

Town of Newport, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen Minutes of February 10, 2022 Budget Review Meeting
Municipal Building, 15 Sunapee Street, Newport, NH 03773
Remote Access: Zoom.com - Meeting ID: 846 7004 4569 Passcode: 064790
+1 (253) 215-8782 US (audio only, long-distance fees may apply)

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Jeffrey Kessler, Chairman; Barry Connell, Herbert Tellor, Jr.; *via zoom:* John Hooper II, Vice Chairman

SELECTMAN ABSENT: Keith Sayer

STAFF PRESENT: Hunter Rieseberg, Town Manager; Paul Brown, Finance Director; Todd Cartier, Director Public Works Department; Timothy West, Foreman

COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT: none

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Kessler called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

BUDGET REVIEW: Referencing the cover letter on the BOS budget review binders, Town Manager Rieseberg gave a synopsis of the proposed 2022-2023 Town budget. The Town is requesting an additional Warrant Article for a Bond for the Dorr Woolen lagoons (\$75,000). It will fund the engineering analysis of the lagoons that is currently being done. There was a brief discussion about this between Board members and Town Manager Rieseberg as well as a lack of a Bond for the Community Center in his synopsis. A 2% base wage adjustment has been given to all employees across the board. Education and Longevity payments will be distributed across 26 pay periods instead of a large check in November of each year. Town Manager Rieseberg also reviewed the capital improvements that had been accomplished and those yet to be completed. He told the Selectboard that in 2022 the Town has applied for and anticipates receiving \$7 million in grant funding to complete capital projects throughout the Town.

Newport Public Works Department - Mr. Cartier addressed the BOS and stated he believed the consolidation of the Buildings & Grounds Department and the Public Works Department (PWD) has gone well. Town Manager Rieseberg stated combined manpower allows the PWD to share personnel and equipment to do the larger jobs.

District Court - Town Manager Rieseberg and the Board members discussed the following:

- New lease
- Capital Reserve
- Revenues from District Court
- Maintenance of building
 - Electrical issues
 - Heating issues
 - Air Condition issues
 - Infrastructure (roof, etc.)

Buildings and Grounds - Town Manager Rieseberg stated there was not a lot of growth in the Buildings and Grounds Department. Due to reduced tenure of employees, the budget line item reflects lower salaries.

- Property and grounds insurance
- Fuel
- Reduction in municipal electrical bills due to the use of the solar arrays

Cemetery - Town Manager Rieseberg and the Board members discussed the following:

- ❖ Cremation and ‘full burial’ plots
- ❖ Winter burials and possibility of curtailing them
- ❖ Maintenance

Public Works Garage - Town Manager Rieseberg stated there was not a lot of growth in the Public Works Department. Due to reduced tenure of employees, the budget line item reflects lower salaries.

- Board members asked questions on the following:
- New Town wide Radio System
- Low to no maintenance costs? Warranties?
- The cost of fuel oil and gasoline (historical and actual; vendors)

Highway Department:

- Fleet preventative maintenance program
- Small equipment department needs
- Replacement of culverts done as roads are refurbished (75% of Town culverts that have been dug up needed replacing)
- Manhole installation, drainage above ground and preventative measures for flooding
- Progress on acquiring a salt and sand shed
 - Cost of new shed
 - If sand is currently under cover

Mr. West explained shed’s importance for staff safety and product quality and longevity

- Overtime.
- Staffing in PWD
- Conversion to LED lighting
 - LED conversion in buildings: Town Offices
 - Savings

Highway Department - Board members asked questions on the following:

- Sidewalk plow. There was a brief discussion on the sidewalk plow and the ease of clearing the new sidewalks.
- Vehicle replacement
 - B & G have 4 vehicles. Will replace with fewer, more versatile vehicles
 - Plow truck replacement schedule is an 18 year rotation cycle
 - Need body replacement for 2007 dump truck (not in budget; will wait)
 - All vehicles purchased are now computerized, not mechanical
 - \$90,000 in Fund Balance to go towards a vehicle
- State grant funds for PWD vehicles
- Overlay Projects
- Sidewalks (additional replacement is proposed for the 2022-2023 fiscal year)
- Highway Vehicles Repair/Replacement

Bridges - Chandlers Mill Bridge (replacement or become single lane bridge)

- ❖ New guardrails for Corbin Covered Bridge
- ❖ Bridge monitoring for railroad covered bridges.
- ❖ State Bridge Aid Program (cancelled until 2029; will become a competitive process)

Finance Director Brown and Town Manager Rieseberg spoke on the State Bridge Aid Program and how it will not be available until 2029.

