

Budget Committee
October 24, 2023
Meeting Minutes

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

Others Present:

Christina Goodwin, Town Administrator, Shaun Lagueux, Select Board Representative, Scott Sanschagrin, Select Board Representative,

Absent:

Janet Cavanagh

Call to Order:

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

Pledge of Allegiance:

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

New Business:

Select Board Presentation of the 2024 Proposed Budget

Mr. Lagueux relayed the Select Board's most important priorities which are reflected in the 2024 Proposed Budget in order: Employee retention, attracting new employees, succession planning, maintaining existing service, and updated plans for road maintenance. Mr. Lagueux noted that throughout each department, wages and salary lines reflected increases for employees to accurately reflect where employees should be on the pay scales. Executive Projects saw changes in their lines as projects were finalized and completed and a discussion will be had regarding new and upcoming projects that fall within high priorities. Under the Town Clerk/Town Tax Collector's budget, there was an increase to reflect the need of more clerks for the four elections, including the new ballot counting machine. Finance Administration budget lines reflect contracting out work as the Town does not have a Finance Director currently. Reval is budgeted to reflect needs in 2025; however, updates will be made throughout the year if possible. Legal Expenses saw a decrease in budget. Under Personnel Admin, the Healthcare line has increased but will be updated when the Town receives the final figures. Mr. Lagueux also noted that in General Government, the Public Safety Building is budgeted for 2024 as Fire and Police Departments should be in the new building as of June 2024. There were increases to both departments to reflect wages and adjustments made. A new 5-year contract for body cams and tasers is reflected in the budget lines. Mr. Lagueux stated the town will save with long-term payments. Mr. Regan would like both Town Departments to come speak regarding the budget breakdowns on the new building and to hear from the Select Board regarding the fate of the former Fire Department Building. The Solid Waste Disposal budget was increased to reflect the filled position of the Full Time Transfer Station Lead Attendant. Animal Control, Kelley Park, and Patriotic budget lines are level funded. Mr. Lagueux and the Budget Committee discussed Health Agencies and the proposed budget of level funding Pemi-Baker and slight increase to Lakes Region VNA's budget. Parks & Rec and the TTCC saw a 6% increase to their budgets along with increases to Library, Conservation Commission, Economic Development Committee, and Water and Sewer.

Agencies:

01-4652-578 Bridge House - \$2,000 - Judy Drake

Ms. Drake, Prevention Outreach, handed committee members Bridge House's annual appeal information for review. Bridge House in Plymouth is currently full due to the housing crisis. They house those who are low income eligible, veterans, and the elderly. Funding for the Bridge House comes from the State, through proceeds of Ladders and Step Ladders Thrift Stores, along with contributions made from towns within Grafton County.

01-4652-580 Day Away – \$1,500 - Sandra Coleman

Sandra Coleman, Director of Day Away, stated the program started in 2013 for caregivers of those with Dementia and Alzheimer's. There are currently three participants in the program, though none from Bristol currently. The program is run by multiple volunteers along with herself, the only paid employee of the program. The caregivers are able to drop off their loved ones for the day and are picked up in the afternoon, giving the caregivers and families respite time. The volunteers work with the participants on local outings, arts and crafts, and other activities. Due to COVID, the program was shut down and struggled to reopen still.

01- 4652-570 Tri-County CAP - Energy Program & Homeless Program - \$6,488 - Jeanne Robilard

Mrs. Robilard, CEO of Tri-County CAP, stated their request is created from a standard formula for all 78 municipalities that they serve. They help with fuel and energy, housing stability services, food distribution, and other services. Tri-County CAP served 189 Bristol residents; 108 for energy assistance and 65 for emergency rental assistance. Mrs. Robilard has seen a large increase in applications for assistance.

Review and Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve amended October 10, 2023 minutes by Mr. Therriault, second by Mr. Waring, 6-0-0. Motion passed.

Correspondence

Mr. Regan stated he received correspondence from Mrs. Cavanagh that she was unable to attend the meeting.

Member/Select Board Comments

None

Staff Comments

None

Next Meeting

Tuesday, November 14 at 6pm in Town Office Meeting Room A.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 8:17pm by Mrs. Sodano, second by Mr. Therriault. Motion passed, 6-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Shannon Wharton