

DRAFT Budget Committee Meeting Minutes- January 11, 2024

Open the Meeting and Roll Call

- Chair Cutting called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Harry Seidel called the Select Board's meeting to order at 7:01 PM.
 - *Present:* Michael Cutting (chair), Harold Blanchette, Richard Bixby, Ray Martin, Robert Blake, James Sherman, Michelle Kendrick, Allan Brown
 - *Also Present:* Harry Seidel, Faith Minton, Georgia Flanders

Operating Budget

- Budget is higher than previous years
- Audit
 - Necessary due to retirement of current tax collector
 - Cost: \$3,000 to \$5,000
 - Tax collector position may be restructured
- Energy Budget
 - Some accounts reduced by 12%
 - Expenses have increased due to new invoices being posted
 - Budget still higher than actual expenditure
- Cushion
 - Building cushioning in throughout the budget vs. Utilizing contingency fund
 - Contingency fund can be no more than 1% of total budget
 - Decreasing budget in favor of increasing contingency?
 - Contingency fund designed to be a last resort
 - Can be risky
 - Revisit idea in 1 year
- Highway budget
 - Underspent for 2023
 - \$42,000 grater payment expected, but this did not occur
 - Diesel line item reduction
 - December bill not yet arrived
 - Initial reduction to \$70,000
 - Board voted to reduce to \$75,000 instead
 - Final line total: \$75,000
- Computers
 - Budget seemingly higher than necessary
 - Budget also accounts for setup, and for time put in by IT professionals

Capital Budget

- Records Preservation
 - Sealing of records room pending
 - Possibility of dry system for fire suppression
 - Line item also includes records inventory in attic
- Police Department Vehicle
- Bridge Block grant
 - No tax impact
- Highway Vehicle
 - Department intends to keep using current truck through springtime
- Highway Block Grant
 - No tax impact
 - Being moved out of general fund
- Transfer Station
 - No concrete plan for new transfer station yet
 - Possible need for a committee
- Fire Department Equipment
- Fire Department Vehicle
 - Reduced from initial amount
- Employee Expendable Trust Fund
 - Article removed by Select Board
 - No longer needed due to change in insurance structure
- Contingency Fund
 - May be raised
- Revaluation
 - Lapse in funding necessitates greater amount asked for in 2024
 - Bill for revaluation due in mid- 2025

Upcoming Meetings:

- January 25: Final review of budget
- February 1: Public Hearing
- February 6: Continuation of Public Hearing
- February 8: Final vote

Harry Seidel made a motion to adjourn the Select Board's meeting. Allan Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed, and the Select Board's meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Ray Martin made a motion to adjourn the Budget Committee's meeting. Harold Blanchette seconded the motion, and the motion passed. The Budget Committee's meeting was adjourned at 8:21 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Georgia Flanders

Zoom Administrator