

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2021

SELECTBOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: John Adams, Chase Kling

BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE PRESENT: Ruth Hook, Lawrence Hibbard, Bob Palifka, Laurence Duffy, Bill Paxton, Tom Thomson, Ken Wiren (called in)

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

2022 Proposed Operating Budget

Adams asked for questions and comments pertaining to the 2022 proposed operating budget

Salaries:

Was a final decision made on the percentage increase for Town employees?

- Adams said yes – it's been set at 6% (Cost of Living 5.9% and comparable wages are up overall in the local area)

Planning Board Budget:

Why has this budget increased over 2021?

- The Planning Board agreed to hire a professional assistant from the UV Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission. That person also takes the minutes for the meeting.

Can a member of the Planning Board take minutes to help reduce the budget?

Cemetery Budget:

Is the line item for gasoline high enough considering the price per gallon?

- Dobbins-Marsh will calculate the # of gallons used in 2021 against the rate of \$4/gallon

What was spent for Supplies & Maintenance?

- A detailed list will be provided at the next BAC meeting

Police Budget:

Why are we adding to the budget for support staff? Can't we have the NH State Police or Sheriffs Department cover the town when our Police Chief is on vacation etc.?

- Per Chief Bachus, both State Police and the Sheriffs department are short staffed and only responding to emergency calls.
- The part time officer would be used as needed to cover the Chief's vacation time and when Chief Bachus is having to spend time completing paperwork due to caseloads.

Fire Department Budget:

Why is there a \$2,000 increase in the budget?

- The Selectboard will obtain a list of items to be purchased in 2022

Highway Budget:

The Selectboard will obtain details for the budget increase for the following line items:

- Equipment Rental up \$1,000
- Contracted Services up \$2,000

- Building Maintenance up \$6,000 – what maintenance items is this for
- Equipment Repair/Replacement up \$1,000 – what items are planned on being replaced
- Culverts up \$5,000 – what culverts is the highway department planning to replace
- Gravel up \$5,000 – also, we underspend this line item in 2021 – what roads are planned to be worked on in 2022 that will require additional gravel? do we get quotes from various vendors for gravel? What would be the reason to purchase more gravel in 2021?
- Asphalt Patch up \$1,000 – in 2021 less than \$500 was spent, why the increase and where will this be used?

Vehicle Maintenance – Hook mentioned that the Wentworth road agent uses a traveling mechanic to work on their highway trucks. Could that be an option for work on the trucks vs. taking them to Reed's?

Thomson briefly reported on the meeting with himself, Chase Kling and a rep from NH DES. The level of sand today leaves 2-3 years of sand to be used by the Town. The Town could dig down further, but that will cause its' own issues. Kling will be preparing a written report on this meeting for the Selectboard to review at a future meeting.

Parks & Recreation:

Portable Toilets – why the increase?

- The Selectboard agreed to have a portable left at the playground area near the boat landing for 2022

Tree Maintenance – should a line item be added to this category for tree care on the mall and community field?

- The Selectboard discussed adding additional funds to the Tree Care Capital reserve account. The tree warden, parks & playgrounds and the highway department will be asked to help identify trees that will need removal, replacement or maintenance in 2022 to help determine the additional amount of funding to add to the Tree Care CRF

Lease Agreement with Rivendell for the use of the Community Field

- The contact was based on a 3-year average of expenses, shared with the Town of Orford. The Selectboard will look over the last three years and compare to the current lease fee.

2022 Proposed Warrant Articles

Police Cruiser:

Why looking to purchase a truck vs an SUV similar to the current cruiser?

Can any of the equipment in the current cruiser be reused for the new vehicle?

- The Selectboard will review with these concerns with Chief Bachus

Will the truck qualify for reimbursement from the Police Cruiser CRF?

Will the radar and radio qualify for reimbursement from the Police Software/Major Equipment CRF?

- The Trustee of the Trust Funds will be asked to clarify these concerns

Establish a Re-evaluation Capitol Reserve Fund

How does the costs of the previous assessor compare to our current costs, including this funding for the CRF?

- The previous assessor, Steve Allen, billed the town a flat annual fee that included the cost for the assessing

- The current assessor invoices the Town on an hourly basis for assessing, pick-ups and the cyclical data review with an estimate for 2022 of \$14,700. There is a separate contact for the re-valuation service and he's suggesting adding funds into a CRF of \$7,000 per year vs paying the total re-valuation contract in full.
- The Selectboard will discuss the re-valuation contract in greater detail with the assessor at their 11/24/21 board meeting

Highway Truck:

The 2013 International has relatively low mileage, and relatively low maintenance in 2021 – why are we looking to replace this now?

- Miles on a highway truck don't reflect the wear and tear of these trucks due to regular use

Why a 10-wheeler – what impact will it have on our roads – can it access the smaller roads?

What is the turning radius, and will it fit into the garage?

- The 10-wheeler can transport material to roads saving on mileage
- The truck will fit into the garage and can access the smaller roads in Town of Orford

The new truck approved at the 2021 annual meeting will arrive in 2022, and if we purchase a second truck also in 2022 then the Town will be replacing 2 highway trucks every 7 years during the same year.

- The Selectboard will work on the replacement schedule to see what changes can be made

River Road Paving:

Why were funds used to pave aprons on 5 roads instead of being applied to River Road or paving of another road?

Over several years the Town has approved paving projects and they never seem to happen – what guarantee is there that River Road will be paved if this warrant article passes?

Can the Warrant Article be amended to a one-year warrant article and to remove the language "Or other paving projects" – this would force the paving to occur for River Road and have 1 year to complete.

Electrical System upgrade to the Fire Engine #3:

Does this upgrade include the truck harness?

Is this upgrade to bring the fire engine up to code?

- The Fire Chief will be asked to provide a detail, in writing, to support the need for this upgrade

Cemetery Mower:

The warrant article includes a warranty – can this be removed?

- This language was used the last time a mower was purchased – the Selectboard will ask the Cemetery Commission if this is still needed

Purchase of Property:

What property is the Selectboard looking to purchase and why?

- The property is at the intersection of Route 25A and Townshed road. It would provide additional sand for the Town, and a potential site for a town complex after the sand is removed.

Kling wanted to add an additional warrant article to use funds from the Road Improvement CRF to work on the Archertown Road hill. Adams said the Selectboard would need to review and discuss before this would be added to the list of warrant articles.

Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh