

Special Meeting
Selectboard Minutes
10/20/2020

Members Present by Zoom: Christine Werneke, David Sander, Roger Brown, Bard Hill, Katie Mather

Absent:

Others Present by Zoom: Josh Arneson, Town Manager; Kathy Daub-Stearns, Admin. Assist.; Connie Bona, Finance Dir.; Kyle Kapitansky, acting Police Chief; Ravi Venkataraman, Planner; Rebecca Mueller, Library; Kendall Chamberlain, Water & Sewer Superintendent; Pete Gosselin, Highway Foreman and Dennis Gile, Fire Chief; the meeting was recorded for MMCTV Channel 15.

Called to Order: 7:03 PM

Welcome by David.

Comments from the public: none

I. Review and Discussion of the FY22 Budget

a) Library Department

Rebecca reported:

- that all the lines are staying static
- that postage is going down due to the carrier service and grant money
- that travel and training is down but still in the budget in case things return to normal
- that she needs to hire someone to replace an employee that has left. This employee needs to be web and tech savvy

Discussion:

- that Josh noted that the insurance impact is due to a single person moving to a family plan
- that Christine asked if Rebecca had taken into consideration the impact of the new heating system. Rebecca replied she did not know how much the new system was going to cost to run.
- Roger asked if the Library has installed a temperature alarm. Rebecca said that currently the system heats the water if the temperature gets too low. Christina will check with Breadloaf to see if it is part of phase 1.

b) Fire Department

David said he likes to see decreases over the last year and he wondered if we should be putting more money into replacement equipment.

Dennis reported:

- that minimum wage going up caused the wage increase
- that equipment purchases went up to replace outdated equipment and bring other equipment up to standard
- that the hose testing needs to be done this year
- that he asked if the payment for the truck that was paid off could be put into a capital account going forward to help pay for the next truck.

Discussion included:

- that Bard agreed with putting the money aside.
- that Bard asked if Dennis knew what the life span of the hose is. Dennis replied that hoses cannot be tested after 10 years.
- that Bard asked Dennis to put together a list of when the current hoses were purchased.
- that Bard said level funding the fire department and putting the overage into a capital account for equipment purchases made sense
- that Connie said the difference would be \$18,028. David said yes, and if we needed to find a way to cut things it could change.
- that Roger asked if the purchase of a new truck was a five (5) year cycle. Dennis replied yes, one truck gets paid for and we purchase another.
- that Jerry said the rescue truck is the next one to be purchased. Dennis said it would be about \$400,000 when asked.
- that Christine asked about the fire house needs, wondering if the \$11,000 was for building maintenance. Dennis said yes, that should do it.
- that Christine asked about the increase, then decrease. Dennis said it was due to the an exit door installation that hasn't been done yet this year.
- that Dennis asked about physicals. Kathy will update Josh and Connie with the information when it is available.

c) Police Department

Kyle reported:

- the SRO is listed as 0
- that the Governor's inquiry says that all state and municipal polices departments should have body cameras adding that may turn into a mandate and our cameras are failing and are of low quality.
- that as of Dec. 31 the tasers currently being used will be obsolete and not able to be used. The new ones come with training and is a five (5) year commitment of \$3600 per year which includes replacement if something goes wrong with one of them.
- that it is anticipated that two (2) computers will need to be replaced
- that there is a cruiser that needs to be purchased
- that there is nothing listed yet from the Governor's Safety Grant Program on the income side because he is concerned about putting a large number in that would artificially inflate things since the revenue goes up and specific OT wages makes it to go back down.

Discussion included:

- that Roger asked what happens if the SRO is not funded by the school. Kyle responded that the salary is accounted for in the FY22 budget adding that it is difficult to schedule with less officers. There is also an officer that is being deployed for several months so the SRO position is listed at full time.
- that Roger said if the school does fund the position then we would be down an officer for all but the summer months.
- that Kyle said the district is looking to pay on a per diem basis and only pay for the hours an officer is called in.

