

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 1, 2018

Presiding: Ed Morgan

Members Present: Paul Donnellan, William Jones, Sue McIntyre, Ed Morgan, Justin Reinhardt

Members Absent: Howard Burnham, Steve McLean

Selectmen Present: Joanne Andrews, Dottie Richard

Guests: Michael Gilpatrick, Code Enforcement Officer; John McIntyre, resident; Judy LePage, Town Clerk / Tax Collector; Robert Richardson, Road Commissioner; Steve Malamute, resident; Steve Richardson, resident;

1. Call to order – count for quorum

The meeting was called to order at 7: 00 p.m.
A quorum was established

2. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes of October 25, 2018

A motion was made by Paul Donnellan to accept the minutes of October 25, 2018, seconded by Bill Jones. Motion passed with all in favor.

4. Review proposed Tax Collector / Town Clerk Budget, and Elections Budget (taken out of order)

Judy LePage, Town Clerk and Tax Collector provided the Committee with a Proposed Budget for 2019 for Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Deputy Town Clerk, Deputy Tax Collector, as well as the Proposed Budget for Elections. The proposed budgets reflect a 3% COLA increase in salaries. The budgets did not reflect any substantial increases.

A motion was made by Paul Donnellan to accept the Town Clerk / Tax Collector Budget of \$55,129.15 for 2019, and to accept the proposed Deputy Town Clerk /Tax Collector Budget of \$32,570.73 for 2019. Motion seconded by Justin Reinhardt. Motion passed with all in favor.

5. Review and Recommendation for Proposed Code Enforcement Budget (taken out of order)

Michael Gilpatrick, Code Enforcement Officer, came forward before the Committee with a proposed 2019 budget for the Code Enforcement Department.

Mike noted that the only significant changes in the proposed budget included an extra five (5) hours for his Secretary which correlates with the proposed purchased of a Community Development and Public Works Software, called “iWor”.

The proposed software would make the Code Enforcement Department “web-based” and would allow for residents to file for building applications online. It additionally would allow Mike to be able to do onsite inspections while having up-to-date information at his disposal, including blueprints, with the use of a tablet. It would provide a great deal of efficiency. The current process involves lots of paperwork, documents, etc., oftentimes copies done in triplicate since copies of documents need to be forwarded to other Town Departments such as the Tax Assessor’s Office. Upon returning from on-site inspections, all paper documents need to be addressed, reviewed, and recorded, etc., which is time-consuming. This software on the other hand, would allow for all of this to be done onsite, in “real-time”. Limerick has many “seasonal residents” with many away from Limerick during week days.

This software would be accessible 24/7. Those who only come to their seasonal home on weekends, would be able to apply for permits while sitting at home and be able to include any necessary attachments such as blueprints. They would not be approved immediately, but Mike would be able to review their application requests and correspond with them. It would significantly streamline the entire process. However, the entry of initial information in the database may take more hours than initially reflected in the proposed Budget. The program is essentially managed by the “iWor” company, it includes a database, has a back-up system, and includes implementation and training. The purchase allows for four (4) licenses. The program would coincide with the Tax Map and Tax Map Lot numbers. Mike added that there is a \$2500 per year management cost / fee for this software. The next proposed Budget for 2020, for instance would reflect that yearly management fee.

In answer to a question about on-line payments, payment cannot be made with this proposed software purchase. However, it is something Mike will be considering for the future if this software proves to be as effective and efficient as he believes it will be.

When it comes to the cost of building permits fees, Limerick is somewhat a little “ahead of the curve”, if compared to a town like Parsonsfield. However, if you compare Limerick with Buxton and Hollis, Limerick does not currently charge any “impact fees” like those towns do. Mike does believe that the permit fees will eventually need to be addressed and updated. It is not clear how much revenue has been received. A “guestimate” of around \$20,000 so far, was stated, however, this does not include certificates of occupancy, or plumbing permits, etc. Mike also stated that all in all, if he had to guess, the Town is about 5% to 8% above where we were at this time last year. Mike would cautiously be willing to state that this program would pay for itself within a 4 to 5-year period.

