

01/04/21 Budget Committee

Committee Members: Ben Kilanski, James Rokes JR, Brenden Hubbard, Nate Holmy, Jason Spaulding
Also in Attendance: Karey Miner, Theresa Sepe, Lindseigh Picard, David Olmstead, Adam Parker, Felicia Olmstead

Meeting is brought to order at 6:00 PM.

Ben motions to approve the minutes from December 13th, JR seconds, motion carries 5-0.

JR motions to recommend the Assessing & Revaluation capital reserve for \$16,522. Ben seconds, budget committee recommends 5-0.

JR motions to recommend the Town Owned Building Upgrades capital reserve for \$10,000, Ben seconds, budget committee recommends 5-0.

Ben explains the purpose of the Bridge Reconstruction Capital Reserve. Ben motions to recommend this warrant article for \$5,000 JR seconds. Motion fails 3-2, budget committee does not recommend this article.

JR questions the difference in the written and numerical amounts on the requested Highway Equipment Capital Reserve, it is explained this is a typo, the amount is \$30,000. JR motions to recommend, Ben seconds. Budget Committee recommends this article 5-0 for \$30,000.

Ben explains requested amount for the Ambulance Capital Reserve. The intention is to revisit this article after getting a quote for a new Ambulance. Felicia talks about current quotes, lead times and warranties for new Ambulances. Discussion ensues about how long the wait time is for a new Ambulance and that money allocated during a fiscal year needs to be used in full during that year. Nate motions to table recommending this article, JR seconds. Motion carries 5-0.

Ben motions to recommend \$50,000 for the Fire Equipment Capital Reserve. Nate seconds, budget committee recommends 5-0.

Ben motions to recommend \$13,000 for the Police Cruiser Capital Reserve. Nate seconds, budget committee recommends 4-1.

Ben motions, JR seconds to recommend \$3500 for the Computer Capital Reserve. Nate asks what computers this covers, Ben and Karey explain this can cover all town owned computers. Karey comments that the fire station server may need to be replaced at around \$24,000. Ben retracts his motion. Ben motions to table this article, Nate seconds. Motion to table carries 5-0.

JR motions to recommend \$82,000 for the Culvert Repair Capital Reserve. Ben seconds. Discussion ensues what we do during an emergency. Ben explains we make temporary repairs then engineer a permanent fix. Motion passes 5-0 to recommend this warrant.

Jason motions to not recommend \$10,000 for the Ashuelot rail trail, JR seconds. Brenden asks Jason and JR their reasoning. Jason comments he doesn't feel this is a necessity. JR comments he doesn't believe it's the town's responsibility to maintain the state ROW. Ben comments the town has been participating in upkeep of the trail for tourism. Nate asks how Snowmobile registrations play a role.

JR explains if you join a snowmobile club some money goes to the state and some the club keeps for maintenance. Motion passes 4-1 to not recommend this article.

JR motions to not recommend \$10,000 for the Town Beach Capital Reserve, Jason seconds. Ben explains it will cost about \$160,000 to make the beach ADA compliant. JR asks if this is a requirement. Ben explains no however most other towns have made their beaches compliant. Motion carries 3-2 to not recommend this article.

Ben motions to recommend \$5000 to the Electronic Balloting device capital reserve, Nate seconds. Ben advises we should start saving now. Motion carries 4-1 to recommend this article.

JR asks who owns the Forest Lake Dam. Karey explains the Lake Association. Ben explains the Lake Association is raising a lot of funds for this. Discussion ensues about who controls the Dam, the state monitors and controls it. Ben motions to recommend \$25,000 for this capital reserve, Nate seconds. Motion carries 3-2 to recommend.

Discussion of the Ambulance Lease Warrant Article is tabled, waiting for further information.

Theresa raises a point of order, recommending the budget committee does not vote on articles that don't have a budgetary number associated with it.

Ben motions to recommend \$310,379 for the water department, Nate seconds for discussion. Motion carries 5-0 to recommend \$310,379 for operations at the water department.

Ben motions to approve \$407,734 for operations of the sewer department, JR seconds. Motion carries 5-0 to recommend \$407,734.

Jason questions who pays the remainder of the 2.7 million broadband note if the provider defaults. Brenden says it falls on taxpayers. JR says in his opinion the provider would already be doing this if it was profitable. Lindseigh explains there is no up front fee. Karey and Ben explain this is grant supported so the provider can't get the bond. Brenden says like the Ambulance if the money is budgeted for fiscal year 22-23 it needs to be used in this year. JR motions to not recommend, Jason seconds. Motion fails 3-2, Budget committee does recommend 2,700,000 for broadband.

Ben discusses that our current sludge drying equipment at the sewer plant is inadequate. Nate asks if we could make some revenue from taking in and treating other towns/ companies sludge. Ben says yes. JR asks if we currently partially dry it then truck it. Ben answers yes. Brenden asks when will we be forced to make these upgrades. Ben explains they are not sure but it will be within the next few years. Brenden and JR discuss the interest and length of the bond. Ben motions to approve 4,700,000 for the Biosolids Improvements, Jason seconds. Jr questions the amount of information we currently have on this subject including the bond length and interest rate. Motion carries 4-1 to recommend 4,700,000 for the Biosolids and Improvements for the wastewater Treatment Plant.

JR motions to revisit the Executive Budget, Nate seconds, motion carries 5-0. JR motions to adjust the selectboard stipend (01-4130-1-100) to \$0 which reduces this budget by \$10,000 to \$69,503, Ben seconds. Motion carries 5-0, the Executive budget is now recommended at \$69,503.

Brenden calls for 15 minutes of Public Comment.

Theresa asks if the budget committee has come up with a final bottom line budget. Brenden says the overview sheet has not been completely updated. Jason reviews the minutes from previous meetings and says the budget committees recommended budget is 3,871,009.

David Olmstead raises concern over his property values if the dam is rebuilt. He also says the Lake Association has not yet contacted him about the project. Brenden thanks him for discussing this and advises him to bring this topic up at the next selectboard meeting.

JR motions to adjourn, Ben seconds. Motion carries 5-0 at 7:19PM.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Ben" followed by a stylized surname.

1/12/22