

Budget Committee
December 12, 2023
Meeting Minutes

Present: Chair Paul Regan, Walter Waring, Charlie Therriault, Daniel Kenney, and Les Dion, Select Board Representative.

Absent:

Vice Chair Sue Sodano and Janet Cavanagh.

Others Present:

Christina Goodwin, Town Administrator, Don Milbrand, Chair of the CIP Committee, Ben LaRoche, Fire Chief, Kris Bean, Police Chief, and Shaun Lagueux, Select Board Chair

Call to Order:

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

Pledge of Allegiance:

Mr. Milbrand led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

New Business:

CIP Presentation

Mr. Milbrand stated that the Capital Improvements Plan is an informational session which advises and spreads out any capital expenditure over several years. Any capital equipment with 3 years or over life expectancy and over \$10,000 is added to the CIP. The first page is expenditures, leading to the second page of the report for offsetting revenues. The Capital Reserve fund is used to assist with large purchases and is beneficial compared to loans or leases, and with no interest. One large purchase noted is a rubber tire excavator for this year to reduce use of the backhoe, which will need to be replaced soon. An ambulance will also need to be purchased but will be pushed a few years out. Town roads will be reviewed more in detail and a long-term plan of road pavements will be created.

Budget Committee Overall Goals for 2024 Budget

The committee agreed that if there are lines that any member would like to amend or clarify line items, please say something. If an answer cannot be given right away, the specific budget can be readdressed and added to the next meeting's agenda.

Review & Approve – Budget Sections:

#4210 Police Department

Motion to move the bottom line of #4210 Police Department in the amount of \$1,300,745.27 by Mr. Regan, second by Mr. Kenney. Chief Bean noted, in working with the Select Board, signed, and filed paperwork for a federal grant for radar equipment which has been approved and will be receiving the grant. To receive the grant, the equipment cannot be added as a Warrant Article or voted down in any way due to the signed contract. The Town needs to pay for the equipment up front and be reimbursed with the grant which then goes back into the budget line which is currently closed out. Chief Bean also noted he decreased a higher paid officer and a part time position along with the lines for tires to increase salaries, overtime, and uniform lines for employee retention. Budget lines for Body Cams and

Tasers are being used towards the new contract that was signed for 2024. Chief Bean stated that CADY is no longer servicing Bristol and the Police Department is partnering up with the Newfound schools to create their own drug and alcohol educational program and would like to obtain the funding once used for CADY to fund their program. Line #391 PD Training only reflects spending as of October and does not reflect the up-to-date monies paid for mandatory training from the Academy or online. Motion to restore line #891 Grant Related Expenses to an amended amount of \$35,346.50 by Mr. Regan, second by Ms. Dion. Motion passed, 4-1. Motion to move the bottom line of #4210 Police Department in the amended amount of \$1,336,091.77 passed, 4-1.

#4220 Fire Department

Motion to move the bottom line of #4220 Fire Department in the amount of \$1,355.453.04 by Mr. Regan, second by Mr. Kenney. Chief LaRoche stated the biggest increase in budget is Personnel lines, seeing an 8% increase, to continue with employee retention in the competitive workforce. Line #330 Ambulance Billing is an increasing revenue which assists in offsetting expenditures. Lakes Region Dispatch increased the cost of services to reflect a formula change which will help to stabilize the costs over a five-year span. Uncontrollable but valuable lines that have seen an increase are Dispatch, Medical Supplies along with Heath & Electricity lines. Motion to move the bottom line of #4220 Fire Department in the amount of \$1,355,453.04 passed, 4-1.

#4230 Forestry

Motion to move the bottom line of #4230 Forestry in the amount of \$203 by Mr. Therriault, second by Ms. Dion. Chief LaRoche noted the Forestry Truck was sold. Motion passed, 5-0.

#4290 Emergency Management

Motion to move the bottom line of #4290 Emergency Management in the amount of \$1,002 by Mr. Regan, second by Ms. Dion. The Fire Department did receive a matching grant from the State that will not be reflected in the budget until the next budget season. Motion passed, 5-0.

#4445 Welfare – Vendor Payments

Motion to reopen #4445 Welfare-Vendor Payments in the amount of \$28,900 by Mr. Regan, second by Mr. Therriault. Motion to amend line #440 WEL RENT to an amount of \$10,000 by Mr. Therriault, second by Mr. Regan. Discussed followed regarding amendment. Motion passed, 4-1. Motion to move the bottom line of #4445 in the amended amount of \$18,900 passed, 5-0.

#4522 Kelley Park

Motion to reopen #4522 Kelley Park in the amount of \$39,898 by Mr. Regan, second by Mr. Therriault. Motion to amend line #820 Project Master Planning to \$0 by Mr. Therriault, second by Mr. Regan. Ms. Dion stated the plan to build a handicapped accessible pathway to the park requires this funding and would not be able to go forward without the funding. Motion passed, 3-2. Motion to move the bottom line of #4522 Kelley Park in the amended amount of \$19,898 passed, 3-2.

#4583 Patriotic Purposes

Motion to reopen #4583 in the amount of \$29,600 by Mr. Regan, second by Mr. Therriault. Motion to amend line #881 PAT Community Events to an amount of \$12,000 by Mr. Therriault, second by Mr. Regan. Discussion regarding amendment. Motion to rescind amendment by Mr. Therriault, second by Mr. Regan. Line #4583 Patriotic Purposes closed.

#4611 Conservation Commission

Motion to reopen #4611 Conservation Commission in the amount of \$2,400 by Mr. Regan, second by Mr. Therriault. Motion to amend line #560 Scholarship to the amount of \$400 by Mr. Therriault, second by Mr. Regan. Discussed followed regarding details of Scholarship. Motion passed, 4-1. Motion to move the bottom line of #4611 Conservation Commission in the amended amount of \$1,800 passed, 4-1.

Review and Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve amended minutes of November 28th minutes by Mr. Regan, second by Mr. Therriault. Motion passed, 5-0.

Correspondence:

Mr. Regan and the committee discussed member comments that are general versus specific items that members would like to see added to the agenda. Mr. Regan noted going forward, if members have items to add to the agenda for further discussion, please do so at least two days prior to the meeting. The agenda needs to be posted within 24 hours of the meeting date and time by law.

Member/Select Board Comments:

Mr. Regan noted that he feels the line items within each budget section seem reasonable. Mr. Regan, Ms. Dion, and the committee members agree that the Fire and Police Chiefs have done an outstanding job with their budgets and balancing the wage increase with a decrease in other line items.

Ms. Goodwin noted that she will have updated worksheets with up-to-date figures for 2023 budgets.

Mr. Therriault noted that a public comment section should be included in the minutes when the public attends and comments.

Staff Comments:

None

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, December 19, 2023, at 6pm in Town Office Meeting Room A.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn at 8:21pm by Ms. Dion, second by Mr. Therriault. Motion passed, 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Shannon Wharton