

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2020

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

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, Jason Bachus, Terry Straight

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm.

Roll call taken (members listed above were all present)

Review of the proposed 2021 Budget

Adams reviewed each subsection of the 2021 budget with the Budget Advisory Committee members (BAC). Questions and comments were given on the following:

- **Salary Increases**
 - The budget reflects salary increases between 1.4% and 2%. Further discussion by the Selectboard is needed to finalize these percentages
- **Training Seminars**
 - While physical attendance will be limited and/or eliminated, virtual courses are still offered, and often have fees associated with them. (for example, in 2020 the highway department had in person grader training as well as an online courses)
- **Town Clerk**
 - The cost of dog registrations is down in 2020 primarily because residents are not coming to the office to register their dogs due to COVID. YTD the Town Clerk has registered about 40 dogs less than the prior year.
- **Cemetery**
 - The salary line item has increased to include 2 additional weeks for the season – this will allow the Cemetery Commission a max of 30 weeks to better manage the time of year for mowing
- **Fire Department**
 - Medical supplies are stored on all the fire trucks, and AEMT, EMT and paramedics carry supplies as well. Supplies are replaced as required and/or needed.
 - The 1991 fire truck is being kept as it's been used at small forest/grass fires and can be used by the highway department to flush out culverts and clean bridges.
 - Equipment Maintenance includes pump testing, SBCA flow tests, air pack and fire extinguisher testing. Every two years ladders are also tested.
 - Vehicle Maintenance – why was the expense for the repair to the body crack on the rescue truck not included in the budget expense line item vs using the Capital Reserve account. Per Chief Straight, the budget is there for routine maintenance, and the Fire Department Major Repairs CRF is for non-routine major repairs.
 - The equipment line item 2020 budget is under spent, but funds were used from the Fire Department Equipment CRF to purchase a new radio. Per Chief Straight, the CRF was created for replacement equipment, such as the radio. The old radio is installed on one of the fire trucks as a backup radio

- **Highway Department**
 - Approximately 10 culverts were replaced in 2020 using stock on hand. Recently additional culverts were purchased to replenish the stock. The UVLSPRC completed an analysis of the Town's culverts and in 2021 additional culverts will be replaced using the report as a guideline.
 - Asphalt patching has been relatively low compared to the budgeted amount – can this be reduced further for 2021. Straight said it will depend on the number of culverts that are replaced on paved roads
- **Street Lighting**
 - Is there anyway to reduce the number of street lights in Orford. Adams said we will add this topic as a project for the Selectboard to work on in 2021
- **Landfill**
 - DuBois & King monitors the landfill and files the report with the State of NH. Orford only needs to file a report every two years, however, there's an increase in the fee as the State now requires six (6) samplings and analysis and in the past, it was only five (5). Monitoring needs to continue until of ENV-SW 807.04 are met, and currently there are no landfills in NH that have met these performance standards
- **Parks & Playgrounds**
 - Adams and others commented on the excellent job Lawrence Hibbard did on the mowing and maintenance of the Community Field.
 - Should the beach monitor be on duty when the beach at Indian Pond is closed? Chief Bachus said when the beach is closed a notice is posted stating "swim at your own risk", which is why so many non-residents were at the beach this summer. When the beach is closed, it's nearly impossible for the monitor to do her job. The Parks & Playgrounds committee will need to have this discussion with the Selectboard sometime next year.
- **Conservation Commission**
 - E-coli testing is up for 2021 as the Selectboard wants to test more often. In 2020 tests were on the normal schedule, but due to low water levels, e-coli results were higher. By the time the Town was notified of the results, and if the reading were high, timing didn't allow for another timely test. Reading are completed at the three (3) beaches, various spots on Jacobs Brook and Mousley Brook, and results are posted on the Webpage, Listserv and if beaches need to be closed, that notice is posted at the beaches as well.
- **Rivendell Lease**
 - The lease agreement between the Town of Orford and Rivendell was effective in 2019. It's based on the costs to maintain the Community Field and shared between the two entities. In 2021, costs will be analyzed for the past two (2) years, and the contact may need to be modified.

