

**TOWN OF WOLFEBORO
BUDGET COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

December 22, 2020
Great Hall, Wolfeboro Town Hall and Virtual Access

Chairman MacDonald opened the meeting at 6:32 pm.

I. Preamble and Roll Call of Members in Attendance

Good evening and welcome to the December 22, 2020 meeting of the Wolfeboro Budget Committee.

Due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order #2020-04, this Board is authorized to meet electronically. **However, the Committee has jointly decided to proceed with a 'hybrid' meeting for mat allowing for members of the public and Board to attend and participate in the meeting in-person or virtually.**

In accordance with RSA 91-A: 2, III, the Board has 5 members joining the meeting remotely, which a public body has the authorization to allow.

At this time I would like to take a roll-call vote of ALL members present. For those participating virtually, please indicate why your attendance is not reasonably practical and if you have any other individuals present in the room with you.

Budget Committee Members Present (In-person): John MacDonald, Chairman, Matthew Plache, Steve Johnson, Members.

Budget Committee Members Present (Virtual): Bob Tougher, Vice-Chairman (indicated he is at his residence and no one is present), John Burt (indicated he is at his residence and no one is present), Brian Black, (indicated he is at his residence and no one is present), Paul O'Brien, Selectmen's Representative (indicated he is at his residence and no one is present), Linda Murray, BOS Alternate Representative (entered meeting following the Chair's call for attendance).

Votes taken during this meeting will be via roll call vote for ALL members.

In accordance with Emergency Order #12, for members of the public, this is to confirm that we are:

1. Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means through GoToMeeting. All members of the public and Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through the GoToMeeting platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone #+1 (646) 749-3122 followed by the audio access code 918-242-429, or by video following the directions on the Town of Wolfeboro Website posted on the home page under the Virtual Town Meeting Login Information page.
2. Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting; we previously gave notice to the public of how to access the meeting in-person or using GoToMeeting and in, and instructions are provided on the Town of Wolfeboro website at wolfeboroh.us on the Virtual Town Meeting Login Information page.
3. Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access; If anybody has a problem accessing the meeting via phone or computer, please immediately call 603-486-2692 OR email hendrickson.leeann@gmail.com. In the event that the public is unable to access the meeting, we will adjourn the meeting and have it rescheduled at that time.

Member Absent: Bob Loughman, Bob Moholland, Tom Bell, Members (all excused).

Staff Present (In-person): Jim Pineo, Town Manager, Lee Ann Hendrickson, Administrative Secretary.

Staff Present (Virtual): Kathy Carpentier, Finance Director.

II. 2021 Budget

LIBRARY (Capital Outlay)

Website Replacement; \$15,000

Cindy Scott stated the current website is not capable of supporting the new programs; noting the website was due to be upgraded in two years. She stated a donation is expected to be received that will cover the

cost. She stated the \$15,000 includes design, development and building of the website. She stated the Trustees have approved the funding request; noting there will not be an impact to the tax rate.

It was moved by Steve Johnson and seconded by Bob Tougher to approve the funding request for the Library Website Replacement in the amount of \$15,000. Roll Call vote: John MacDonald – yes, Bob Tougher – yes, Steve Johnson – yes, Matt Plache – yes, John Burt – yes, Brian Black – yes. The motion passed (6-0).

Bob Tougher stated at a previous meeting the Budget Committee discussed a discrepancy in salary among Department Heads; noting he had identified three long time serving Department Heads that he feels was lagging behind in salary; Brenda Lapointe, Pat Waterman and Cindy Scott. He stated the Committee made motions to increase the salaries of Brenda Lapointe and Pat Waterman and asked if the Committee could address Cindy Scott's vote.

John MacDonald asked who sets the salary of the Library Director.

Jim Pineo replied the Trustees of the Library.

John MacDonald asked if there is a member of the Trustees present at the meeting – no person responded.

Bob Tougher stated he would include in the motion that the salary increase be pending upon the approval of the Library Trustees. He stated the Town Manager provided a list of all Department Heads and their salaries and upon examining such he observed three Department Heads that had been serving Wolfeboro for a very long time. He stated the Committee approved a 2.5% increase for Brenda Lapointe and a slightly higher increase for Pat Waterman. He stated he feels that Cindy Scott's salary should be increased and hopes that everyone's salary is reviewed in the future so that no one falls behind.

It was moved by Bob Tougher to increase the Library Director's salary 2.5% from \$68,472 to \$70,184 pending approval by the Library Board of Trustees. John Burt seconded the motion.

Discussion of the motion:

Steve Johnson stated that while Bob Tougher's motion is to be applauded that he would rather wait until the Committee receives word from the Trustees. He stated he believes the Committee may be usurping the Town Manager's pervue. He stated at this point, he is not in favor of the motion.

Roll Call vote: John MacDonald – yes, Bob Tougher – yes, Steve Johnson – no, Matt Plache – yes, John Burt – yes, Brian Black – yes. The motion passed (5-1).

Bob Tougher stated he would contact the Board of Trustees.

ASSESSING

John MacDonald questioned the fluctuation in hourly wages from 2019 to present.

Jim Pineo stated such is related to a reduction in overtime wages and that the 2020 budget reflects 53 weeks and the 2021 budget reflects 52 weeks and the line represents a single employee under the collective bargaining agreement.

Bob Tougher asked if the cost of the revaluation could be moved out. He stated the BOS submitted a warrant article to pay for the revaluation; noting he believed it was unwise stating that under State law the Town is required to do the revaluation and fund it. He stated if the warrant article fails then the Town is unable to fund the revaluation and is breaking the law. He stated in 2010 and 2015 the funding for the revaluation was in the operating budget and believes that is where the funding for such belongs.

Jim Pineo stated a capital reserve fund will be established in 2022 to address the issue.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Lenore Clark reviewed the activity of the Commission in 2020 and noted an error in line #820 (Professional Development); noting the line was zeroed out and should reflect \$150 (level funded). She requested the reinstatement of the \$150. She reviewed a Powerpoint presentation supporting the \$10,000 funding request for the treatment and eradication of invasive species.

John Burt asked what the funds in Other Property Series is used for.

Lenore Clark replied snowplowing the Bill Rae Conservation Area, mowing of Goodwins Basin property and tree removal on various properties.

John MacDonald asked if the funding request for invasive species is a one-time expense.

Lenore Clark replied no.

John MacDonald asked how much will be spent from start to completion of the project.

Lenore Clark stated that as the sites get under control the labor will be less intensive however, she does not know what the total cost will be.

Steve Johnson asked if the \$10,000 will go to one contractor to address Front Bay Park.

Lenore Clark stated both Front Bay Park and the Towns Garden properties would be addressed.

Steve Johnson agreed that the invasive species is an issue and should be addressed. He questioned the surety of the eradication.

Lenore Clark stated smaller areas can be 100% eradicated however, larger areas have to be continually managed.

Brian Black asked if the invasive species would be chemically treated.

Lenore Clark stated the eradication and management would include a combination of chemical treatment and hand removal process.

Jim Nupp stated the Wolfboro Tuftonboro Land Bank has been appealing for a Town wide approach to the issue and discussed the problem of invasive species at Sewall Woods. He noted that chemical treatment is only one step of the process.

Bob Tougher asked if the invasive species is eradicated at the Towns Garden property would it keep from coming back; noting there are invasive species on abutting properties and questioned whether such would encroach back onto the property.

Lenore Clark stated the arborist recommended the start of an outreach program to receive permission from abutting property owners to extend the chemical treatment over the Towns Garden property onto the abutting properties to address the issue of encroachment. She requested the reinstatement of \$150 to professional development.

Matt Plache asked if other options have been explored; noting he used goats on his property to eradicate Bittersweet. He stated such is an environmentally friendly way to address the situation.

It was moved by Steve Johnson and seconded by Matt Plache to level fund/appropriate \$150 to 01-46110-820 Professional Development. Roll Call vote: John MacDonald – yes, Bob Tougher – yes, Steve Johnson – yes, Matt Plache – yes, John Burt – yes, Brian Black – yes. The motion passed (6-0).

FIRE/RESCUE (Capital Outlay)

Refurbishment of 9-Boat-1; \$35,000

Norman Skantze stated the existing boat is 15 years old; noting that immediate improvements are needed (replacement of twin outboard motors totaling \$34,169).

John MacDonald questioned the use of capital reserve funds.

Jim Pineo stated the funds are earmarked for the purchase of the Ladder truck and the request does not fall under the capital reserve fund. He noted there are not enough funds to even complete the purchase of such. He stated this is the third year the request to refurbish the boat has come before the Committee.

John MacDonald asked if the price includes all controls and shifters.

Norman Skantze replied yes.

John MacDonald asked if the cost is consistent with State bid.

Norm Skantze stated he would pursue such.

Steve Johnson questioned the number of times per year the boat is utilized.

Norman Skantze stated the boat is in the water and available April to December and is used frequently for training purposes.

Steve Johnson confirmed the cost for the motor replacement is \$35,000 and the cost of the refurbishment is \$83,166.

Norman Skantze replied no, the BOS reduced the request from \$83,166 to \$35,000.

Brian Black stated the cost is reasonable.

John MacDonald asked Mr. Black if he has access to the State bid costs.

Brian Black replied no.

Jim Pineo stated the Town does and he uses such to retrieve cost comparisons.

The Committee further discussed the cost of the replacement motors and agreed to table the discussion until receipt of firm cost estimates for such. Brian Black volunteered to assist the Fire Chief in retrieving cost estimated.

It was moved by John MacDonald and seconded by Steve Johnson to table further discussion of the Refurbishment of 9-Boat-1 until receipt of firm cost estimates and additional information relative to the motor replacement. Roll Call vote: John MacDonald – yes, Bob Tougher – yes, Steve Johnson – yes, Matt Plache – yes, John Burt – yes, Brian Black – yes. The motion passed (6-0).

Cardiac Defibrillator; \$32,800

Norman Skantze stated the request is to replace existing equipment; noting the equipment is a 12 Lead EKG/Cardiac Monitor that allows personnel to perform diagnostics on patient care.

John MacDonald asked if the equipment currently exists on ambulances.

Norman Skantze replied yes.

John MacDonald asked if the Town's contracted ambulance service has the equipment on their ambulances.

Norman Skantze replied yes.

John MacDonald asked what vehicle currently holds the equipment.

Norman Skantze replied Engine 1; noting such is the first response unit.

Brian Black asked the age of the existing unit.

Norman Skantze replied 5 years; noting the equipment is no longer being supported.

Brian Black questioned the useful life of the equipment.

Norman Skantze replied 5-7 years.

Brian Black questioned the protocol of paramedics and Huggins Hospital.

Norman Skantze stated there are basic and advanced EMT's and Stewart's Ambulance has one paramedic. He stated Huggins Hospital also has a paramedic however, does not respond to all calls. He reviewed the service provided by Huggins Hospital and Stewart's Ambulance.

Steve Johnson asked of the 858 medical rescue calls annually how many times has the current cardiac monitor been used.

Norman Skantze stated

Jim Pineo stated the request is marked as urgent and noted the equipment falls within the standard of care provided to the community. He stated the unit being replaced is closer to fifteen years old.

Steve Johnson stated he feels there is an overlap of responders and therefore, is not in favor of the request.

It was moved by John MacDonald and seconded by Matt Plache to approve the Fire/Rescue Capital Outlay Request for a Cardiac Defibrillator in the amount of \$32,800.

Discussion of the motion:

John MacDonald stated he spoke with the Fire Chief regarding the request; noting the Chief attempted to get State funding for the equipment to offset the cost however, was unable to secure such.

Matt Plache stated the purchase is extremely important to both the residents and guests of the Town.

Brian Black stated Stewart's Ambulance doesn't always responds to calls and an outcome will depend on the first responder.

Roll Call vote: John MacDonald – yes, Bob Tougher – yes, Steve Johnson – no, Matt Plache – yes, John Burt – yes, Brian Black – yes. The motion passed (5-1).

Public Works/Water and Sewer Reorganization (revisit)

Bob Tougher stated the Budget Committee previously held a joint meeting with the BOS regarding the reorganization of the Public Works Department; noting the Committee didn't receive the information upfront and what information was received was within days of the meeting. He reviewed an excel spreadsheet that was provided to the Committee that differentiates the current and proposed Public Works management; noting that when the reorganization is complete the Town will incur an additional \$137,000 of benefits expense added to the budget. He stated he had spoken with four other members of the Committee personally and everyone he spoke with, himself included, feels the format is very good. He stated the members he spoke with and himself are very leery of the open ended salary commitment of Dave Ford going forward at his current salary. He recommended tabling the proposal this year and revisit it next year to work it out in the off season however, would like to wait until all members of the Committee are present to take a vote. He stated he doesn't feel the reorganization as presented to the Committee should move forward.

John MacDonald stated the Committee should review the proposal based on what is right for the Town and not focus on a specific individual. He asked for Mr. Tougher's recommendation as to how to proceed.

Bob Tougher stated he has three ideas; one being to revert to the 2020 budget (level fund similar to a Default Budget). He stated there is a note on the spreadsheet to put forth a warrant article to hire a new Public Works Director for half a year at \$68,670 with only \$9,442 needed from taxation. He asked if there is money right now in the Public Works budget lines for the position.

Jim Pineo replied yes, as currently proposed.

Bob Tougher asked if the Budget Committee decided not to fund the position could the budget lines be identified.

Jim Pineo replied yes and noted the following lines are impacted; 01-43110-113 in the amount of \$47,760, 01-43110-230 in the amount of \$3,500, 01-43110-230 in the amount of \$6,433 and 01-41550-210 in the amount of \$12,751 for a total of \$68,445.

Bob Tougher stated a third option is to do nothing.

John MacDonald confirmed there would be two positions being paid out of two different departments.

Jim Pineo stated Mr. Ford's position would be divided among the General Fund, Water Fund and Sewer Fund.

John MacDonald asked why the position is going to be paid out of the General Fund if the position is no longer doing anything with Public Works.

Jim Pineo stated he would continue to work with Public Works; noting that any engineering and permitting would still fall under Mr. Ford's pervue. He stated the process of permitting is taking more and more time of Mr. Ford and a lot cannot be done without permitting; noting permitting requires engineering.

John MacDonald questioned the duties of the Assistant Director of the Water Department.

Jim Pineo stated the individual has the required certifications to operate the Town's water and sewer systems at the level they are currently operating at. He stated that person is the only person that is qualified to operate the plant; noting the Town is training other employees.

John MacDonald asked why the Assistant Director is paid out of the General Fund.

Jim Pineo stated that moving forward, he would not be. He stated after six months he transitions to the enterprise fund exclusively; noting the transition will occur on July 1st.

Steve Johnson stated the reorganization reduces the responsibilities of the positions however, the salary remains the same and yet a Public Works Director for Highway is being created. He stated that if nothing is going to change and he is going to get the same salary then it should be left the way it is. He stated that usually when there is a reduction in responsibility there is a reduction in salary; noting he is struggling with such.

Jim Pineo stated that over the 13 years Mr. Ford has been with the Town that his responsibilities have sky rocketed without any relief; noting such is not sustainable. He stated Mr. Ford was hired to do a certain job and that model cannot be maintained; noting such is noted in the Tate and Howard report.

Steve Johnson stated he approves of the reorganization but, not in favor of lesser responsibility.

Jim Pineo stated Mr. Ford has been asked to do more than within his job description and he always does it.

Matt Plache questioned the current organization of the department.

Jim Pineo reviewed the current structure of the department and the proposal; noting 20% of his time is proposed to permitting larger projects (road projects, Route 28 project).

Matt Plache stated it seems that the position is being tailored because of Mr. Ford's expertise.

Jim Pineo stated Mr. Ford's expertise is water, sewer and roads.

Bob Tougher asked the Budget Committee feels that Dave Ford's salary as Director of Public Works is commensurate with a salary should be for a Public Works Director.

John MacDonald asked Mr. Tougher to focus on the position and not the person.

Bob Tougher stated we are creating a situation that could not be good for morale with other Department Heads and the Town Manager who is making less than Dave Ford and has to be addressed.

Jim Pineo stated that Mr. Ford would be making significantly more money than he is with the Town of Wolfboro right now if he were out in the private sector as an engineer. He stated he knew what he signed up for when he came to work at the Town Manager's office and knew what Dave Ford was making for salary when he became Town Manager. He stated for it to be stated there could be some animosity related to that, he feels is respectfully, out of line. He stated the statement regarding morale is a slippery statement.

John MacDonald asked the Budget Committee to focus on the position and asked if there is a motion regarding the new position.

Bob Tougher stated that without a full board he would not do anything.

It was moved by Bob Tougher and seconded by John Burt to table any decision regarding the reorganization of the Public Works Department.

Discussion of the motion:

Brian Black asked if the intent is to table the discussion to another budget season or table the discussion to another meeting during this season.

John MacDonald replied the latter.

Bob Tougher stated the matter could be addressed during the final budget review.

Brian Black stated he is opposed to tabling the discussion for another budget season.

Roll Call vote: John MacDonald – yes, Bob Tougher – yes, Steve Johnson – yes, Matt Plache – yes, John Burt – yes, Brian Black – yes. The motion passed (6-0).

III. **Other Business**

N/A

It was moved by Steve Johnson and seconded by Matt Plache to adjourn the December 22, 2020 Budget Committee meeting. Roll Call vote: John MacDonald – yes, Bob Tougher – yes, Steve Johnson – yes, Matt Plache – yes, John Burt – yes, Brian Black – yes. The motion passed (6-0).

There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lee Ann Hendrickson

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