

# **DRAFT Budget Committee Meeting Minutes**

**July 25, 2024, 7:00 PM**

## **Open the Meeting and Roll Call**

Chair Cutting opened the Budget Committee meeting at 7:00 PM.

Present: Michael Cutting (Chair), Alfred Hanson, Bill Hanson, Robert Blake, Richard Bixby, Michael Smith (Select Board), and Kathleen Frenette (Town Administrator)

Also Present: John Leavitt, Ed Mical and Jame Sherman in audience.

## **Minutes**

4/18/24 No action taken.

Minutes were approved at prior meeting

## **Review of Operating Budget**

The Budget Committee reviewed the operating budget for the first half of the year.

Select Board Discussion/Questions:

- Budget is \$246,617 60.6%, bis
- Costs of Annual Report, interim Town Administrator, Admin wages, Overtime line item
- Changing, Adding/Removing line items from budget.

Financial Administration Discussion/Questions:

- Expenses to date and any additional expenses
- Town audits: change auditor every few years, review scope of work prior to signing contract, auditor works with and reports to with the Select Board.
- Tax Collector: software upgrade costs, Tax Collectors wages, Deputy position/wages.

Reval Discussion/Questions:

- Computer expenses

Legal Expenses Discussion/Questions:

- Current budget is \$25,000 Spent to date \$16,272 or 62% of budget
- Anticipated to stay within budget
- Eversource legal battle ongoing

Planning Board 57% of budget has been spent.

General Government Buildings Discussion/Questions:

- Heating Fuel; shared purchasing with neighboring towns
- Sprinkler system cost of repairs

Sprinkler system in Town Hall remains not fully operational

Attic area not operational at this time

Police Department Discussion/Questions:

- The department is down 2 officers due to salaries. Sign on bonuses to be considered
- The department is utilizing the Sherriff's department and State Police for back up
- Camera security system is needed

Ambulance Discussion/Questions:

- 44% of budget has been spent

Fire Department Discussion/Questions:

- 34.7% of budget has been spent

Building Inspector Discussion/Questions:

- 11% of budget has been spent
- The Select Board is in the process of rewriting policies
- Vacant position has been filled

Emergency Management Discussion/Questions:

- Hazardous Mitigation Plan being reviewed

Highway Department Discussion/Questions:

- 41% of budget has been spent
- Rental costs
- Added line item for mechanic
- Overtime costs
- Parttime wages for shared employees
- Mileage costs
- Building Supervisor wages position is still vacant

Transfer Station Discussion/Questions: NONE

Health Officer Discussion/Questions: NONE

Welfare Discussion/Questions:

- Significant increases statewide
- Position is has been filled on temporary basis
- Budget will need to be increased in 2025

Parks & Recreation Discussion/Questions:

- Building Maintenance and wages

Library Discussion/Questions: NONE

Conservation Commission Discussion/Questions:

- Budget is overspent by 6.27%

### **Budget Expectations for 2025**

The Budget Committee discussed the following directions for Town administration.

- Consider employee contribution towards benefits.
- Inform employees of benefit costs
- Consider new employees to contribute towards benefits.
- Consider looking at different benefit plans.
- Wage and benefit study of comparable towns to be conducted internally
- Scrutinize entire budget for areas of savings.

Technology problems that need to be addressed.

- Outdated equipment
- Cyber security
- 7 computers need to be replaced
- Managed IT care
- Expiring firewalls
- Each department budget should reflect their computer needs
- Lack of server and back ups

The CIP will be presented in October. The CIP needs to be to the Budget Committee before the budget review. Scheduled for October presentation at Budget Committee meeting

John Leavitt informed the Budget Committee that RSA 32:5 II states that line items cannot be added to a budget after the public hearing prior to the vote. Line items can be added during the budget process.

### **Next Meeting**

Parks and Recreation tour of Riverside Park Thursday July 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm.

**Rick Bixby made a motion seconded by Bill Hanson to adjourn the meeting.  
Motion passed unanimously.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:28 pm

Respectfully submitted by Tracy Doherty