

Appleton Budget Committee March 2, 2022

Meeting held via Zoom

Committee Members present:

Bob Bocko-

Fred Bucklin-

Ed Carroll-

Rebecca Diaz-

Bill Fiegenger-

Mary Kate Moody-

Tim Peabody-

Ken Ward-

Linda Wyler-

Selectboard members:

Peter Becket

Scott Esency

Lori Costigan

Also present:

Prent Marriner-Fire Chief

Marci?

Introductions were made.

Meeting called to order by Bob Bocko at 6:05

Motion to approve 2/9/22 meeting minutes; 2nd

Bob Bocko-Yes

Fred Bucklin-Yes

Ed Carroll-Abs

Rebecca Diaz-Yes

Bill Fiegenger-Abs

Mary Kate Moody-Yes

Tim Peabody-Yes

Ken Ward-Yes

Linda Wyler-Yes

Most recent budget numbers are version 13.

General Gov

Why is line 6 so high? Is there a carryover (c/o) in this line? Explain why Code Enforcement funding is not related to fees associated for permits?

Treasure 6% pay increase.

Town Clerk 3% increase.

Budget has 40 hours to cover overtime in a 35-hour work week for both employees.

Removed Custodian/moved to line 11.

Added bookkeeper 8 hours every two weeks.

CEO Alternate added and increased 6 hours to 8 hours for current CEO. Serves 7 towns. Increase in new buildings in town. Fees for applications/permits go into surplus. Article question to move some surplus items into revenue (general fund). Some permits go to State such as plumbing. How many annual permits issued? Backlog but 8 looked at in past 6 weeks. CEO is paid weekly fee regardless of the hours spent working for the town. Planning Board is asking for time with CEO.

Carryover goes into unexpended funds.

Line 9 increase can it be fuel and gas prices? Break down of building versus utilities requested.

Alarm system increase. Supplies up \$50. Parking lot plowing is an estimate. Mowing cost expected to increase.

Oil and K2 lines have never been fully spent in the past.

Maintenance needed: lights swap to LED, front door gap, fire extinguisher testing, window repairs.

Line 11 office expense is the moving of the custodian from line 6.

Line 13 increase is due Auditor recommendations and legal fees from code violations.

Line 15 Insurance and bonds % increase. MMA is the cause.

Replacement cost of the current building was discussed as a reason to increase insurance. Explained blanket coverage was provided.

Line 23 13.6% total increase. Concerning to B/C member. What is the average increase for this cost area?

Motion to recommend \$ 293,738 2nd

No discussion

Bob Bocko-Yes

Fred Bucklin-Yes

Ed Carroll-Yes

Rebecca Diaz-Yes

Bill Fiegenger-Yes

Mary Kate Moody-Yes

Tim Peabody-Yes

Ken Ward-Yes

Linda Wyler-Yes

Lines 25-28 mentioned. No discussion.

Protection & Safety

Line 33 Labor and training are conservative to meet our needs. Working toward grants to help with this.

Line 34 Need to replace and test hoses.

Line 35 why increase with a Carry Forward (c/f) each year. Painting of the building is the c/f and not done yet. New roof in a few years. Surplus or other funding ideas are welcome. The money c/f was raised several years ago. Bid accepted for painting. Waiting on roofing contract. Using Appleton businesses when possible.

Line 37 Ambulance fees discussed. Select Board and Fire Chief have been working with Union on this number. Union provides service to Washington, Union and Appleton. Original offer included additional staffing at higher training levels. New proposal is current staffing with pay raises. Our % of usage is lower than the other two towns. Liberty Mutual Aid was discussed and NorthEast Ambulance. More information forthcoming. Distance for NorthEast is a concern as response time will be 20-25 minutes.

State EMA regulates maximum response time. Appleton has a few EMTs as first responders. Liberty is not 24 hours a day. Are we required by State law, do we need to contract for an ambulance? What happens if 911 is called without a contract? Prent believes that the call would go to NorthEast and other mutual aid towns will respond as needed. Last year Union responded to 78 calls in Appleton. Is it cost prohibitive to have our own First Responders and not transport? Some towns in Waldo County do this. Shortage of EMT's Statewide. Comment; that 104,000 is 2.7% of our overall budget. Do we put our residents at risk over a few dollars? Another B/C member echoed the statement.

Line 40 last year it was discussed about eliminating this. Fuel for generator. Will need to replace all radios according to Knox Dispatch. Last year there was talk of Jaws of Life. We do have Hydraulic Jaws of Life.

King Grant is spent. Available to reapply in two years. Will apply for this and other grants this year.

Equipment replacement schedule in addition to new fire truck fund? No, we continue to fund the truck annually. We were one year ahead until we bought the tanker. Now we are making payments with line 36. 2001 truck with be the next to be replaced.

ARCP funds have not been spent yet. May be used for broadband. Could these funds be used for line 37, yes according to Select Board.

Ambulance usage rate is so low, why is it? Population versus Washington is explained by nursing homes and major traffic roads. Did Union talk about call out rates versus population? No, they are sticking to population formula. This is an annual contract.

Motion to recommend \$ 265,885 2nd

No discussion

Bob Bocko-Yes

Fred Bucklin Yes

Ed Carroll-Yes

Rebecca Diaz-Yes

Bill Fiegenger-Yes

Mary Kate Moody-Yes

Tim Peabody-Yes

Ken Ward-Yes

Linda Wyler-Yes

Line 46-47 Do donations at the transfer station go to this fund? Yes

Highways & Bridges

Line 59 is the only increase in this cost area. Road contract is up by 33%. This is the end of the three-year contract. Only one bid. \$5,001 per mile. 48 miles of road. We buy sand and salt. Our road commissioner also serves Searsmont and Hope.

Line 60 Paving c/f and LRAP funds. Recent paving is already potholed. What material and why is it not holding up to wear and tear? What is the proposed plan for paving this year? Paving schedule done by the road commissioner. Sennebec road, Peabody, Town Hill and Appleton Ridge all need work.

Sennebec was hot patch is also showing wear and tear in other towns.

What is Road Maintenance versus Road Improvement? Lines 57 vs 58. Storms are washing out road in a single storm. How are we going to improve our roads? Being looked into such as climate change funds. Line 58 will combined with line 57 on next years' budget. Possible Bond in the future to address some of these issues.

Line 59 c/f?

Line 60 c/f? Explained that we do not spend it all each year. Select Board will look into those numbers. We safe for a year or two and before spending.

LRAP is line 65 has no \$ amount. \$47,000 expected.

Motion to recommend \$566,828 2nd

Bob Bocko-Yes

Fred Bucklin-Yes

Ed Carroll-Yes

Rebecca Diaz-Yes

Bill Fiegenger-Yes

Mary Kate Moody-Yes

Tim Peabody-Yes

Ken Ward-Yes

Linda Wyler-Yes

Sanitation

0% increase

Peter Beckett has been working with Tri-County for many years. Surplus used to keep \$ down.

Motion to recommend \$42,200 2nd

Bob Bocko-Yes

Fred Bucklin-Yes

Ed Carroll-Yes

Rebecca Diaz-Yes

Bill Fiegenger-Yes

Mary Kate Moody-Yes

Tim Peabody-Yes

Ken Ward-Yes

Linda Wyler-Yes

Community

Line 77 10 % Still waiting on bids.

Line 78 200% Where is town park? Ness Park on 131, Town Park on river below town office. Getchell land will be added to the list. Undesignated funds will pay for this. Land for Maine's Future is expected to pay 50%. Additional funding sources are being applied to.

Town Forest signs are on trees around town. Either 6 or 8. Many in West Appleton.

Library increase a few years ago.

Motion to recommend \$34,670 2nd

Bob Bocko-Yes

Fred Bucklin-Yes

Ed Carroll-Yes

Rebecca Diaz-Yes

Bill Fiegenger-Yes

Mary Kate Moody-Yes

Tim Peabody-Yes

Ken Ward-Yes

Linda Wyler-Yes

Provider Agencies

Line 83 Still missing two agencies from last year.

Comment made about how the requests are made and how does it fit into their budget?

Were the agencies screened? Not by the B/C

In the past the B/C has discussed line by line versus the group as a whole.

Most agencies send a letter explaining how many people use their services from our town.

Motion to disapprove \$6,394 2nd

No need to tax residents to make charitable contributions.

Bob Bocko-Yes

Fred Bucklin-No

Ed Carroll-No

Rebecca Diaz-Yes

Bill Fiegenger-Yes

Mary Kate Moody-Yes

Tim Peabody-Yes

Ken Ward-No

Linda Wyler-Yes

Capital Projects

Motion to recommend \$0 2nd

Bob Bocko-Yes

Fred Bucklin-Yes

Ed Carroll-Yes

Rebecca Diaz-Yes

Bill Fiegenger-Yes

Mary Kate Moody-Yes

Tim Peabody-Yes

Ken Ward-Yes

Linda Wyler-Yes

Where are the funds in line 87?

112,000 in Capital Reserve need to add 50,000 for lead removal on town office.

Line 92 14.4% increase. This is three items! Ambulance/Building/Salaries

Line 101

Reevaluation of the town will have tax rate going down.

Line 103 for AVS is an estimate because they do not know how much they will get from the State.

Comment that the select board, in the past has recommended \$300,000 from surplus/unassigned funds to offset taxes.

Getchell plus tax burden relief could be from 300,000-500,00 in 22-23. This will impact line 92(total).

Select Board may ask B/C to vote on this at a later date.

Motion to recommend \$1,203,321 for a total budget 2nd

Bob Bocko-Yes

Fred Bucklin-Yes

Ed Carroll-Yes

Rebecca Diaz-Yes

Bill Fiegenger-Yes

Mary Kate Moody-Yes

Tim Peabody-Yes

Ken Ward-Yes

Linda Wyler-Yes

Motion to recommend continuing with a 2% discount for on-time payment of property taxes. 2nd

Comment that this is a benefit to a few residents who pay on time (\$40,000) and some have their bank/mortgage holder paying their property taxes. This is a burden to those who can least afford to pay. Agreed by another b/c member who also has concerns. Discussed annually at town meetings.

Bob Bocko-No

Fred Bucklin-Yes

Ed Carroll-No

Rebecca Diaz-Yes

Bill Fiegenger-Yes

Mary Kate Moody-Yes

Tim Peabody-Yes

Ken Ward-Yes

Linda Wyler-Yes

Next Meeting is to review AVS budget, Wednesday March 9th, 6 pm

Motion to adjourn at 9:12 **all in favor.**

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kate Moody