Review of the proposed 2021 Warrant Articles

- **#3 – Capital Reserve Funding**
 - The Selectboard agreed to maintain the funding into the Road Improvement CRF at \$146,000 (the same as 2020), and fund the remaining CRF accounts as outlined on the CRF Spreadsheet in the 2020 annual report. Regarding the Road Improvement CRF, there are still several projects to be completed that will access these funds – FEMA projects (Town Road #100, Quinttown Road Culverts, Sawyer Brook headwalls and Mousley Brook culvert), the Jacobs Brook bridge at Archertown Road, Archertown Road hill project, Orfordville Bog project, and High Bridge road bridge replacement
- **#4 – Adding to the Road Improvement CRF with funds received from FEMA**
 - This is a housekeeping item as the Town must vote to add funds into a CRF and this represents funds reimbursed from FEMA for expenses paid for in 2020.

- **#5 – Creating a Broadband Development CRF with \$2,000**
 - Adams has been attending the Grafton County Broadband committee meetings and it's been suggested to start a CRF to help with expenses to create a business model for Broadband in our community
- **#7 – Purchasing a new highway 10-wheeler dump truck**
 - Road agent Straight is requesting this purchase to replace the 2008 dump truck. This truck has had a lot of issues in 2020, and requires repairs that are costly to the Town in terms of time lost and actual expenses for repairs. He's requesting a 10-wheeler (vs a 6-wheeler) because the larger body will carry more gravel, sand and/or salt and can make one trip out east when working on the roads (the current 6-wheeler has to return to the garage for additional product). With a larger truck, the Town can save money when purchasing gravel – by picking up the load ourselves we save money on the price per yard.
Questions were asked on the turn radius and how this will impact navigation on our town roads. Straight said if the truck is approved, over the summer the highway crew will work on turn around areas on the roads this truck will plow. He has spoken with other towns that have a 10-wheeler and got good feedback. Straight feels our roads are wide enough to handle the longer truck, and during mud season, the 10-wheeler will float better than a 6-wheeler. Straight said the longer truck will fit in the garage, but will need to remove the plow.
While the truck only has 66,000 miles on it, wear and tear over the past 12 years have taken a toll. YTD the town has paid over \$11,000 for unexpected repairs, plus time off the road and time to take to the garage or to repair themselves.
It was suggested looking into the possibility of not purchasing the warranty, but self-insuring.
- **#8 – Restoring High Bridge road bridge**
 - In order to complete the work to restore the bridge, additional funds will be needed from the Road Improvement CRF. \$22,000 were approved at the 2017 annual meeting, but due to the need to repair the support buttresses before re-decking, and additional \$46,000 will be needed. While the Selectboard has the authority to spend the CRF funds, they want to make sure the voters still want to repair the bridge as it requires additional money.
There was discussion if the bridge could be re-decked and made into a walking bridge. Adams said at the 2017 annual meeting this suggestion was rejected by the voters, but with additional funds needed to repair the bridge, voters may decide to go with that option. Dobbins-Marsh will work up a wording for a revised warrant article.
- **#9 – Discontinuing the Bridge Replacement CRF**
 - Chris Crowley, the Trustee of the Trust funds, has completed research on all the trust funds, and found several corrections are needed, such as name changes of the accounts. He found at the 2011 annual meeting the Town voted to create a Bridge Replacement CRF - however, there was no purpose for the fund, nor were agents listed. Cowley suggested the Selectboard to either discontinue the account, or list the purpose and agents, and suggest a funding amount. Because the Town has the Road Improvement CRF that includes bridge work, it was decided to discontinue this fund. This led to discussion on the Road Improvement CRF (currently referred to as the Bridges & Roads CRF) and if a warrant article should be created to address the renaming of that account.

Review and Discussion of Misc. Items

- **Sand Pit Reclamation**
 - The town contracted with Mary Pinkham-Langer to help with the sand pit reclamation. It's an ongoing project at this point.

- **Primex Safety Report on the Garage** - There were several items on the Primex report – some are complete, with the remaining items needing prioritizing for 2021
 - **Fire Detection and Monitoring**
 - Install a monitored fire alarm system in the facility. The fire alarm system will consist of several devices working together to detect and warn of a fire. Included would be smoke detectors and heat detectors and manual pull stations. Alarms should be monitored by a call center or tied into a municipal fire alarm system. On site warning horns and fire alarm strobes are also recommended. **Pending**
 - Determine the appropriate number of fire extinguishers in the facility as well as install identification signs above them all. **Pending**
 - Combustibles - Limit the amount of combustible materials in work areas and keep them from accumulating. Store quick-burning, flammable materials in designated locations away from ignition sources and store oily waste in covered metal containers. In addition, ensure that passageways and fire doors are free of obstructions. It is also important to maintain clear access to fire extinguishers and other emergency equipment. Specific concerns identified at the facility include: Spray lubricants located throughout facility. Pathways are narrow when all trucks are parked inside. **Completed**
 - **Battery Disconnect Switches**
 - Ensure that battery disconnect switches are installed on all commercial trucks and establish a written department policy regarding the mandatory use of the battery disconnect switches when trucks are parked, particularly during off hours (overnights and weekends). Periodically spot-check trucks to verify that drivers are using the battery disconnect switches. Many newer commercial vehicles are factory equipped with these devices. Older vehicles can be retrofitted with battery disconnect switches for less than \$100 (parts only). **Pending**
 - **Upgrade Electrical System**
 - Install emergency lighting throughout the building by a qualified vendor. Inspect on a yearly basis. **Completed**
 - Current main electrical panel is 100-amp service. Recommend working with a certified electrician to potentially upgrade the panel to a 200-amp service. Ensure that main electrical panel has 36 inches of clearance around it all times. This will entail moving the generator being stored in front of it. **Completed**
 - Ensure that the small electrical panel in the road agents office has 36 inches of clearance around it all times. This will entail relocating the refrigerator that is currently located in front of it. **Pending until addition is added**
 - Install emergency lighting throughout the building by a qualified vendor. Inspect on a yearly basis. **Completed**
 - **Exit Areas**
 - Add a second means of egress in the office door - **Pending**
 - Ensure passageways and fire doors are free from obstacles, and maintain clear access to fire extinguishers – **working on adding an addition to allow supplies and tools to be moved out of the garage**
 - A second exit door is blocked by storage shelving. Recommend removing the shelving and placing the exit way back in service. This exit way could be extremely important in the event there is an emergency in the building when all trucks and equipment are parked inside. **Completed**
 - Recommend having the threshold at the main entrance/exit way repaired to ensure it is no longer a trip hazard - **Pending**
 - Exits door clearly marked – **Completed**

- **Fleet Parking Strategies**
 - Develop a parking plan for public works equipment including dump trucks, utility vehicles and specialized heavy equipment. This plan should consider separation of equipment to limit loss severity in the event of a fire or other catastrophic event. Where vehicles are park adjacent to one another consider large gaps between vehicles and alternating cab forward arrangements on adjacent units to limit fire spread from unit to unit. **Pending – Long Term Project**
- **Building Improvements**
 - Waste Oil furnace – **a new propane heater was installed at the garage to work with the waste oil furnace.**
 - Recommend appropriately storing the extra waste oil elsewhere on the property. Currently barrels are spread out in the rear of the facility and are taking up valuable real estate in a small facility. **Completed – barrels are stored outside**
 - Add Exhaust Vent – **Pending**
 - Repair Welding Machine – **Completed**
 - First Aid kits upgraded, and include tourniquets – **Completed**
 - Install a new eye wash station – **Pending**
 - Pest Control system – recommend having a qualified vender to create a plan – **Pending**
- **Outside Garage**
 - Clean up piles of debris behind salt & sand sheds - **Completed**
 - Removing the storage trailer (closest to the gas pumps) from service and disposing – **Pending – need a place to move items in trailer first**
 - The other storage trailer needs to be cleaned up - **Completed**
 - Leaking oil barrels to be dealt with by a qualified vender – **Pending (pulled barrels and stored in sand pit until they can be removed)**
 - Bring current fuel station up to code (work with a qualified vender) **Pending**
- **Bank loan for purchasing large items** – the was a discussion of borrowing money when a large purchase is needed, and using the Capital Reserve fund to make annual payments
- **Do we need a warrant article for approval of the Jacobs Brook bridge at Archertown Road replacement?** Adams will work on language for this warrant article
- **A request was made to include a list of open projects in the 2020 annual report**

Other Business – none at this time

Adjourn

Motion made by Adams, seconded by Steketee adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh