

**Wolfeboro Board of Selectmen  
Public Meeting Minutes  
Budget Meeting  
October 27, 2021**

**Members present:** Chairman Linda Murray, Vice Chairman Dave Senecal, Brad Harriman, Luke Freudenberg and Brian Deshaies.

**Staff present:** Town Manager James Pineo, Finance Director Kathryn Carpentier, Tax Collector Brenda LaPointe, Deputy Tax Collector Kathy Ferland and Recording Secretary Amy Capone Muccio.

Chairman Murray opened the meeting at 6:00 PM.

**Non-Public Session RSA 91-A: 3**

Chairman stated that there is not a need for non-public session.

**Consideration of Minutes**

N/A

**Public Hearing(s)**

N/A

**Public Comment (limited to 3 minutes per person not to exceed 15 minutes)**

None

**Bulk Vote**

N/A

**Board/Committee Appointments**

N/A

**New Business**

***A Discussion: Budget Hearing 2022***

**1. General Government**

***Town Clerk***

Mr. Pineo introduced this budget and noted a 3.8% decrease.

Chairman Murray questioned if this department still has an open position.

Mr. Pineo replied the position has been filled.

Chairman Murray suggested updating that in the budget. She also noted that the election line should reflect four elections per year for this upcoming year.

## **2. Assessing**

Todd Haywood contract assessor was online for any questions or comments regarding the budget.

Mr. Pineo noted this budget is up 2.6%.

Chairman Murray questioned if this includes the contract increase.

Mr. Haywood replied it does.

Chairman Murray questioned the new file cabinet.

Mr. Pineo replied that one file cabinet is broken and needs replacement.

## **3. Tax Collector**

Mr. Pineo stated this budget has an increase of 2.0%.

Chairman Murray questioned if the open position has been filled.

Mr. Pineo replied they plan to post the position soon.

Chairman Murray questioned the increase in part time wages.

Ms. LaPointe addressed the Board and replied as she plans her retirement she will use the extra hours for training. She noted the staff works a 35 hour work week so the hours will not be paid at overtime.

Mr. Pineo noted the department window closes at 4 PM but they still need time to cash out.

Chairman Murray stated the description should reflect what it is being used for to be clear.

Ms. LaPointe stated that line 1-41504-740 machinery & equipment, check scanner can be removed as they purchased this year.

**It was moved by Linda Murray and seconded by Brad Harriman to reduce line 1-41504-740 Machinery & Equipment in the Tax Collectors budget from \$855 to zero. Members voted and being none opposed, the motion passed.**

### ***Capital Outlay-Tax Collector***

Ms. LaPointe summarized that the department is having issues with the hardware for the software used for billing, electric, water/sewer and taxes. She stated the cost of the annual maintenance is increasing and they have begun exploring other options. At this time she plans to transfer the tax billing over to Avitar which is the software already used in the Assessing office and continue to explore other options for the utility billing.

Chairman Murray questioned if this is to change software or purchase a new server.

Ms. LaPointe she said the plan is to have the hardware available as to not lose any service. This request addresses the taxes only at this point.

Mr. Pineo stated the currently software program, Enquesta, is \$44,000 per year and it has been challenging working with this vendor.

Ms. Carpentier stated she has been discussion the issue with the department, Block 5 and the vendor to work out a plan for replacement. They do not have a full plan in place, but need to start somewhere with this ongoing issue. Right now they do know that Avitar is the solution for the tax billing, but the utility billing plan is still unknown.

Ms. LaPointe stated that over the years the department needs have grown such online payment systems etc., which makes a software change difficult and adds to the cost.

Chairman Murray stated that it seems this will be done in phases, so that should be noted in the back up.

Ms. Carpentier stated at this point they were looking for a place holder, and understood if wished to not move forward since they do not have a concrete plan for the whole project.

Mr. Deshaies questioned if they back the system up.

Ms. Carpentier replied yes they do every night.

Chairman Murray questioned how the Board wish to proceed on this.

Mr. Senecal suggested leaving it as a placeholder to get further information, it is something that will have to be done.

Mr. Pineo stated they will continue to work on it with plans to have an updated version at the Budget Committee level.

#### **4. Health Officer**

Mr. Pineo introduced the budget with a 24.1% increase to the Health Officer's stipend. This increase was approved by the Board last year as part of a three year plan to increase the wage. The Health Officer has been essential during the pandemic and provided regular assistance.

Mr. Deshaies questioned if this is how other town's employee health departments operate or is more of a part time position.

Mr. Pineo stated that larger communities have full time departments, but most towns operate similar to Wolfeboro, some have the Fire Chief do it and others hire a per diem person.

#### **5. Welfare**

Mr. Pineo stated introduced this budget with a 1.5% increase.

Chairman Murray questioned based on what has been spent to date, are there enough funds to make it to the end of the year.

Mrs. Capone-Muccio addressed the Board and stated that yes there will be enough funds. She stated the Warmth & More Fund is available with a balance left to offset the anticipated heating requests.

## **6. Debt Service**

Mr. Pineo stated this budget has in increase of 6.3%.

Ms. Carpentier noted that a debt schedule will be provided in the Budget Committee books.

## **7. Insurance**

Mr. Pineo stated this budget is the insurance policies broken out by department with a place holder as we await the new rate.

## **8. Personnel Administration**

Mr. Pineo stated this budget has in increase of 20.8% that includes a place holder as they await this rate as well.

Mr. Freudenberg questioned how often the town shops for health insurance.

Mr. Pineo replied that two years ago they explored a change with another company, but no cost savings to change was deemed at that time. He stated he and Ms. Carpentier have discussed this and plan to explore it in the spring.

## **9. Town Docks**

Mr. Pineo stated this is a new request based out of pilot program Mr. Freudenberg came up with at the Town Docks.

Mr. Freudenberg stated out of discussions that dock space is limited and ensuring that all spaces get used, a pilot program was created. The Town entertained seeking one or two part time people to do this, but did not have any interest. In order to try the pilot, the town opted to use a few public works employees on two weekends at the docks to run this program. The program was a success and well received both by the boaters and by the businesses. He stated it turned out to be beneficial having town staff cover this duty because of the knowledge of the town and ability to interact with the public. He stated that this budget proposal reflects continuing a pilot program next summer to gather more information to see if creating this as a regular summer program would be as viable as they believe it will be.

Chairman Murray stated the owner of Black's Paper Store told her that she received numerous comments with great feedback from the customers on this program. She believes the community recognizes the need for this at the Town Docks, they are very busy.

Mr. Deshaies stated that the employees were offered gratuity that they did not accept, but thought instead maybe they could put up donation boxes and those funds could be used to offset the cost of the program.

## 10. Legal

Mr. Pineo noted this is a change, legal is in its own section with a break out for each department.

Mr. Deshaies questioned if would be more economical to hire our own attorney.

Mr. Pineo replied the counsel the currently uses has 95 attorneys on staff, which provides them with a great depth of professional services.

## 11. Sewer Fund Operating Transfer

Mr. Pineo stated this has a slight reduction this as the RIB site nears its completion, but future potential projects will likely cause it to increase.

Chairman Murray stated this needs to be calculated to the end of the year and adjusted to reflect the actual spent.

## 12. Brewster Building

Ms. Carpentier stated the night the Board was to review this budget, it was missing a page. She summarized the budget is up 18.4%

Chairman Murray questioned the increase in heat and oil is that based on usage.

Mr. Pineo replied it is relative to updates to the heating/cooling system that they have has a lot of issues with. He noted they also plan to get the floor refinished this year.

Chairman Murray replied she thought the floor was a yearly event and asked for them to check on that. She questioned the copier lease increase.

Mr. Pineo replied they leased a new scanner to save full size plans. He noted the planning department is running out of room to store plans in the basement and are currently scanning them all into the system and storing them electronically instead.

Mr. Deshaies questioned if they need the \$1,600 for COVID related items.

Mr. Pineo replied at this point, they probably don't as they were able to get a lot of PPE from the State. He does not see a problem with reducing that.

**It was moved by Linda Murray and seconded by Luke Freudenberq to reduce line 1-41941-880 by \$1,100 down to \$500. Members voted being all in favor, the motion passed.**

## 13. Capital Outlay

Ms. Carpentier stated there is a request for a new phone system for Town Hall, Parks and Recreation and Municipal Electric, which will provide us with an annual costs savings once installed.

Mr. Pineo stated that they have been experiencing a number of outages. The current system is managed by a third party, not our IT provider this will help us have better control over our system.

Chairman Murray suggested based on the number of outages this should be categorized as urgent.

#### 14. Revisit List

Chairman Murray stated they can review some items from the revisit list this evening and do the rest tomorrow night.

- Heritage Commission request for \$17,000 for survey of Historical Buildings will be presented to the Board as a Warrant Article.
- Propane expenditures on multiple accounts is due to change in vendor, some are getting credits for what was in the tank and paid for upon the change to the new vendor, will be off set on the fill of the new tanks.
- Parks and Recreation is updating the revenue sheet for the Budget Committee review.
- Abenaki rug has since been changed to an insurance claim, removing to address this year.
- Libby Museum increases, the Town Manager supports the budget as presented and supports an increase to the Director's salary.

**It was moved by Luke Freudenberg and seconded by Brian Deshaies to make the following increases in the Town Manager budget for an increase in the Supervisory salary (5%) line 1-41302-113 \$4,124, line 01-41302-220 \$114, and line 1-41302-230 \$ 211. Members voted all in favor, the motion passed.**

**It was moved by Linda Murray and seconded by Dave Senecal to make the following increase in the Parks & Recreation Maintenance budget to include the missing length of service stipend (LOSS) line 1-45202-114 \$1,500, line 01-45202-220 \$114, and line 1-45202-230 \$ 211. Members voted all in favor, the motion passed.**

**It was moved by Linda Murray and seconded by Brad Harriman to make the following increases for the Museum Director in the Libby Museum budget for an increase in the Supervisory salary line 1-45891-113 \$1,018, line 01-45891-220 \$78. Members voted all in favor, the motion passed.**

**It was moved by Brad Harriman and seconded by Dave Senecal to make the following decrease in the Beach budget by \$5,000 line 1-45203-710 \$for a shed. Members voted all in favor, the motion passed.**

**It was moved by Luke Freudenberg and seconded by Brad Harriman to make the following decrease in the Finance budget in the amount of \$2,800 line 1-41501-434. Members voted all in favor, the motion passed.**

#### 15. Non Union employee wage increase

Mr. Pineo stated that Board was provide with a packet of information from him last week outlining a summary of what other communities are and some options for the Board to choose from. The Police Union will received a 3.5% plus a ½% for COLA total a 4% raise, Social Security is providing a 539% increase and the AFSCME Union is in negotiations. He stated this group of staff performed above and beyond working through the pandemic, therefor he is recommending 4% as this group of employees (non-union) has not seen an annual increase in over 5 years above 2%.

Mr. Senecal stated he agrees with this recommendation over the years the unions have received higher increases that this group of employees. He stated we have a good group and we need to keep them.

Mr. Deshaies questioned why he chose the towns he used for information.

Mr. Pineo replied, because those are the towns that responded.

Mr. Freudenberg stated he agrees with this recommendation of 4% or higher, he feels this is well deserved to the staff.

Chairman Murray agreed, due to the cost of inflation and this group of staff has not seen a substantial increase in quite some time. It's time to tell them how good of a job they have done.

**It was moved by Dave Senecal and seconded by Brian Deshaies to approve a 4% increase for 2022 to the non-union staff as presented by the Town Manager. Members voted being all in favor, the motion passed.**

Chairman Murray stated that they approved a 5% increase to the Town Manager in an effort to keep that separation from the department heads catching up, she questioned if they should change that to 6%.

Mr. Pineo replied he appreciates that sentiment, but he agreed to the 5% and is okay with that.

Mr. Harriman stated that they did discuss trying to keep that separation.

Mr. Freudenberg agreed, it was the intent of the 5%.

Mr. Deshaies suggested 5.5%.

Chairman Murray stated she feels strongly in the additional 1%, he does an excellent job and important to keep that intent.

**It was moved by Brad Harriman and seconded by Linda Murray to approve an additional 1% increase for the Town Manager. Members voted being all in favor, the motion passed.**

Chairman Murray stated tomorrow they will revisit a few more lines with the intent to have a budget number to vote on at the Boards Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

### **Other Business**

Chairman Murray stated she would be speaking on behalf of the Board at Cindy Scott, the Director of the Library's, Retirement Celebration, Nov. 2<sup>st</sup> at 4 PM, thanking her for her 20 years of service to the Town of Wolfeboro.

### **Committee Reports**

None

### **Town Manager's Report**

None

### **Questions from the Press**

None

**Public Input**  
**(Limited to 3 minutes per resident and not to exceed 15 minutes in total)**

None

Being no other business before the Board, Chairman Murray entertained a motion to adjourn.

**It was moved by Luke Freudenberg and seconded by Brian Deshaies to adjourn at 7:35 PM. Roll call vote; Brian Deshaies-yes, Brad Harriman-yes, Dave Senecal-yes, and Luke Freudenberg-yes. Being none opposed, the motion passed.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Amy Capone Muccio*

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