

Meeting, February 1, 2023

Meeting called to order at: 6:30 pm by John Arico

Attendees:

Bill McKinney
John Arico
Lorri Hayes
Sean Mamone
Sheila Sturm
Howard Brown - Selectboard Representative
Frank Weber
Kim Roberge
Tim Berry
Joan Cleary

Absent:

George Torres- School Board Representative

1. Opening public comment- JA thanks the public for joining us, there were no public comments
2. Review of each department's budget and committee decision to support or not support JA says we will go through each section of the budget that JC provided. Starting at beginning of the budget. TB asked HB if there is a need to increase the legal line item. HB says he expects there to be increased legal costs next year. LH asks JC when she conducts Treasurer duties. JC says during the normal workday. LH says she is receiving a stipend for the duties. KR says there should be a clearly defined job description for all the Selectman's employees because it is difficult to determine if the wages are apples to apples. Since one person in the office works for the planning board as well, it is difficult to match their wage from year to year. Maybe the positions should be combined on one position description. LH asks if the wages for the planning board work are the same as the wages for the selectman's work. JC says the wages are the same. JC says the planning board duties are completed during the workday as well and that she purposely changed the hours for the position to say that the planning board duties will be 7.5 hours per week. KR suggests that the jobs are combined. TB says that is it good to have them separated due to the fact that the planning board secretary may be a different person in the future. LH asks if the planning board duties are a dedicated time in the office. JC says they are not. JC says she estimated the number of planning board hours due to her experience working as the planning board secretary. SM asks if the planning board duties can be done on Friday. JC says that the selectman's office is closed on Friday. SM questioned the efficiency of doing both positions at the same time. LH asks if the wages were the same as the previous planning board secretary and JC says yes. BM believes the budget increase (10%) is the highest he has seen. He suggests that many of the increase costs in the government buildings line items should be moved to the government building reserve fund. KR asks if there is enough in the fund. JC and HB say they will evaluate fund to make that determination. **BM made a motion to move the increases in 419413, 419423, 419433, and 419453 to the Repair and Maintenance of Town Buildings non lapsing fund. The motion passes by acclamation. The total moved will be \$46,000.** Question as to how it will be marked in the budget. KR says that usually there is an asterisk next to the budget items that are funded elsewhere. KR recommends that the practice continue. LH

asks the reason the sergeant is paid only \$5,000 less than the police chief. TB says the sergeant has many more years in the police department than the chief does. TB says the sergeant has worked for Mont Vernon for 8-10 years more than the police chief. KR says the full time and part time special duties line item should be marked so that it is clear this money is reimbursed. JC says that Becci Schwarz is the grant writer for Mont Vernon and she is currently writing a grant for the Fire Department. She says that the grant writer recently wrote a successful grant for the police department. JC says we should forward any grants we see that may apply to Mont Vernon to Becci Schwarz. BM questioned the reason there is no line item for building inspection training. **BM motions to add a building inspection training line item to the budget. KR abstains. Motion carries.** BM recommends that we not support the increase in 431256 Pavement Marking. **BM makes a motion to reduce line item 431256 to \$6500. SS seconds. Motion carries by acclimation.** LH asks the reason the public works overtime budget line item 431213 has increased by \$5,000 when the line item has never been over \$25,000. TB says due to increase in wages and the department is now fully staffed. KR noted that line item 444900 has increased by 10%. TB says it is due to increase in fuel costs. KR asked what line item 444500 Other Vendors of Assistance is? JC explains that it is an end of year contribution to the charitable foundations such as the red cross, the blue bus, and other such charities. KR discusses her concern regarding the increase in the number of hours for the children's library director. KR says the increase in the number is not substantiated. KR says that she has reviewed the information provided by the library trustees and she still believes it is unclear. **KR made a motion to reduce the library wages line item by \$8,043.36 and reduce increase in hours to 29. SM seconded motion.** Motion was discussed. KR says that she doesn't believe the hours have been justified. SS says that the librarians work hard, and we should support their work and pay them for the hours they work. LH says that there is a lot of work done outside their normal hours, the little library tree is an example of work done outside normal hours. Jane King, library trustee, says the preparation time to conduct the children's library duties has to be done outside of the desk hours and there are not enough desk hours to do it. Cindy Raspiller, library trustee, responded that she created the library trustee document responding to KR's concerns and she actually prepared it at first with the consideration that the employees worked 40 hours. She reduced the hours in the document to reflect 35 hours but believes the employees will work well beyond 35 hours. Cindy said they work the number of hours it takes to do the job. Bonnie Angulas, Library Director, responded that the current Children's Library Director works 25 hours. Bonnie also said that it is not a clerical job by which employees can punch in and punch out as necessary. KR says that it would be more palatable to increase the hours if they were also getting rid of one of the other positions. **Voice Vote was taken. Motion fails 1-7. No recommendation. Motion was made to support budget as written with recommendations.** BM says the 10% increase is more than he has seen. He would recommend that we go back through the budget and determine if there are further reductions we can recommend. TB says we are only an advisory committee. SM says that we need to provide advice. **SM makes a motion to reduce line item 431213 DPW overtime by \$2500 to \$27,500. BM seconds motion. Motion passes by acclimation.** TB makes a motion to reduce line item 415310 selectman's legal budget by \$10,000 to \$40,000. **SM seconds motion. Motion passes by acclimation.** SM makes a motion to reduce line item 431254 cold patch by \$500 to \$2,000. **KR seconds motion. Motion passes by acclimation.** SM makes a motion to reduce line item 431257 Calcium Chloride by \$1,400 to \$14,600. **KR seconds motion. Motion passes by acclimation.** It was noted that the total savings would be \$74,400 which reduced the increase to around 8%. **SS made a motion to support the budget with the reductions. TB seconded motion. Motion passes by acclimation.** HB asks the reason the department heads

were not invited to the meeting. JA says he did not invite them by mistake. JC says she publishes the invitation on Facebook. JA asks JC to invite the department heads to the meeting next week.

3. Review and acceptance of minutes from January 18th and January 11th. TB provided one correction to the January 18th minutes. **Minutes accepted by acclamation**
4. Review of action items:
 - JA will ask the library to present the 2022 actual costs- **DONE**
 - JA will ask the selectboard who was the driving force behind the RFP for the road- John Quinlan, **DONE**
0. New business- LH says that Milford also has 100% paid health insurance
0. Closing public comment period- Eileen Neighbor says that the school board will hold its deliberative session next Wednesday and it would be unfair if we held our meeting at the same time. JA says we will hold the meeting beginning at 7 pm.
0. Next meeting: Wednesday, February 8, 2023, at 7 pm
0. Meeting adjournment- 9 pm

Recommendations:

1. Move the increases in 419413, 419423, 419433, and 419453 to the Repair and Maintenance of Town Buildings non lapsing fund.
2. Add a building inspection training line item to the budget.
3. Reduce line item 431256 Paving Marking to \$6500
4. Reduce line item 431213 DPW Overtime by \$2500 to \$27,500
5. Reduce line item 415310 Selectman's legal budget by \$10,000 to \$40,000
6. Reduce line item 431254 Cold Patch by \$500 to \$2,000.
7. Reduce line item 431257 Calcium Chloride by \$1,400 to \$14,600.

Action Items:

1. JC and HB will check the **Repair and Maintenance of Town Buildings non lapsing fund** to determine the amount available.
2. JA will ask the reason we have line item 429003 and 429004
3. JA will ask the Department of Public Works what culvert cleaning is.
4. JC will invite department heads to February 8th meeting.
5. JA will have warrant article on Monday, February 6
6. JA will create a document that outlines the Budget Committee's position in the town report and will request comments.

