

Budget Committee
February 10th, 2020
Meeting Minutes

Present:

Chair Joe Caristi, Vice Chair Dave Carr, Tom Kaempfer, Walter Waring, Charles Therriault

Others Present:

Bob Blanchette, Finance/Human Resources Director; Chief McIntyre, Bristol Police Department; Raymah Simpson, Town Clerk/Tax Collector; Christina Goodwin, Land Use Manager; Nik Coates, Town Administrator; Chief LaRoche, Bristol Fire Department; and Select Board Representative Les Dion (late).

Absent

Janet Cavanagh

Call to Order:

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

Public Hearing Open/Close

Executive

Sean, a member of the public hearing crowd, inquired on the generalities and changes made to the Executive Budget. Mr. Caristi stated that the two main causes of budget increases for 2020 is due to the increases in wages for cost of living and staffing increases for unusual amount of elections, and for the new spending to approve Warrant Articles from last year.

Property

The Property Budget saw some increases due to change to assessments.

Legal

The question arose if the budget for Legalities was estimated high enough. Mr. Caristi stated that it is hard to narrow down on a year to year basis as unexpected legalities ascend.

Personnel Administration

The budget increased for COLA at 3%.

Planning and Zoning

Administration lines were combined as it was difficult to track their time in each position.

A member of the crowd inquired on a budget line which Mr. Coates stated that there was a one-time cost for the website update with additional information which was beneficial to provide more economic detail and graphics to attract people to Bristol.

Cemeteries

Mr. Caristi stated there was no appropriation for this line.

Police Department

A member in the crowd asked for details of the Dispatch line. Mr. Caristi stated that it is for the secure lines to the State Police; all communication must go through secure and safe lines. There was also another question from the crowd regarding the cost of electricity and heating as the Police Department took over the old Town Office building. Mr. Caristi replied that the figures are estimates as they have only taken over the building recently and will know more in the months to come.

Fire Department

A question arose regarding the Overtime line increasing and what was the reason. Mr. Caristi stated that this budget is typically flat lined, though Chief LaRoche stated that in the ten years he has been with the department, he has seen the hours increase, especially OT for shifts that need to be covered, equaling 276 hours total per full time regular shift employee.

Highway

Mr. Carisi stated that additional funds were added for side walks on Beech St. Mark stated the cost of salt is stable, but the amount of salt used has increased. There was a question regarding what road was being resurfaced and Mark replied, stating Hall Road.

Solid Waste

A crowd member inquired on staffing over at the transfer station. It was stated that an additional person was hired at the transfer station as many employees are part time. Tipping fees were added and are planning for recycling again in the future.

Fire Betterment

Mr. Caristi stated that this was not funded previously. Mr. Therriault added that it was carried as a liability from previous years.

Beaches

Mr. Caristi stated that the beaches bring in additional revenue and there was an increase for employee hours as shifts need to be covered.

Parks

Ms. Dion stated there are three major projects; gravel the road by the park, adding additional space behind the backstop, and getting the grass to grow back.

Library

There was an increase to 4550-191 PT Assistants and a statement of the increase seemed too high. Library Director Brittany Overton stated that the Library Trustees and herself compared their current

wages to the state wages and observed a large gap between the figures. The amount in the budget line is for all part time employees combined, not just for one person.

Patriotic

Ms. Dion stated that this is for community events such as Old Home Day and the Concert Series.

Economic Development

A member of the crowd asked if the Economic Committee was sending out surveys and it was stated that the Planning Board oversaw the surveys, not EDC. Sean had also asked if the EDC had any ongoing or upcoming projects and the response was continuing the Ready Initiative.

Outside Agencies

Mr. Caristi stated that Tri County Cap is broken up into two divisions; Homeless and Energy as they are two different departments under Tri County.

Vote of Revenues

Motion to move bottom line of the 2020 Revenues in the amount of \$2,817,681 by Mr. Therriault, seconded by Mr. Kaempfer. Motion passed 6-0-0.

Vote to Recommend/Not Recommend Warrant Articles

Motion to recommend Article 16 by Petition by Mr. Kaempfer, seconded by Mr. Therriault. Mr. Waring and Mr. Caristi discussed this article needing 3/5 majority to pass but also restricts voters. Motion failed 1-5-0.

Motion to recommend Article 17 by Petition by Ms. Dion, seconded by Therriault. Discussion by Mr. Caristi, stating this Article is advisory only and cannot appeal for five years. Motion failed 0-6-0.

Motion to recommend Article 18 by Mr. Therriault, seconded by Mr. Kaempfer. Motion passed 6-0-0.

Motion to recommend Article 19 by Ms. Dion, seconded by Mr. Carr. Mr. Caristi stated that this is for unexpected costs. Motion passed 6-0-0.

Motion to recommend Article 20 by Mr. Kaempfer, seconded by Ms. Dion. Sean, a member from the public hearing, asked if recommend and passed, would \$100,000 lock the Town into the Public Safety Building Project. Chief McIntyre was present, replying that it only locks us into the preparations of architectural designs and related studies which is the first step of project but not the actual construction or further plans for the building which would be looked at a year or two from now. Motion failed 2-3-1.

Motion to recommend Article 21 by Mr. Waring, seconded by Mr. Kaempfer. Discussion by Chief McIntyre on revenue opportunities and to help offset costs. Motion passed 6-0-0.

Motion to recommend Article 22 by Mr. Therriault, seconded by Mr. Waring. Discussion by Mr. Therriault regarding the reasoning behind needing new Cardiac/Defib Monitors for the Fire Department as the current ones are out of date in relation to no longer being serviced by the manufacturer. Motion passed 6-0-0.

Motion to recommend Article 23 by Mr. Waring, seconded by Ms. Dion. Motion passed 5-0-1.

Motion to recommend Article 24 by Mr. Therriault, seconded by Mr. Kaempfer. Motion passed 4-1-1.

Motion to recommend Article 25 by Mr. Waring, seconded by Ms. Dion. Motion passed 6-0-0.

Motion to recommend Article 26 by Mr. Waring, seconded by Mr. Kaempfer. Motion passed 6-0-0.

Motion to recommend Article 27 by Ms. Dion, seconded by Mr. Kaempfer. Motion passed 6-0-0.

Review and Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve amended minutes from January 27th by Mr. Therriault, seconded by Mr. Waring. Motion passed 6-0-0.

Motion to approve minutes from February 4th by Mr. Kaempfer, seconded by Ms. Dion. Motion passed 6-0-0.

Correspondence:

None

Old Business:

None

Member Comments:

Mr. Caristi stated that out of his four years of serving on the Budget Committee, this was the most respectful and collaborative group to work with. Mr. Waring stated that Mr. Caristi was a very classy Chair and had a lot of respect for him.

Select Board Comments:

Ms. Dion stated that the committee was well run this year.

Staff Comments:

Chief McIntyre of Bristol Police Department stated he was impressed with clear budget guidelines and directions in order to produce a workable budget.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn meeting at 9:06PM made by Mr. Waring, seconded by Mr. Therriault. Motion passed 6-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shannon Wharton