

Select Board Meeting, Thursday, January 4th, 2024, at 6:00pm
Location: Town Office Meeting Room: 37 High Street Cavendish Vermont

Present: Bob Glidden (Chairman, arrived 6:38), George Timko, Shannon Devereux, Dave Norton, Mike Ripley (via Zoom), Rick Chambers (Town Manager) and Jen Leak (Recording Secretary).

1. Call the meeting to order

George Timko, Acting Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm.

2. Adjust agenda

There were no adjustments.

3. Work on FY25 Budget.

Rick passed out an updated draft of the FY25 budget. He said that he had updated the costs for ballot printing. Rick said that the appropriation figures are still last year's and handed out a list of the appropriation requests received this year. Mike and George suggested level funding the organizations who received appropriations last year. Rick added that he can contact any of the organizations if the Board has questions or would they like to make presentations. Mike added that if the budget is voted from the floor then people could adjust the amounts awarded to each organization.

(Bob arrived at 6:38 pm.)

The Board discussed funding the Moover, which has requested an appropriation but has not been awarded anything for the last several years. Rick said that they have added a stop in Proctorsville. The Board agreed to add an appropriation of \$125 for the Moover and level fund the other organizations. Rick said that he would update the budget to reflect those changes.

Rick said that he has not received a request from the Ludlow Ambulance service yet. He said that the library, historical society and cemetery are level funded. He said that there is a slight increase for recreation department wages.

Rick reviewed the draft budget section by section with the Board.

General Services - Rick pointed out that there is a large increase in recycling tipping and hauling to reflect actual costs over the past several years. He said that he increased the mowing contract because mowing the ball field was included this year. He added that mowing costs may go down depending on how Greven Field is rebuilt.

Garage & Equipment – Rick said that he increased the lines for equipment maintenance/repairs and tires based on actual costs. The Board discussed putting in an order for leasing a new truck. Rick said that there is about a 2 year wait and he will start looking for one if this budget is approved. He said that he would like to increase the capital equipment fund so there will be enough for a new truck lease. Rick said that he added \$7,000 for a blower attachment for the case tractor. He said that it would be used to clear ditches and road sides of leaves and debris, and could be used while the tractor is mowing to keep debris out of the roads.

Rick said that he got a better quote on new radios for the vehicles. He said that Ludlow and Weathersfield lease theirs and they operate via satellite. Rick said the lease is \$35 per radio per month, with an initial installation charge of about \$2000. He said that the first year would cost \$6,200 with a yearly cost thereafter of \$4200. Rick said the service would be much better and he thought it would be an important safety measure to have in place.

Rick said that the summer/winter road salaries include estimated overtime, which have not been fully

expended in past years and could be cut. He said that he would revise those figures.

Rick said that he put an amount in the budget for crushing 10,000 yards of gravel which would be used for building the roads back up to their proper condition. He said that there is not enough material on the roads to grade them properly right now. He added that he thought the Town already has enough gravel to get through next spring's mud season.

The Board discussed adding \$1,000-1,500 for cracking sealing on Tarbell Hill Road.

The Board discussed putting some money into the bridge capital fund, which had about \$1,500 in it at the end of FY22. Rick said that he thought there would be grants available for bridges and there would be time to put money into the fund when a bridge replacement was needed.

The Board asked what the Town Business Miscellaneous expenses were. Rick said that line item was for unbudgeted expenses, and had been used for a dry hydrant installation and for replacing the Proctorsville streetlights.

Financial - Rick said that he will work to collect more delinquent taxes this spring and added that the Town hadn't held any tax sales during the covid pandemic.

Rick said that a single audit will be required next year due to FEMA expenses from the July flooding event.

Rick reviewed an example of the increase in annual property taxes with the proposed 29% increase in the town budget, which would be \$275.74 for a property valued at \$158,100.

Rick said that the regular monthly Select Board meeting will be Monday, January 8th. The Board agreed that the next budget meeting will be Thursday, January 18th at 6:00 pm.

4. Adjourn

George Timko moved/Dave Norton seconded a motion to adjourn at 7:47 pm. All voted in favor.

Minutes Approved: _____

Date: _____