

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen
Department Budget Meeting Minutes
October 21, 2020

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, Terry Straight, Larry Duffy, Lawrence Hibbard, Ruth Hook

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm

Election Assistance CARES Act Grant - The Selectboard reviewed and approved the Election CARES Act grant application. *Motion made by Adams, seconded by Kidder to authorize Deborah Hadlock, Town Clerk, to sign the application, and to approve acceptance of these funds. Motion Passed.*

Fire Department Budget – Chief Straight presented the 2021 budget to the Selectboard. Straight discussed changes to the department budget as compared to 2020 – overall the budget is lower than the 2020 budget by \$4,700.

- Equipment Maintenance decreased by \$1,000 – the department has a schedule for members to work on the vehicles on a more consistence basis, resulting in lower maintenance requirements
- Equipment decreased by \$3,000 – these funds are used to purchase new equipment and replace/update old and outdated equipment. It's also used to purchase gear for new members, once certified.
- Training decreased by \$1,000 – the department is unsure of the number of classes that members will be able to attend in 2021

Straight discussed the sale of the fire truck as voted in favor of at the 2020 Town Meeting. Because he's not heard if the Fire Fighters Association has or will be purchasing the trailer for the Fire department, he'd like to retain the truck for the present time. The cost to keep in the fleet is minimal (primarily inspections), and it's been an asset at recent fires. (Hook informed the Selectboard during the meeting that the Association placed the order for the trailer, and it should arrive in November 2020). The Selectboard can make the decision not to sell the fire truck, however, more discussion is needed.

Highway Department Budget – Terry Straight, Road Agent, presented the departments 2021 budget to the Selectboard. Salaries and benefits will be added by the Admin Assistant at a later date. Adams asked if the budget addresses any of the Primex audit concerns at the Town garage. He suggested Straight review those suggestions. Of the line items presented, the budget is lower than the 2020 budget by \$4,600.

Electricity – the 2021 budget amount was left the same, but Straight feels this will be less in 2021 with the electrical updates, but at this time he's unaware of what that change will be.

- Equipment Rental decreased by \$1,000 – Straight feels \$5,000 will be sufficient for the few pieces of equipment the department may need to rent in 2021

- Contracted Services decreased by \$2,000 – this is a decrease due to having a full staff and the need for additional services should be less than in 2020
- Vehicle Maintenance increased by 12,000 – with an older fleet, unexpected repairs often occur. Even if the Town votes to purchase a replacement truck in 2021, the new truck won't be operational until well into 2021, and over the last 2 years, the actual amount spent for maintenance is close to \$30,000 per year.
- Heating Oil decreased by \$1,900 – By installing the propane heater, the oil usage will decrease. The department will continue to use waste oil to heat the garage, with propane being the backup
- Propane increase by \$1,000 – as the propane heater is new, the department isn't sure of the usage. The department also installed ceiling fans which helps maintain the heat in the building.
- Building Maintenance decreased by \$4,000 – in 2019, the primary expense was to repair the waste oil furnace, which doesn't seem to be an issue currently. Part of the 2021 budget would include repainting the garage
- Road Improvement Projects decreased by \$3,000 – Straight wasn't sure what this budget line was for – only a few dollars allocated to it in 2019 and 2020. He has zero funded for 2021
- Road Treatment increased by \$3,500 – this year, due to the dry roads, the department put down two treatments on the gravel roads. Straight is budgeting for the same in 2021
- Equipment Repair/Replacement increased by \$1,500 – Straight said many items were repaired or replaced in 2020, but there are still a lot of outdated and broke tools at the shop that will need replacing in 2021, including several chain saws
- Uniforms increased by \$1,000 – with 3 crew members, this will cover the cost for t-shirts and pants
- Culverts decreased by \$4,000 – Straight said there's inventory of 11-12 culverts currently. Adams said there was a plan in 2020 to replace multiple culverts – is there a plan for 2021? Straight indicated he'll work on a priority list for the board to review.
- Gravel decreased by \$2,000 – Straight has inventory of gravel, but most of the roads need work.
- Road Salt was originally the same as 2020, however, Straight said the average usage since 2014 is 200 tons per calendar year. By using the average rate for ton for 250 tons, he suggested lowering the salt line item to \$17,500
- Road Signs decreased by \$800

Warrant articles – Straight feels the 2008 International (Truck #3) needs to be replaced. It was originally on the replacement schedule for 2019 and has been moved forward for the last two years. Straight presented quotes for a 6-wheeler and a 10-wheeler, but would recommend the 10-wheeler. A bigger truck would allow the Town to pick up gravel vs having it delivered (at a lower cost per yard), and would allow work in East Orford to be completed with one trip vs two, as is currently the case. The estimated presented to the Selectboard for the 6-wheeler was \$173,000, the 10-wheeler \$198,000. There will be an additional charge for a warranty.

Straight presented an additional list of items for the Selectboard to consider

- Replacing the windows on the garage south side and add smaller windows that can be opened, along with adding a vent fan (Primex recommended adding an exhaust fan as well)

- Paving the entrance on Sawyer Brook Road, Orfordville Road, Baker Road and E. Cemetery Road. Straight was asked what the cost of this project would be. Adams asked how the Selectboard members felt about this project, as if the board supports this as a warrant article, Straight will need to obtain accurate quotes for the project. There was a lengthy discussion between the Road Agent and the Selectboard around long-term paving projects. It was agreed the Road Agent and Steketee (highway liaison) will work on a plan for 2021 (paving and other work) to present to the Selectboard at a future work session.
- Additional funding for the grader cover – unfortunately, the cost of lumber has increased drastically causing the cost of the project to be significantly higher than originally estimated.
- Additional funding for the garage addition
- Capital Reserve Funding – Straight is concerned about the amount the Town votes to allocate to the trust funds each year. With the cost of highway and fire trucks increasing each year, when it's time to purchase a new vehicle, the funds in the account may not be sufficient.
- New Overhead doors at the garage – Straight and Steketee met with Twin State Doors to review repairs for the overhead doors. Adams asked if they want this to be a warrant article vs an expense in 2020. Straight said the small door on the east of the building needs replacing ASAP. Steketee said the cost to replace the door, hardware and the motor will be \$2,085. To replace all three doors, hardware and two motors will cost \$8,185. Kidder reminded Steketee the board wanted a cost to replace the motors only – Steketee didn't have that information. Twin State Doors will be submitting various proposals for the board to consider
- Replacing the radio in the Garage – the current radio is old and outdated – the cost to replace is \$2,200
- High Bridge Road bridge – due to the condition of the support buttresses, the project will need to be more than just replacing the deck. Based on an estimate received, a warrant article will be needed for additional funds of approximately \$48,000, for a total project cost of \$70,000

Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh