

TOWN OF ORFORD

Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

October 18, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Adams, Kevin Follensbee, Chase Kling

OTHERS PRESENT: Esther Dobbins-Marsh, Jason Bachus

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm

Review Police Department Budget

Bachus presented the 2024 budget for the Police Department. Line items discussed:

- Grant paid Expenses – this new line item reflects grants the PD is expected to receive to reimburse the Town for in the same amount.
- Communication – there will be an increase over 2023 expenses as grant funds covered some expenses in 2023 that will not re-occur in 2024
- Vehicle Maint. & Repairs – even though the department has a new vehicle, in 2024 tire replacement will be needed
- Prosecution – the cost for prosecution is based on a 3-year usage average and is estimated to increase between 1% and 3%. Currently Bachus has budgeted for the higher percentage increase, and will adjust if necessary.

Review Police Department Warrant Articles

- Bachus discussed the possibility of asking for funding to install a cruiser camera, but will only do so if the State Highway Safety grant will cover 100% of the cost.

The Selectboard asked about a radio for the old Explorer currently being used by the Highway Department. Bachus said the old radio could be re-installed for \$300-\$400. Hand-held radios would need to be purchased.

Review Administration Budgets

Dobbins-Marsh reviewed the following Administrative budgets with the Selectboard:

- Executive – Most of the line items are level funded, with the exception of postage, which was increased to \$2,200
- Town Meeting – again the postage line item to mail the annual reports was increased to \$500 (based on current postal rates for bulk mailings)
- Information Technology – the Town is waiting for the 2024 budget from our IT provider. The Selectboard discussed if the cost for Internet would change if the Town moves to NH Broadband. Dobbins-Marsh will check on the rates and timeline to install.
- Auditor – this expense is under contract and is level funded
- Revaluation of Property – the assessing rate increased by the COLA of 3.2% per the existing contract.
- Legal Expense – Legal Fees were increased to \$20,000 and \$10,000 for Right to Know requests

- Insurance (not otherwise allocated) – Workers Compensation and Property/Casualty insurance both increased over 2023 by \$1,911 and \$1,931 respectively
- Advertising and Regional Associations – the fee to UV Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission increased by 5%. Kling asked what services the Town receives from these dues. Dobbins-Marsh will research.
- Solid Waste – Disposal of Rubbish is under contract and remains the same as 2023. The Town has not received the cost for the Household Hazardous Waste cost yet.
- Land Closure – there will be no expense in 2024 (testing done bi-annually)

Review of Salaries & Benefits

- Salaries – for budget purposes, the Selectboard agreed to use the COLA increase of 3.2%
- Benefits – the Health Insurance premiums increased by 15.6% Dobbins-Marsh has requested quotes from other insurance agencies. For budgeting, the Selectboard agreed to keep the employee contribution at 11%

Review Warrant Articles

- Charitable Contributions – The requests are up \$509 over 2023. The Selectboard will review in greater detail at a future budget meeting
- Capital Reserve Funding – The Selectboard will work with Bob Palikfa regarding funding to the Vehicle & Equipment related accounts at a future budget meeting.
- Archertown Road Flat – Phase II of the Archertown Road project will be added as a Warrant Article. The Board is waiting from an estimate from Engineer Darrow.
- Paving – The Road Advisory Committee will be asked to look into other roads for paving in 2024
- Mousley Brook Culvert – Engineer Darrow is working on an estimate to remove the culvert and install a bridge at this location.

Update on Highway Projects

- Clough Brook – The header has been poured. Kling asked the other board members to review the design as there was a question regarding the wing walls. As the plan doesn't call for wing walls, the Board agreed to use erosion stone under the pipe and on both sides of the pipe with the waste blocks reinstalled on top of the erosion stone.
- Archertown Road Hill – Bill Wilson has agreed to construct the stone headers needed in a few locations, with one pre-cast headwall to be returned. Reclaiming is on schedule for the week of 10/23. Regarding the shim coating, due to timing most likely only one of the sections will be completed this year, which will most likely be the section from the start of the project, down the hill towards the bridge.
- Highway Trucks – the new 6-wheeler will be sent out to have outfitted. The Highway department will review the new 10-wheeler against the specs before it's taken to have the plow package installed.
 - At the October 25th Selectboard meeting, the board will discuss what to do with the 2008 and 2013 International trucks (sell or trade).
- Explorer – the Cemetery Commission asked about using the Explorer (vs the F-550) to haul their mower to the East Cemetery and Dame Hill Cemetery. If this is acceptable, the Cemetery Commission would like a hitch installed to connect to their trailer. The estimate received is just under \$700. This will be further discussed when the Selectboard reviews the Cemetery budget for 2024

- Prettyman Road – the water is up in the pond and close to the road due to beaver activity. The Highway Department will ask for permission to enter private property to take care of the issue.

Adjourn

Motion made by Follensbee, seconded by Adams to adjourn the meeting. Motion Passed 3/0.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Esther Dobbins-Marsh