- that Bard asked about the number of body camera's being purchased. Kyle said he budgeted for six (6) and he will be going over this number again getting numbers from companies.
- that Bard said we need to pay close attention to the SRO situation because it is hard to build a police department without knowing what to expect. Bard added that the school could do something like a retainer or opt to use the Sheriff's Dept.
- that the school is assessing their needs due to hybrid learning
- that Connie asked if an officer needs to be SRO certified for things like having an officer at an afterschool function. Kyle said no, it could be any officer. If they want to have an officer that does anything substantive, then we do have an officer that is certified.
- that Christine asked if it would make sense for her to come down and look at the staffing plans. The increases over the last few years is significant and she is looking to understand where the increase is coming from. Roger responded that a big part of that is salaries because a position was not filled and not budgeted for in FY20. Kyle added that the SRO is not funded yet, so the number is inflated.
- that the police department budget will be scrutinized, and Christine wants to understand so that she can answer any questions posed.
- that Bard said vacancies are noticeable in the budget
- that once the chief is chosen the wage numbers will be more solid
- that Roger noted that the public being absent during this discussion when they were so charged up less than a month ago
- that the dispatch number is up and may go up more dependent on whether there is a charge for services from the state police dispatch. The increase looks like it will be 100% each year for the next 4 years starting with \$15,750 this year, next year will be \$30,000.
- that Christine noted that the Howard Center fees went up and asked if we were going to receive more service time. Josh replied no, the fees went up because they had been artificially low due to other funding being used.
- that Josh noted that as the Howard Center expands to other towns the costs of the program will go up for all the towns participating.
- Roger asked Kyle if the department is using the Howard Center more. Kyle said yes, the community has had several devastating events and that the Howard Center came helped with and the officers are using the program whenever possible.
- that David asked if Kyle had a wish list what would it be? Kyle said the tasers are needed. David asked if Kyle needed to trim anywhere where would that be? Kyle said maybe the cameras depending on what the governor's order comes down to, other than that he would need more time to go over everything line by line.
- that Connie asked if the cruiser was replacing one. Kyle replied yes adding that one (1) cruiser has been decommissioned and the new one (1) will be replacing it. Connie asked if we do not replace the SRO would we still need a new cruiser. Kyle said probably not, especially with an officer deploying.
- that Bard noted that the SRO position really swings the budget

d) Highway and Recreation & Trails

Pete Gosselin reported:

- that he has two (2) employees retiring and two (2) employees moved into those positions. He has a candidate for the open full-time employment and no candidate for the PT opening.
- that the diesel price was renegotiated and is less due to new pricing

- that the last capital plan was in 2017
- that fleet maintenance costs could be level funded if we moved to a seven (7) year cycle of replacing the big trucks.
- that the pick-ups should be on a three (3) year cycle. That would mean those vehicles would not be in service for more than 9 years.
- that truck #1 (dump truck) needs to be replaced in FY 22 instead of the roadside mower and that should be replaced in FY23. Pete suggested purchasing a pickup with capital fund money, then move the excavator out to FY24. Christine asked that Pete send that purchasing request out to the board. Bard thought that made sense and would be useful to follow Pete's logic.
- that the playground is going to need equipment replaced
- that the Rec Committee is taking this over sometime in the next year
- that Ben & Jerry's donated rubber Euroflex for the playground

Discussion included:

- that Christine asked about the maintenance number being down \$40,000. Pete replied that the overhead doors needed to be replaced this year.
- that the sign line did not include another illuminated cross walk sign. Katie thought there was a grant that would cover half of that.
- that Christine asked about culverts being level funded. Pete said he is aggressive with fixing our roads, so these numbers are just maintenance.
- that Christine said during the walk-thru on Bridge St Pete said final paving would be done. Pete said the paving will be done in FY22.
- that Pete said there is a contact in place to do the paving from this year.
- that Christine asked where the paving budget was. Pete replied that "retreatment" is the term for paving
- that Katie thought the board had said they wanted another illuminated crosswalk sign and another radar sign. Pete replied that if that was what the board wants, they need to be budgeted for and then hope for a grant (the Governor's Highway Safety Grant). Bard thought we should budget for them and see what that looks like. Katie asked if they could be separate line items. Bard thought we should decide where we would place a radar sign. Katie said we used the one on Cochrane instead of another road that may need to have one.
- that Roger asked about reserves. Pete said when we start Dugway we will have huge invoices that need to be paid. Roger said that we have been looking at moving money around to keep from having loans. Connie said we will be in a dangerous position if we spend that money.
- that Roger said a no increase budget is a risk then next year we need to go up 5% because we underspent. Pete said the capital expenses over the next few years is going to need \$40,000 deposits on them. Roger said we could put more down on the dump truck or more into a reserve account. Connie said raise the money to pay for the utility vehicle, don't use the capital reserve money to buy it, and use the proposed funds for next years capital purchases or put more for a deposit on the dump truck. Bard noted that the interest received on the capital reserve account is less than the amount of interest that would be charged for a loan. Roger agreed.
- that Pete will have a list ready for the board's next budget meeting
- that Ravi said the Rec Committee is busy revitalizing themselves and will be discussing the donated matting and the playground at the next meeting adding that they should be more self-sufficient, in the next year. Pete thought that the line should be level funded until then.

- Roger asked about the Conservation Fund. Josh said that it is voted on and then added to the budget afterwards. Bard said it would be up to the voters to decide. Roger said we have an artificial rate because the voters voted for the conservation fund and the OCCC, should we assume there is an additional 1.5% increase coming after whatever we decide? Bard said typically the budget has been voted up on Town Meeting Day adding that we should find a target and then let the voters decide. Josh replied that in the budget talk, on Town Meeting Day, he spelled out the options. Bard said, generally we want to be in the same ballpark as inflation but then there are wages and insurances. Roger said when the Conservation Fund was not by Australian ballot, we presented a rate that was inclusive, now we do not.

e) Town Administration and Assessors

Josh reported:

- that payroll projections show increases
- that health insurance is level funded
- that office supplies went up to match what was spent
- that Zoom and DocuSign will be needed for the foreseeable future
- that there are two (2) computers that will need to be replaced in the Town Clerk's office for researchers
- that we may need an additional audit due to receiving federal money
- that in February we will start the process of going out to bid for insurance
- that we have been notified that PACIF will go down about 5%
- that the Assessors contract services number may change
- that the Town wide reappraisal is going to be billed monthly, but the bulk will come out of the reserve fund. Connie said that by the time the appraisal is done by adding to the reserve fund each year it will be paid for.

Discussion included:

- that Roger asked if we could delay one of the projects to save money on the additional audit. Josh replied that to do that Dugway would not be able to be started until July 1, 2020. Bard asked if there is any benefit to the Town to have the audit done. Roger replied it is not bad, it is just a lot. Connie said that most of it would be the same as what is normally done, just formatted differently. Bard said we are talking about millions of dollars in funding, so in the scale of the budget it may be the cost of doing business. Katie asked if the price of the work would change if we waited. Josh said that within a construction season there probably would not be much difference.
- that Christine asked about the variation of the retirement numbers between departments. Connie said it is driven by salary ranges and the percent the town pays is different for the police department.

f) Planning and Zoning

Ravi reported:

- that the CCRPC fee structure will be flat or have a slight increase
- that having funds available for matching funds to do grant planning is necessary

Discussion included:

- that Bard noted that the planning and scoping studies make projects shovel ready for grant approval

- that once the scoping and planning work is done then in the next few years Ravi said he would be back to fund the projects.
- that Bard asked Ravi if he would increase the budget and see if it works, Ravi agreed.
- that Connie asked about whether video and broadcasting was going to continue. Ravi replied that it would be continued even without COVID. Bard said it is plausible that we will continue to be thinking about how to physically distance and it is prudent to be continue with being transparent through broadcasting.

g) Charitable Appropriations

Will be reviewed at the next budget meeting due to time. Bard thought having more meetings that are shorter would be preferable.

II. Executive Session if Necessary

III. Adjourn

Barad moved to adjourn; Katie seconded. Roll call vote: Christine, Bard, Roger, Katie, and David voted affirmatively. The meeting ended at 10:25PM.