

## Jan 12, 2022 6:00pm Town Budget Committee Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Susan Finnegan, Christine Abdelnour-McKenna, Dean Priebe (phoned in), Bill Chase, Clayton Stalker, Dave

### Committee Organizational business:

Meeting was called to order at 6:01pm Dean phoned in due to not feeling great and not wanting to get anyone sick.

### FY2021 Financial Performance Review

Revenues were up over the anticipated revenues so overall the town looks to be in good shape.

### FY2021 Budget Discussion

All of the budget was filled in and ready for the budget committee to review and discuss. As each line item was reviewed, discussion occurred when 2021 actuals varied significantly from budget. Selectman Stalker had line details and rationale for increases in the FY22 budget.

The budget committee approved the following categories unanimously each member approved and there were no objections.

4130, 4140 4150 4153 4155 4191 4194 4195 4196 4210 4215 4299 4220 4240  
4290 4311 4316 4324 4411 4414 4415 4441 4442 4520 4583 4550 4611 4711 4721  
4723

4312 We had a lengthy discussion with Dave about the costs associated with the highway department. It seems like they have had a few years of equipment breaking down and they had to have an entire engine replaced and one of their trucks has been in and out of the shop for losing power. But now everything seems to be running well for the moment. The costs of fuel and materials have also affected their budget significantly. Dave informed the committee that many of the dirt roads require a lot of work during the snow storms and often require more work than comparable paved roads. Dave also informed us that the sand and rock budget basically go to the dirt roads.

The budget committee is questioning whether over time maintaining some of these challenging dirt roads is more costly than if the town were to vote to have some of them

paved. We had previously discussed whether or not they track the amount of hours and materials spent on dirt roads so we could compare to the same mileage and typography as a paved road. We requested Dave to begin to implement a log book process so we could have the data to review for next year. Dave informed us they don't have the time to track, they often work lots of hours and are running on little to no sleep. The budget committee reiterated that we appreciate all their efforts and this is in no way us trying to 'big brother' them but to get the data so the town has it to make a decision that could make their job easier and safer. Christine volunteered to come down and help set up a process for them that would take very little time. Christine also volunteered to just have them call or text her and she would jot down the data if keeping a log book does not seem doable. This discussion was lengthy but ultimately Dave said he would give it a try. Clayton informed the budget committee that we should bring this up to the selectboard and we could drop into one of their meetings at any time. We also discussed speaking with other towns to see how they tracked this data.

4312 On this article we voted to approve and had a majority vote but it was not unanimous.

Below are things we were not sure of the answer to so we will follow up questions to ask Jo Ann about

#42900680, what is forest fire control?

#4550680 appropriation for the library \$13,082? We didn't know what appropriation meant? That category also has a 30% increase, do you know why?

Article 5, the amount you have highlighted (in the packet you left for us yesterday), does not equal the amount of the total budget line of \$1,514,234. Shouldn't they be the same?

In any of these articles, where we allocate a certain sum of money, (say it is the town clock restoration or the purchase of a fire alarm system), where does that extra money go if it's not utilized? For example if the town clock does not cost \$27,000, but only costs \$20,000, where does that extra \$7000 go? I know I've asked this before and it goes back into the general fund but, just not 100% certain what that means? If you could let me know to make it more clear for me, because I could not answer this last night to the rest of the committee(!)

Article number 11; are there any funds left from this capital reserve fund? If so, what is the balance?

Capital reserves balances; #4915. Could you fill that in for us on page number four for the transfer to capital reserve funds. Last year if you recall we had asked for what the balances were on the sheets too.

## **Warrant Articles**

The budget committee approved/ supported the following warrant articles unanimously each member approved and there were no objections.

Article 1, Article 2, Article 3, Article 5, Article 8, Article 7, Article 8, Article 4, Article 9, Article 10, Article 11, Article 13. Article 6, Article 12, Article 14.

We had a question about article 6 and wondered what happened to the excess funds if the clock repair comes in less, we were informed it goes back into the general fund.

Meeting adjourned @ 8:17pm Next meeting is the Public Budget Committee on February 4th, 2022 at the town hall 7:00pm