

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

December 10, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Adams, Fred Kidder II, Tom Steketee

BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Tim Surprenant, Bob Palifka, Bill Paxton, Lawrence Hibbard, Tom Thomson, Ruth Hook

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, John Berryman, David Bischoff, Ken Wiren, Jordon Sutherlin, Kevin Follensbee, Janice Bartley

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30

The Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) reviewed their list of concerns and questions on the following items from the operating budget:

- Employee Raises of 3% - is this based on cost of living and/or merit?
 - For those employees that qualify for an increase, it's a combination of both
- Topsham Communications has reduced their rates for internet services
 - Dobbins-Marsh will get information and present to the Selectboard at their next meeting
- Informational Technology - # of computers and timing of upgrades
 - 2 computers will be replaced and upgraded to Windows 10 in 2019
 - 4 computers will be replaced and upgraded to Windows 10 in 2020
 - Replacements and upgrades will need to be completed prior to January 14, 2020
 - The computer at the Highway garage was purchased in 2019 with Windows 10 installed
- Engineering Services – what is the \$4,500 for
 - This was paid to DuBois & King for the Town Road #100 engineering study
- Engineering Services – is there a bid process for hiring an engineering firm?
 - For the smaller projects (Quinttown Road and Sawyer Brook), the Town contacted two engineering firms and two individuals to quote the projects.
 - For projects involving design work for roads and bridges, DuBois & King is the engineering firm the Town uses
- Engineering Services – what was the total amount paid to DuBois & King in 2019 and projected to be paid in 2020

- Dobbins-Marsh provided a handout reflecting this information – 2019 the Town paid \$95,420 for FEMA projects, Archertown Road rebuild and Jacobs Brook bridge projects – the remaining estimate for 2020 is \$113,800 for design work for Town Road #100, Archertown Road rebuild and the Jacobs Brook bridge replacement projects
- Police Department
 - What is the Selectboard policy regarding the Chief's presence in Town? The police department varies its hours to cover evening and weekend patrolling. Chief was working a case at Rivendell that consumed his time both at the school and completing paperwork – however, this was not as a resource officer.
 - Why is the cruiser left idling when the Chief is in his office? When the temperature drops below a certain reading, the cruiser is left on to provide heat to the computer system in the cruiser. Chief doesn't bring the computer into the office as it would delay his response time when called out. He does take out of the cruiser at the end of his shift. The Selectboard will be approving an amendment to the Vehicle Use policy addressing idling of Town owned vehicles and will address with Chief Bachus.
 - Dispatch – the BAC would like this expense reflected within the Fire and Police department budgets vs its own line item under Emergency Services. The Selectboard said to split the annual cost between departments would be a guestimate based on past history. The current billing doesn't provide detail by department to make this allocation straight forward.
- Fire Department
 - Equipment – Concerns were expressed about the amount of equipment that has been purchased over the past several years – “when will old equipment be completely replaced?”. The Selectboard said this line item is used to purchase new equipment and to replace/update old and outdated equipment, including nozzles, fittings, flashlights, hand tools, power tools and new gear for new members. Looking over history of spending, it appears spending in declining. The Selectboard will verify with Chief Straight.
 - Equipment and Radio line items – the BAC would like to keep these line items separate.
- Highway Department
 - Has the Selectboard looked into contracting out the highway? The Selectboard will work on this, but most likely won't be for the 2020 budget
 - Salaries – Why are the # of employees increasing from 3 to 4? It would depend on who was hired as the Road Agent and what their experience

would be. The admin assistant to the highway would be used more or less based on what the Road Agents' background is.

- Why is the admin assistant to the Highway working more than part-time hours? Currently he's acting as the manager of the highway department (with oversight from the Selectboard) in addition to doing the computer work
- Equipment Rental-why rent an excavator when there's a backhoe that could be used? The work plan for 2020 would use the excavator to help with ditching and culvert replacement as it's faster to use than the backhoe. It would be transported by a trailer to the project site.
- Contracted Services – would culvert installation be put out to bid? Some culverts would be replaced by the highway department, but certain situations and locations may require contracted services and estimates would be requested of contractors.
- Roadside Mowing – the BAC suggested using another company to complete the mowing, and the highway department needs to make sure the contractor is shown all the roads, be provided with a map and know the width of mowing to be done. The highway department then needs to review the work as completed.
- Vehicle Maintenance – the BAC expressed concerns of overloading the trucks with sand – this causes unnecessary wear and tear on the vehicles
- Sand – general concerns about the amount of sand being used. Is the usage being tracked? Berryman said he will remind the crew to track as they have forms to use for this. Steketee is working with Harry Burgess on a reclamation plan for the sand pit and has calls out to the NH DES – Dobbins-marsh will provide the contact information for our rep at the NH DRA that oversees excavations. Concerns was expressed about the quality of the sand in the pit – need to have Burgess address this as well.
- Road Salt – concerns about the overall increase use of salt over the last several years. Berryman is working on calibrations to better control salt use.
- Landfill Closure
 - How much longer do we have to monitor this? DuBois & King is currently monitoring on a bi-annual basis. Dobbins-Marsh will pull information received regarding the length of time this needs to continue for
- Conservation Commission
 - Where can the results be seen of the e-coli testing? The Conservation Commission has the data and provides copies to the Selectboard.

The Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) reviewed their list of concerns and questions on the following warrant articles:

- #3–Capital Reserve Funds
 - The BAC discussed the funding for the Police Cruiser – some concern the funds will be insufficient in 2021 as no inflation is being accounted for. Palifka provided a revised list of funding amounts to include a 3% increase for inflation
- #4-Archertown Road Rebuild Bond of \$600,000
 - Were the engineering services put out to bid? As stated previously, the Selectboard uses DuBois & King for these types of projects.
 - Why are we requesting a specific dollar amount before we put the project out to bid? Bonds can be applied for twice per year – in order to receive the bond funds by mid-2020, we need to start the process in January – Public Hearing occurs first, then approved or not at Town Meeting. If approved at the Town meeting, the application is completed and submitted
 - What impact will there be for the Town when the Jacobs Brook bridge project starts. How much will the Town have to front for this project? The State of NH will absorb 80% of the cost of the project. Once the design is submitted and approved by NH DOT, the State will provide 50% of their total to the Town so there are funds to cover initial expenses associated with the project.
 - What is the status on several outstanding FEMA projects? Quinttown Road dual culvert has been approved by NH DES – work can start in 2020, Sawyer Brook culvert head wall engineering study should be completed soon so work can be bid out for 2020, Town Road #100 is in the FEMA portal for approval – then the bid process will start for work in 2020. The Mousley Brook culvert replacement needs to be reopened by FEMA then the process can begin for the engineering study and design.
- #5-Permanent Structure at the Highway Garage \$10,000
 - The BAC suggested revising this warrant article to allocate funds for the Primex list of safety violations at the Highway Garage. The Selectboard agreed
- #6-Radar Signs
 - the BAC suggested purchasing one radar sign and keep looking for grants to purchase a second one. Adams said it would be more expensive to purchase the signs separately as there is a discount when purchasing two at the same time. The BAC had questions on the life of the battery and the cost to replace. The Selectboard will discuss with Chief Bachus.

- #11-New CRF for Police Major Equipment & Database updates \$7,000
 - Can the police department pool with other towns? What does this cover? Can we look at Grafton County Sheriff department for dispatch, similar to Piermont?
 - Surprenant discussed his conversation with Hanover dispatch. There will be a new company providing software support and the cost will be significant. Hanover already pools dispatch services with several towns, including Orford. The Piermont fire department recently switched to Hanover as the reception is stronger with Hanover than Grafton County.
- #12-Replacement of Highway Truck #3 \$140,000
 - The BAC discussed concerns about purchasing a new truck – is it necessary? With only two crew employees, do we need a third truck? Why are we looking to purchase a smaller truck – what impact will this have on hauling gravel and sand? Low mileage on this truck, seems that it should last a little longer
 - Berryman said the crew has test driven this specific truck and liked the handling. It has a smaller bed, but has a better turning radius. The current truck replacement has been delayed a few years from its scheduled replacement date, and repairs are consistently needed to keep the truck operating.
- #13- Replacement Fire Rescue Truck \$200,000
 - The Town supported Chief Straights request to create a Major Maintenance CRF which would move the replacement timeline from 20 years to 30. Why are we looking to replace the rescue truck early?
 - The Selectboard will ask Chief Straight for additional information on this purchase
- #14-Purchase an enclosed Trailer & UTV \$40,000
 - The BAC looked at the data for Fire Department calls for service – non-medical calls account for an average of 17.1% - why purchase this type of vehicle for a low percentage of events. Fish & Game already have 4-wheelers for rescue of hikers (not the FD responsibility). The BAC feel this is an unnecessary purchase.
 - The Selectboard will ask Chief Straight for additional information on this purchase

The BAC's next meeting will be on December 18, 2019 at 5:30 in the Niles Room - Dobbins-Marsh will forward a revised budget worksheet after the Selectboard

meeting on 12/11/19 reflecting YTD actual numbers and any changes to the budget the Selectboard decides to make.

Meeting recessed at 7:30 pm

The Selectboard meeting reconvened at 7:40 pm in the Niles Room

Selectboard Members: John Adams, Fred Kidder

Others: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, John Berryman

The Selectboard discussed possible changes to the 2020 Budget and warrant articles.

- Dobbins-Marsh will check on revised Topsham Communication internet rates
- Dispatch Expenses – leave as one-line item as part of Emergency Services
- Fire Department Equipment and Radio lines items – leave as one-line item under Equipment
- WA #3 – use the revised appropriations to the Capital Reserve accounts as provided by Bob Palifka (increasing 3%)
- WA #4 – check the language to use from the Bond Attorney and DRA Portal
- WA #5 – amend the purpose for Safety Improvements to the Highway Garage, increase the amount to \$25,000
- WA #15 – reduce the amount to move from the Fund Balance into the Capital Reserve account to \$25,000

A motion was made by Adams, seconded by Kidder to enter into nonpublic session under RSA 91-A:3, II(a) at 8:05 PM. A roll call vote of member's present was taken with a decision in the affirmative

The Board resumed the regular meeting at 8:28 PM. A motion was made by Adams, seconded by Kidder to seal the minutes of the nonpublic session. Motion Approved.

V. Adjourn

Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kidder adjourn the meeting. Motion Passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh