



## **Budget Committee Meeting**

**January 2, 2025, 7:00 PM**

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

Chair Cutting opened the Budget Committee meeting at 7:02 PM.

Budget Committee Members Present: Michael Cutting (Chair), Ray Martin, Harold Blanchette, Rick Bixby, Bill Hanson, Alfred Hanson and Robert Blake.

Select Board: Faith Minton, Harry Seidel, Kathy Frenette, Judy Newman-Rogers and Clyde Carson.

### **Approval of Minutes • 12/19/24**

**Alfred Hanson made a motion seconded by Harold Blanchette to approve the December 19, 2024, Budget Committee meeting minutes. Motion passed; Robert Blake abstained.**

### **Review of Capital Budget 2025**

The proposed 2025 Capital budget from the Select Board is \$605,000. Fire Chief John France explained two recent reductions he made that adjusted the Select Board's proposed Capital Budget from \$669,500 to \$605,000. The firefighter's equipment request should be \$35,000 and the fire vehicle requested amount is \$100,000. There was a review of the Fire Department equipment replacement needs and schedule.

**Record Preservation:** \$20,000 (last request) future expenses will come from the operating budget.

**Police Department Vehicle Replacement:** \$35,000 to replace the 2017 vehicle. \$42,000 current balance. Alfred Hanson questioned the need to replace a vehicle when the department is down on manpower. Mike Cutting requested the Police Chief attend the next Budget Committee meeting. Mike Cutting would like all department heads to attend the Capital Budget review meetings.

**Bridge Replacement:** \$85,000 Harry Seidel explained that the original request was \$125,000. There was discussion regarding grant reimbursement and timing. Ed Mical explained that grants are reimbursements, town funding is still needed upfront. There was a discussion regarding the use of funds to offset the tax rate as a one-time reduction.

**Highway Equipment:** \$175,000 Tim Allen is requested at the next meeting to review.

**Transfer Station:** \$50,000 (pole barn improvements)

**Transfer Station equipment:** \$50,000 (\$25,000 rebuild of the bailor and \$25,000 future equipment)

There was a discussion regarding unspent funds for a sprinkler system and a ventilation system.

**Property Revaluation:** \$40,000 for the next town wide reval in 5 years.

**Employee Extendable Trust fund:** \$5,000 Harry Seidel explained that the Select Board is no longer covering 50%, they will cover up to \$1,500. Robert Blake cautioned that this might not be a sufficient amount. John Leavitt stated that the increase in the employee deductibles has cost the town a police officer, he wonders how many other employees will be leaving. Kathy Frenette stated that the increase was unknown when he was hired.

Harry Seidel explained that the Select Board was given a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) of \$779,000. He stated that the Select Board recognized the need to make significant cuts. Harry Seidel stated there is a significant amount of money in Capital Reserve Funds (CRF) that has not been spent. Ray Martin explained a warrant article would be needed to dissolve the CRF returning the money to the general fund. Mike Cutting spoke about money that was set aside for a sidewalk study. Alfred Hanson asked for a ballpark relative to the dollar amount of grant reimbursements that will be received for 2024.

### **Anticipated Revenue 2025**

Tabled until next week

### **Other Business**

- Clyde Carson stated that 2024 expenditures are in the process of being closed out.
- Alfred Hanson requested clarification from the Director of Public Works at the next meeting regarding the job-sharing position.

### **Meeting Schedule:**

Next meeting is January 9, 2025, to finalize the capital budget and revenue review, start discussions on recommendations for the operating budget. January 16, 2025, the meeting will be to finalize the Operating budget recommendations. January 23, 2025, meeting to vote on recommendations for the operating budget, revenue, capital budget and water village district. January 30, 2025, and February 4, 2025, Public Hearings. February 6, 2025, vote on the Budget Committee recommendations.

### **Adjournment**

**Ray Martin made a motion seconded by Harold Blanchette to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 PM

Respectfully submitted by Tracy Doherty

Edited by Judy Newman-Rogers, Select Board Administrative Assistant

Edited by Darcie Buskey, Assistant Clerk