

Town of Westmoreland Budget Committee Meeting

Jan 6, 2025

Called to order: 6:33pm

- Susan asks about merging the Town Meeting for the 2025 Town Budget & School Meeting for the Westmoreland School Budget. They are 1 hour apart from each other starting at 6pm with the Town Meeting on Friday, February 7th, 2025.
- Vote for Town of Westmoreland Budget Committee Chair
 - Bill made a motion to nominate Susan Finnegan
 - Kevin second the motion
 - No discussion, all members passed the motion for Susan Finnegan to become Chair

Discussion for Operating Budget: Presented by John Snowden & Jodi Scanlan

- Executive:
 - 4130110: Increase in salary for Town Administrator
 - 4130432 - IT Service: Increase by \$5K in order to better the Town's cyber security
- Legal Expenses: Increase due to carryover of lawsuit and other small legal issues from 2024 to this year.
- Planning & Zoning: 4191700 – Ordinance Review: SW Regional Planning to provide professional review of the Town Ordinance Plan. This is a one-time fee then there will be potential charges if ordinances need to be rewritten.
- Master Plan committee is meeting soon
- Fire & Rescue Department:
 - 4220120 - Firemen Salary: This was increased due to the hard work they do and their life being on the line on every call.
 - 4220410 – Electricity: Cost has risen substantially for commercial use. Hopefully the solar project will alleviate this cost
- Highway Administration: 4311110 – Permanent Wages: Dave & John salary increased to be closer in line with regional average. This is a move motivated for retention of good people.
- Highway & Streets: 4312681 – Signs: Received pamphlet in the mail about speed limit signs. The Town purchased two speed limit signs (with speed reading capability) and a mobile unit. (this was for question about 2024 budget line item of \$10149 spent on signs
- Health Administration: 4411110 – Health Officer Salary: He has done a lot of work putting in well over 80 hours and did make a mention about compensation for that position.
- Old Home Days: Put this into the budget instead of raising the money. More efficient use of time and resources
- Newsletter: 4589200 - The Westmorelander: This old newsletter has been revived. It will come out quarterly and including print and postage will cost approximately \$4000 per year.

Warrant Articles:

- Buildings:
 - Paint Town Hall Exterior Walls: Money will be used to paint the front of the town hall, the bell tower and the side facing the post office
 - Highway Garage Septic, Highway Garage Well, Highway Garage Bathroom (with shower install). Currently the well is just a dammed-up stream that has fish in it! A well needs to be dug, an official bathroom with a shower needs to be upgraded and the septic needs to be brought up to par to match those new demands.
- Other:
 - Edson Cemetery Fence: A new surround needs to be installed. May go with granite posts and chains, similar to the town square.
 - PAYT: Going to a buy-a-bag system for the transfer station to start a long process of converting more residence to recycling and eventually get the Westmoreland Transfer Station to make money such as Walpole and eventually Harrisville.
- Transfer to Capital Reserve
 - Increased most line items by \$20K to align inputs with inflation. Corrected a mistake with 2 Highway Equipment line items. Added \$10K to Fire Equipment line, bringing it up to \$20K and added \$10K to the Grant Matching Fund.

Total Budget Increase of \$71547 or 4.1%. Revenue inputs estimated at \$881701 with the rest covered by tax payers. John Snowden presented the budget as stated and asked for Budget Committee approval

Kevin made a motion to approve the budget as presented. Bill second the motion. Vote was unanimously approved.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm