

Budget Committee
December 19, 2023
Meeting Minutes

Present: Chair Paul Regan, Vice Chair Sue Sodano, Walter Waring, Janet Cavanagh, Charlie Therriault, Daniel Kenney, and Les Dion, Select Board Representative.

Others Present:

Christina Goodwin, Town Administrator, Richard LaFlamme, Cemetery Trustee Chair, Raymah Simpson, Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Cheryl Herbert, Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Patty Hayward, Library Director, Kathleen Haskell, Library Board of Trustees Treasurer, Karen Boyd, Library Board of Trustees Chair, Sue Nieman, Library Board of Trustees Secretary, Lucile Keegan, Dolly Prive, Anita Avery, and Nancy Dowey, members of the Library Board of Trustees, and Shaun Lagueux, Select Board Chair.

Call to Order:

Mr. Regan called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Mrs. Hayward led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

New Business:

Review & Approve – Budget Sections:

#4195 Cemeteries

Motion to move the bottom line of #4195 Cemeteries in the amount of \$1,200 by Mr. Regan, second by Mr. Waring. Mr. LaFlamme stated the Cemetery Trustees encumbered funds from last year, have restored two gravestones in Keyser Cemetery, and have a grave restoration workshop scheduled for May. The Cemetery Trustees support and maintain Worthen, Heath, Sanborn, Keyser, and both Sleeper cemeteries. Motion to amend line #650 Town Cemeteries Appropriation to an amount of \$750 by Mr. Waring, second by Mr. Regan. Motion passed, 6-0-1. Motion to move the bottom line of #4195 Cemeteries in the amended amount of \$750 passed, 7-0.

#4140 Election, Registration, and Vital Statistics

Motion to move the bottom line of #4140 Election, Registration, and Vital Statistics in the amount of \$208,599.57 by Mr. Regan, second by Mr. Kenney. Motion to amend line #120 Town Clerk Shared Assistant from \$17,586.40 to an amount of \$13,586.40 by Mr. Regan, second by Ms. Dion. Ms. Simpson stated the office is staffed by herself and one other full-time employee with the hope of filling the open part-time position later next year. Motion passed, 7-0. The Committee discussed the vendor and type of counting machine that would be purchased. It was noted that if a new counting machine becomes available, and the state gives permission, the town will be purchasing one to replace their current one which is discontinued. Motion to move the bottom line of #4140 Election, Registration, and Vital Statistics in the amended amount of \$204,599.57 passed, 7-0.

#4550 Library

Motion to move the bottom line of #4550 Library in the amount of \$264,838.46 by Mr. Regan, second by Mrs. Sodano. Mr. Kenney asked Mrs. Hayward about the increase of line #342 Library Computer Support and if it was underspent for 2023. The budget line will be corrected and relayed back to the committee. Motion to amend line #674 Library Programs to an amount of \$1,500 by Mr. Kenney, second by Mr. Therriault. Motion passed, 7-0. Motion to amend line #810 Library New Equipment to an amount of \$1,000 by Mr. Regan, second by Mrs. Cavanagh. Motion passed, 7-0. Motion to amend line #560 Meetings/Memberships/Trainings to an amount of \$578 by Mr. Therriault, second by Mr. Regan. Motion passed, 7-0. Motion to amend line #240 Library Professional Development to an amount of \$500 by Mr. Therriault, second by Mr. Kenney. Motion passed, 7-0. Motion to amend line #673 Library Passes to an amount of \$0 by Mr. Regan, second by Ms. Dion. Motion passed, 7-0. Motion to amend line #673 Library Passes to an amount of \$1 by Mr. Waring, second by Mrs. Cavanagh. Motion passed, 6-1. Motion to amend line #410 Library Electricity to the amount of \$2,000 by Mr. Regan, second by Mrs. Sodano. Discussion ensued regarding the motion. Motion passed, 7-0. Line #191 Library Part Time Assistants/Substitutes reflects 2023 increases and #192 reflects 2024 COLA Step increases. Motion to move the bottom line of #4550 Library in the amended amount of \$262,197.46 passed, 7-0.

#4130 Executive

Motion to move the bottom line of #4130 Executive in the amount of \$190,556.03 by Mr. Regan, second by Ms. Dion. Ms. Goodwin noted line #114 Executive Assistant reflects the part time assistant transferred from the Town Clerk's office, line #115 Executive Finance/Executive Assistant was moved to the finance budget, and line #120 Minute Takers was corrected to reflect two part time minute takers for the Budget Committee, Select Board, and other committees as needed. Line #690 Select Board/Town Administrator expenses covers employee recognition gifts and/or the holiday party in December. Line #330 Contracted Services is a placeholder for services rendered by the Interim Town Administrator. Motion to amend line #610 Budget Committee Expenses to an amount of \$400 by Mr. Regan, second by Mr. Waring. Motion passed, 6-0. Motion to move the bottom line of #4130 Executive in the amended amount of \$190,456.03 passed, 6-0.

