

Budget Committee
December 8th, 2020
Meeting Minutes

Present:

Chair Charles Therriault, Walter Waring, Janet Cavanagh, Sue Sodano, and Select Board Representative Les Dion (remote).

Absent:

Janet Cavanagh and Vice Chair Joe Caristi.

Others Present:

Nik Coates, Town Administrator (remote), Don Milbrand, CIP Representative (remote) and Bob Blanchette, Finance/Human Resources Director (remote)

Call to Order:

Mr. Therriault called the meeting to order at 6:04pm.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

CIP Committee Presentation

Mr. Milbrand stated that CIP is a long-term running subcommittee of the Planning Board. The purpose of the subcommittee is to make recommendations on capital items and spreading out the purchasing to not see tax rate increases. Mr. Therriault questioned the fund balance of \$50,000 for the Police Department. Mr. Milbrand stated that the cruiser has not been purchased yet. Mr. Coates clarified that the order for the cruiser has been placed but factories have been shut down and cruisers burnt from riots down west are to be priority first for replacement. Mr. Therriault asked how long vehicles last and how much mileage is on them before selling them. Mr. Milbrand stated they last six years and typically at 200,000 miles and receive around \$150 once retired. Mrs. Sodano asked if Cruiser 8 was a 2004. Mr. Milbrand stated that it is, and that cruiser is used for drug confiscations. Currently, there are ten full time officers, six cruisers in operation, and the Chief and Canine Officer have their own vehicles.

Mr. Milbrand discussed the Public Works and the current spending items. The budget includes the purchase of a baylor for cardboard and a place to house it along with other equipment. This will generate various revenue rather than tax dollars. The shed has been a long-time project placed into the budget by the Select Board. Mr. Waring asked if the shed would save the town any money. Mr. Milbrand was not sure of figures as Mr. Bucklin handles all the numbers. Mr. Milbrand also stated that the shed would hold more, therefor discounts in buying bulk would apply rather than purchasing small loads of salt and sand for higher prices. The salt and sand are affected by weather and where there is a tarp covering the current space for both but has open gaps, the salt and sand are being exposed to different weather climates. Mr. Therriault and Mr. Waring asked Mr. Coates and Mr. Milbrand if the budgeted \$300,000 was higher or lower from past times or was it for 2020. Mr. Coates stated it was \$460,000 for scheduled road repairs but during the Select Board meeting last week there was a trade agreement made with Mr. Bucklin. The pavement figures needed to decrease, and the salt and sand shed would be added into the budget. Mr. Milbrand stated Mr. Bucklin would be the best person to answer the specific budget figure questions.

Mr. Milbrand spoke on the town buildings budget, which includes capital reserves that are planned to be turned into Warrant Articles. The elevator should be built in early 2021. Mrs. Sodano asked why the need for an elevator, with the understanding the building already had one. Mr. Therriault explained that there is an elevator shaft but was never finished. By building standards, there needs to be a working elevator.

Mr. Waring asked about the public safety building and if it was truly pushed through to the budget. Mr. Waring stated that it may not be beneficial to add the public safety in as there is a second wave of COVID suspected to come through and tax rates are in the highest half of the state with medium income coming in. He also stated that he supported the new town hall building and the library but does not support this. Mr. Waring asked Mr. Coates how long it took for Bristol to come back from the market crash in 2008; the response being two to three years. Mrs. Sodano stated that the budget is challenging but looking at wants versus needs and asking the departments these questions will help to determine a stable budget. Mr. Therriault discussed that voters are concerned about the pandemic and will be looking to the committee to determine how the money will be spent appropriately without tax increases. Mr. Milbrand discussed the Kelly Park Improvements, stating \$20,000 is requested. Mr. Therriault asked if it was the same as last year; Mr. Milbrand answered yes. The debt services were broken down, stating the last payment for the library will be made soon and that will fall off. The Offset Revenues plays into the Select Board's decision making and creating Warrant Articles. Mr. Milbrand was tasked with analyzing small capital reserves to consolidate.

Select Board Budget Presentation

Mr. Therriault asked Ms. Dion if she could discuss the changes made by the Select Board compared to the original recommendations made by the Department Heads. Ms. Dion stated that budget line #4152-120- Administrative Assistant for Mrs. Goodwin in the Land Use Office will be split between 25 hours a week in Property Appraisal and have four hours at the Highway Department as recommended by the Select Board. An additional \$10,000 was added to line #42120-810 New Equipment for a possible server replacement. The additional money is balanced out by other deductions in other budget lines of the Police Department. Line #4311 Highway was decreased by \$15,949 and line #4312 Highway Projects added #4312-394 Salt and Sand Shed for \$150,000 as paving was decreased in order to make room for the project. Ms. Dion discussed the \$20,000 budget for Water and Sewer reimbursements from 2019 and 2020.

Mr. Therriault asked Mr. Coates if the Planning Technician position was advertised yet. Mr. Coates stated that the job description and advertisement are completed but an add has not been placed yet. There is no authorization on the position until town meeting as it is a new budget line and needs to be approved. Mrs. Sodano asked what the difference was between a Planning Technician and a Planner. Mr. Coates stated that a Planning Tech processes applications and sends them to the Planning Board. A Planner processes application but also plans long range and writes up Master Plans, working alongside CIP and the Economic Development Committee.

Review and Approval of Minutes:

Motion by roll call vote to amend December 8th minutes by Mrs. Sodano, seconded by Mr. Waring. Motion approved 4-0-0.

Correspondence:

None

Member Comments:

None

Select Board/Staff Comments:

None

Adjournment:

Motion by roll call vote to adjourn meeting at 7:24pm made by Mrs. Sodano, seconded by Mr. Waring.
Motion passed 4-0-0.

Next Meeting:

December 15th, 2020 at 6pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Shannon Wharton