Waste Water Treatment Facility - Town Manager Rieseberg stated there was little change in the budget for the Waste Water Treatment Facility.

- There are solar panels installed across the river from the WWTP to provide power
- Upgrades
- Increased size of facility in future

All Selectmen’s questions on upgrades and current status of WWTP were answered by Town Manager Rieseberg or Finance Director Brown

Sewer Services - There was no discussion on this line item

Water Department - There was no discussion on this line item

Town Manager Rieseberg, Finance Director Brown and Mr. Cartier gave additional information on Public Works Department line items as needed.

Mr. Cartier and Mr. West left at 7:40 pm

General Government – **Executive** - Finance Director Brown and Town Manager Rieseberg explained Education and Longevity payments will be distributed across 26 pay periods instead of a large check in November of each year.

Election

➤ The Board questioned the line items for training and salaries. They were told the skeleton crew in the Town Clerk's Department made attending training difficult and were reminded of the additional elections held in 2021.

➤ Town Clerk Department software licensing and contact with state officials

Finance - There was no discussion on Finance.

Revaluation

➤ RVL Assessor

➤ Assessors line item

➤ Contracted Services

Legal Expenses

➤ Legal Fees line item. It is a 'plug' number; the Town can never predict what the expenses will be

TOPAZ - There was no discussion on this department

Insurance Deductible

Advertising/Reg Assn - Municipal association memberships

Health Agencies - Finance Director Brown, Town Manager Rieseberg and the Board members discussed the following:

➤ Sullivan County Nutrition Services-now in the budget

➤ Newport Senior Center-now in the budget

➤ Southwestern Community Services-will continue as Petition Article

➤ VNA NH & VT-will continue as Petition Article.

When polled, the Selectmen concurred to have the requests remain as: Newport Senior Center and Sullivan County Nutrition Services in budget; while Southwestern Community Services and VNA of NH & VT requests will continue as petition articles.

The Board was told that Petition Articles needed to be in by March 8, 2022.

Welfare

➤ Public Welfare

○ Amount distributed

○ Whether the Town directed individuals to other organizations and agencies for assistance

ECON - Need New Economic Development Coordinator; brain stormed position (1/2 school)

Patriotic Purposes - There was no discussion on this item.

Debt Service - 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and Knoll Street Bond payments

Bridge Bond - \$250,000 for refurbish Town Roads; increasing the amount for improving roads

Lease payments for air packs, communication equipment

Capital Outlay - There was no discussion on these line items

Water - There was no discussion on these line items

Sewer Fund - There was no discussion on these line items

Finance Director Brown informed the Board that the next Budget Review meeting will be February 14, 2020: PUBLIC SAFETY.


ACTION ITEMS: **Review and Consider Approval of District Court Lease with the State of New Hampshire** - Town Manager Rieseberg explained the amended lease agreement with the District Court. After a brief discussion on items that delayed the lease and the completion process; Selectman Connell made a motion *to approve the District Court Lease with the State of New Hampshire and to authorize Town Manager Hunter F. Rieseberg to sign all applicable documents pertaining to it.* Selectman Tellor

asked Town Manager about recent expenses on the District Court: one was replacing the roof. He asked if the increased portion of the rent (2%) would cover any future expenses. There was an explanation by Finance Director Brown on the lease revenue and the annual \$10,000 Capital Reserve transfer to cover the maintenance costs. In discussion, the Board agreed to include the dates in the motion.

Selectman Connell made a motion *to approve the District Court Lease with the State of New Hampshire effective February 1, 2022 and ending on January 31, 2025 and to authorize Town Manager Hunter F. Rieseberg to sign all applicable documents pertaining to it.* It was seconded by Selectman Tellor. *The motion passed by roll call vote 4-0-0.*

There being no further business, on a motion by Selectman Connell, seconded by Selectman Tellor; *the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:17 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Stetson, Scribe

The next Budget Review meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for Thursday, February 14, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.: PUBLIC SAFETY

Approved on: February 21, 2022