Jerry Levesque, Peter Gosselin, Linda Parent, Larry Muldoon

1. Public Comment: Linda, Rebecca, Dennis-lighting for parking lot and for crosswalks
2. Library Department:
 - a. Rebecca said that the budget is mostly the same as last year. She pointed out the significant increases. After looking at the paygrid she attempted to adjust employees to proper steps. She also noted an employee who will be signing up for a family insurance plan. She said most of the other increases were modest.
 - b. Connie said she wanted to note the liability insurance numbers are not entered because those numbers are not in until November, and the board had considered splitting that by building or department.
 - c. Bard mentioned past targets, and David agreed that we have tried to keep it to similar to the cost of living increase (usually around 2%)
 - d. Connie noted that health insurance numbers are based on current health insurance plans and coverage.
 - e. Josh noted on the revenue that he increased the projected revenue due to last years actuals.
 - f. Bard asked Connie if there was an estimate for liability. Connie said not at this time.
 - g. Roger asked about Library Reserve, Rebecca said it is typically used for unplanned capital expenses. There is currently about \$40,000 and they recently voted to use about \$10,000.
3. Fire Department:
 - a. Salary increase to give them \$1.00 per hour more
 - b. Training and Education: \$500 increase
 - c. Bard noted that minimum wage will increase every year anyway, and Josh clarified that that was accounted for.
 - d. Travel: \$200, in order to reimburse mileage
 - e. Public Relations: \$600
 - f. Heat the same
 - g. Electricity the same
 - h. Water the same
 - i. Maintenance: \$10000 increase, exhaust system and emergency exit, other improvements
 - j. David asked about fire department reserves. Josh said it could be used for maintenance. Discussion ensued about the two restricted funds.
 - k. Jessica asked about how much of the \$90,000 surplus funds were used last FY, Connie said \$63,000 of that was spent.
 - l. Connie noted the increase for the medical evaluations that were recently started.

- m. Other modest increases were noted in maintenance and equipment.
 - n. Roger asked clarifying questions about the station upgrades and the new truck.
 - o. David asked what the issues were with the 2005 rescue truck. Jerry said the light needs repair, the chassis is old and beat up, the tires may need replacing, mostly from age. He also mentioned some other major tools that need upgrades such as the jaws of life.
4. Police Budget
- a. Larry noted that there are equipment upgrades in the near future, so there are capital reserve increases.
 - b. He also noted that the \$8000 in reserves hasn't been used since 2014.
 - c. Roger noted the major vacancy savings even though capital reserves are not high. Roger said we should consider that. Larry said it was about \$114,000 in savings and he would like to put some of that toward reserves.
 - d. Bard noted the new line for equipment reserve.
 - e. Connie noted also that the leases are done in FY21.
 - f. Roger asked about a capital equipment overview. Josh said it was still a work in progress.
 - g. Larry explained that cruisers are replaced by mileage and not necessarily age and he intends to manage the mileage.
 - h. Larry explained what the police supplies line was for.
 - i. Larry said that COP has been the best \$10,000 we could spend.
 - j. Discussion ensued about grant opportunities.
5. Highway Budget
- a. David said he noted that prior good-budgeting has made an effect on this FY21 budget
 - b. Pete said he would like to use vacancy savings to bring a few employees up to where they should be on the paygrid. He has not addressed salaries yet, because he wants to propose this and see how the selectboard feels.
 - c. He noted the other towns data comparison currently being conducted, but isn't sure how accurate it will be.
 - d. Pete said that the bottom line is still below a 1% increase. He said healthcare is an obvious increase.
 - e. Katie asked if the person the farthest behind should be addressed first.
 - f. David said he felt unsure about discussing it in open session, but defers to Josh and Pete and is in favor of compensating staff appropriately.
 - g. Connie asked the board to pick a direction so she can limit the possibilities she will present.
 - h. David noted that it is hard to replace employees if the predecessors were underpaid. Connie noted that 10 out of 37 employees have left in the last year and a half.
 - i. Connie said that one person would be addressed, the other person would be all set next year, and then the third person would still need steps.

- j. Bard said he would like to see the overall dollar figure to make them whole, and then work back from there.
 - k. Roger asked about the total compensation component as well as the salary figures. Discussion ensued about the paygrid and comparisons to other towns. Roger said he wanted to make sure that all departments were addressed.
 - l. Bard said a compensation review should be added to the administration budget line, and as departments come forward with salary/grid issues we can ask for feedback and consider changes.
 - m. Pete ran through more changes including increases in overtime, lighting, diesel, paint, salt, sand went down, increase stormwater and sidewalks, etc.
 - n. Bard asked where lighting or signaling would be plugged in. He requested including it in the budget and look for the grant funds.
 - o. Connie noted that the dumptruck for FY20 could be paid for outright and could knock off the interest and payments for future budget years.
 - p. The board discussed allocating restricted highway funds to the capital reserve fund.
 - q. Pete explained that the building is 20 years old and having issues with overhead doors. He presented a quote to completely replace the doors for about \$27,800. He said two fire doors also need replacement. Floors and painting are also in need. He mentioned that they also do not have an auxiliary generator. He is suggesting using the restricted funds for about \$40,000 in upgrades.
 - r. Pete mentioned potential upgrades needed for Volunteers Green playground and potentially creating a reserve fund.
 - s. He also mentioned the signage and parking upgrades for the town forest.
6. Administration/Assessors
- a. Salaries have been budgeted for one step increases for everyone
 - b. Josh said he may want to increase admin hours in Jess' absence
 - c. Connie expressed need for a full time or mostly full time body to serve as her backup
 - d. Josh noted the health insurance actually went down
 - e. Tech support is a big new line due to the new contract with Tech Group
 - f. Connie explained how the town center maintenance line functions with revenue and the restricted fund for town center rent.
 - g. Jess noted that fire protection went up. Roger said it seemed like a big increase. Bard and David explained the cost calculation.
7. Planning and Zoning
- a. Office Supplies went up, always is overspent
 - b. Jess explained that advertising is quite steep
 - c. The board decided to invite Marcia Gardner in to discuss the legislative agenda
 - d. Jess mentioned the other minor changes to the budget.
8. Appropriations
- a. Bard asked to increase front porch forum to \$200
 - b. Roger asked about CUSI being previously in the Police Department

Bard noted that discussions have begun with the police union regarding health insurance cost increases. Josh noted that VLCT has been acquired to provide brokerage services for the town for health insurance.

Adjourn: Roger moved to adjourn. Seconded by Katie. All were in favor, so moved.