#4150 Financial Administration

Motion to move the bottom line of #4150 Financial Administration in the amount of \$188,462.06 by Mr. Regan, second by Ms. Dion. Increased lines were to reflect wages and a single annual audit for 2023 or 2024. #395 Contract Services was added to pay for the contract services for payroll and finance until the position is permanently filled along with moving the line for Executive Assistant for Finance/HR from the Executive budget to the Finance budget. Motion to move the bottom line of #4150 Financial Administration in the amount of \$188,462.06 passed, 6-0.

#4153 Legal

Motion to move the bottom line of #4153 Legal in the amount of \$80,000 by Mr. Regan, second by Mrs. Sodano. Ms. Goodwin stated bills will be paid from the 2023 legal budget and is in the process of encumbering \$10,000 from this year's budget to be paid for current professional services rendered as

the hourly rates of both attorneys are increasing. Motion to move the bottom line of #4153 Legal in the amount of \$80,000 passed, 6-0.

#4155 Personnel Administration

Motion to move the bottom line of #4155 Personnel Administration in the amount of \$1,044,480.39 by Mr. Regan, second by Ms. Dion. The budget increased by 10% for line #260 Workers Compensation based on payroll. Discussion followed regarding the wage and merit increases. Motion to move the bottom line of #4155 Personnel Administration in the amount of \$1,044,480.39 passed, 6-0.

#4194 General Government

Motion to move the bottom line of #4194 General Government in the amount of \$436,207 by Mr. Regan, second by Ms. Dion. Ms. Goodwin noted that line #490 Town Clock was added back to the budget after the committee received their documents, but it does not change the bottom line. Line #290 Base Mileage increased to reimburse employees for using personal vehicles for work related transportation. The town hopes to purchase a vehicle later next year, which will be budgeted in line #660 when purchased. Discussion ensued regarding Line #341 Cost of Fiber, which covers 48 lines of fiber attributed to the town. Line #410 Electricity is budgeted for contracts between Constellation and Eversource. Line #815 Media Manager increased as Mr. Overton now manages the Bristol Buzz, the town website, and recordings for Select Board and Budget committees along with other media content. Motion to move the bottom line of #4146 General Government in the amount of \$436,207 passed, 6-0.

#4196 Insurance – Property & Liability

Motion to move the bottom line of #4196 Insurance in the amount of \$70,945.90 by Mr. Regan, second by Mr. Therriault. Line #480 was incorrectly budgeted and now reflects a corrected 9% increase. Motion to move the bottom line of #4196 Insurance in the amount of \$70,945.90 passed, 6-0.

#4521 Beach

Motion to move the bottom line of #4521 Beaches in the amount of \$30,421 by Mr. Regan, second by Mrs. Sodano. Beach Maintenance increased for the new swim line installation contractor quote and an extra water testing kit. Discussion ensued on four different permits for the beaches: standard at \$10 for two vehicles, transferable at \$25 for up to four vehicles, guest at \$50 per week, and trustees at \$10 for one permit or \$100 which allows up to 10 people named as a trustee for town properties. Motion to move the bottom line of #4521 in the amount of \$30,421 passed, 6-0.

#4711 Debt Service Principal L/T Debt

Motion to move the bottom line of #4711 Debt Service in the amount of \$389,329.62, by Mr. Regan, second by Ms. Dion. Half of the debt service is on the new public safety building and the remainder for the sidewalk holder and the sewer project for Central Street and Lake Street. Motion to move the bottom line of #4711 Debt Service in the amount of \$389,329.62 passed, 6-0.

#4721 Interest L/T Debt

Motion to move the bottom line of #4721 Interest in the amount of \$191,380.88 by Mr. Therriault, second by Mr. Kenney. No discussion. Motion to move the bottom line of #191,380.88 in the amount of \$191,380.88 passed, 6-0.

#4723 TAN

Motion to move the bottom line of #4723 TAN in the amount of \$1,500 by Mr. Regan, second by Mr. Waring. Budget has not been spent this year but could be spent in the spring of 2024. Motion to move the bottom line of #4723 TAN in the amount of \$1,500 passed, 6-0.

Review and Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve amended minutes of December 12th meeting by Mr. Regan, second by Mr. Waring. Discussion regarding a member's concern over interpretation of conversation from the minutes with no change to the comments. Motion passed, 5-0-1.

Correspondence:

None

Member/Select Board Comments:

Mr. Regan disclosed to the committee that the deadline for articles placed in the Town Report must be filed with Wendy Smith by Friday, January 12, 2024. Mr. Regan will create a draft report to send to the members prior to the next budget meeting on January 9 to solicit feedback and additions from the committee. Feedback was given on including the Select Board's goals and priorities that were laid out in the budget and how the committee utilized similar practices when reviewing the 2024 budget.

Ms. Goodwin noted that each committee member received a packet before the meeting with revenue details by account that were up to date but the estimated revenues for 2024 were not available. Ms. Goodwin informed the committee the revenue layout was being reformatted and should be completed prior to the public hearing.

Staff Comments:

None

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, January 9, 2024, at 6pm in Town Office Meeting Room A.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn at 9:05pm by Mr. Regan, second by Mr. Waring. Motion passed, 6-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Shannon Wharton