

In attendance and participating via GoToMeeting were Catherine Iino, Louis Annino, Jr., Eileen Blewett, Regina Regolo and Bettie Perreault, acting as clerk. Craig Judge logged in just prior to meeting adjournment.

1. Call to Order: First Selectwoman Iino called the meeting to order at 6:08 P.M.
2. Review of 2021-2022 Operating, Capital and MYCIP: First Selectwoman Iino reviewed a variety of items, including as a starting point and not limited to the following:
  - a. The Grand List has increased slightly (0.95%) but has not yet been finalized.
  - b. Abatements associated with the Fire Company are under review. An increase will result in a decrease in tax revenue, depending upon final decisions.
  - c. ADM figures for schools have been finalized and would result in an increased charge to Killingworth of approximately \$728,000, about a one mil increase in the tax rate, if the budget were to remain level, and without any audit adjustment. The RSD 17 2019-2020 audit has not been completed. The proposed Operating Budget remains level, with “no big drama” involved. Items discussed included, among other, the following.
  - d. Since the four AFSCME employees’ contract expires June 30, 2021, with negotiations pending, no proposed changes to AFSCME wages are included.) A 2% increase across the payroll would result in a \$20,000 budget increase. The wages for the three full-time public works employees reflect the 2.25% negotiated increase under their contract with UPSEU.
  - e. COLA for calendar year 2020 was a 1.4% increase.
  - f. Consultant review of the Highway Department is again up for discussion.
  - g. COVID-related expenses have been included as a separate line item.
  - h. Building Official has requested a significant increase based on workload and what other Building Officials are paid. This represents a 15% increase. The Building Official is an independent contractor and does not receive benefits.
  - i. BOS needs to consider a stipend for an Emergency Management Director. Filling the position has been difficult.
  - j. Animal Control funding goes to the Dog Fund. The Animal Control Officer is proposing an expanded operation; this funding would need to be increased if service is expanded.
  - k. The funding for the Fire Department is currently shown at the same level as the 2020-2021 fiscal year since that budget request has not yet been submitted.

As a part of general conversation and discussion, the Board of Finance will be invited to participate in Board of Selectmen meetings going forward to discuss salaries in general, particularly those of elected officials. Topics noted included the following:

- a. An outside consultant for a Needs Assessment for the Highway Department has had a \$20,000 “place holder” allocation included in the budget. Whether this should be a department-specific assessment or a broader assessment may need to be considered.
- b. Holding joint Board of Selectmen/Board of Finance meetings may eliminate the need for agencies to make multiple budget presentations; some agencies may, however, require more detailed review by both Boards.
- c. It was noted that the Highway Department Foreman reports to and is under the administration of the First Selectman, and thus the Highway budget is under the purview of the Board of Selectmen.

- d. Preliminary conversations on departmental changes prior to budget preparation and presentation would be desirable.
- e. The Fire Company is an independent organization that, by Charter, "contracts" with the Town to provide services, while the Highway Department is part of the town itself. Highway Foreman Walt Adametz will be asked to attend the Monday joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen/Board of Finance.
- f. Departments that should be interviewed were noted as being the Highway Department, Fire Department, and the Parmelee Farm.
- g. HK Youth and Family Services has requested a 5.2% increase over last year's budget. However, their budget was reduced last year after COVID struck. The current request is a 2% increase over their original FY21 request.
- h. How to treat COVID-related expenses should be discussed with the Board of Finance.
- i. There is a cap on allowable municipal tax increases established by legislation that must be observed during budget deliberations.

In connection with Capital Expenditures, the following were noted and discussed:

- a. Chip sealing request is significant, primarily because of what was deferred during the preceding fiscal year.
- b. Funding for the Highway Department and Transfer Station has been updated.
- c. Requests for the Fire Department and Park & Recreation have not been updated; requests have not yet been submitted.
- d. Possible triple chip-sealing of North Chestnut and Beckwith roads is not reflected in Capital Expenditure numbers. Iino is preparing a comparison of annual maintenance expenses and resurfacing costs. Consensus of property owners along these scenic roads would need to be secured prior to doing the project.
- e. The Tree Removal Budget has been moved to Capital Expenditures.
- f. Expenses for exterior/outside work on the library are paid for by the Town, which owns the asset; the Library association is responsible for interior items. Information on what the Library endowment fund is used for is not provided.
- g. The capital budget includes revamping of the Town's website, which is recommended to address security concerns, ADA compliance, and to make it more "user friendly." The requested amount potentially can be reduced upon review.
- h. Salary considerations included in the operating budget should be considered as being required in coming years.
- i. Bonding is an option to consider, particularly with a potential one-mil tax increase for the school budget portion of the budget.

At this time no budget request or other information has been received from the Fire Department; figures shown in the current budget presentation are those of the 2020-2021 fiscal year, with many unknown factors to be considered.

Other items that were noted include

- a. The amount of money allocated for equipment and vehicles for the Highway and Fire Departments.
- b. Painting of the Parmelee pavilion needs to be taken out of Capital Expenditures and moved to Operating Expenses.
- c. Long-range plans for capital needs remain to be filled out.
- d. Fire station renovation continues to be deferred and should be addressed seriously by the Board of Fire Commissioners.

- e. Projects that could be bonded rather than phased in through Capital Expenditures should be reviewed.
- f. The hope is to keep growth in operating budget costs within the same level as the growth in the Grand List.
- g. Salary and benefits surveys of various government agencies were discussed.

Collaboration between the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance, with a “meeting of the minds,” will be important going forward. Information to be available for upcoming meetings was reviewed and will be provided.

There being no other business to conduct, First Selectwoman Iino adjourned the meeting at 7:28 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

*Bettie Perreault*

Bettie Perreault  
Acting Clerk