Paul Donnellan moved to accept the proposed budget of \$64,817 for the Code Enforcement Office for 2019, seconded by Bill Jones. Motion passed with all in favor.

3. Review and Recommendation for Proposed Public Works Tarring and Repair of Highways Budget (taken out of order).

Robert Richardson, Road Commissioner, provided the Board with proposed budgets for both the Public Works Tarring Budget and Repair of Highways Budget for 2019.

The “Repair of Highways” budget will stay the same as last year. However, the proposed “Tarring” budget shows an increase of \$30,000. Mr. Richardson noted that the reason for this is that this year’s lowest bid that had been received on paving was \$13,170. Liquid asphalt prices on are on the increase.

Due to that factor Mr. Richardson is proposing an approximate increase of about \$25,000 more explaining that liquid asphalt costs had taken a jump along with gasoline and diesel that are additionally needed for the operation of equipment. He had to allocate funds from the “Repair of Highways” budget to compensate for those increases this year. It was commented that information found online (reference: the pavementexchange website), predicted in a June 2018 article that mill and pave projects, as well as sealcoating pricing were projected to increase by 10-15%. due to price increases of liquid asphalt.

The “Tarring” budget used to allow for the paving of about three (3) miles per year, when it used to cost about \$37.00 a ton for hot top, today, the cost of hot top is about \$60 or more per ton.

Mr. Richardson explained to the Board the road tarring process. Roads are prepped prior to paving which includes milling and grinding. Paving includes about three (3) inches of hot top. He also noted the importance of drainage which contributes to the “life expectancy” of the road once a road has been upgraded.

This involves keeping road ditches continuously clean and free of debris. If this is not kept up, roads do not drain well and the accumulation of water eventually contributes to quicker road deterioration. However, the the drainage itself must take place at a slow pace as well, otherwise you will get a “road washout”. That’s why the pitch of the road is important. Additional information on the process was provided including the importance of mowing, removal of brush along the roads, etc. One road that is being considered for paving next year is a section of the Foss Road.

Mr. Richardson then moved on to the topic of guardrails and bridges. The Department of Transportation (DOT) is responsible for doing bridge inspections. The Town of Limerick received a copy of the 2017 DOT Bridge Report which identifies deficiencies or preventative maintenance issues that will need to be addressed by the Town. Specifically noted in this report are bridges on Enterprise Road Bridge #1199, the Hosac Stream Bridge #1200, and the Yo-Ho Bridge #5762. There are currently “no approach guardrails” on these bridges. There are no State funds to address this issue. These will need to be addressed by the Town of Limerick. Mr. Richardson noted that the Town currently has boulders there, but the Maine DOT is requiring “guardrails”. And, if it is not addressed, the DOT could require closure of those roads. Subsequently, Mr. Richardson is currently waiting for final price quotes from the Gorham Fence Co. Preliminary quotes consist of about \$50.00 per foot.

In summary, the guardrail issue will not be addressed in this current proposed budget for 2019. Mr. Richardson plans on speaking with the Department of Transportation Team when they return for another Inspection.

The discussion then focused on the small stretch of road located in the Business Park and if it would be more cost efficient, and/or better PR, so to speak, for attracting businesses if the Town were to pave the rest of that road. This is a topic for future consideration and more discussion.

Other questions pertained to mowing and equipment. Equipment costs are based on a per hour rental fee. Mr. Richardson pays for the \$2 Million Liability Insurance costs. The Town does not pay for that.

Another question pertained to the Plowing Contract that had recently been signed by the Town with the plowing contractor. The plowing contractor had voiced his concerns about the lack of “roundabouts” and/or “turn-a-rounds”. It was noted that he had concerns about being able to safely maneuver some of those tight areas while plowing during storms. A discussion followed on what could be done, if anything, to make it safer to plow without chancing damaging people’s property or jeopardize safety. Some roads are easier to maneuver than others. The Norton Road was mentioned as being one of the difficult roads to maneuver. Several “plowing strategies” or potential ideas for solutions were shared as well as offers in sharing plowing “strategies” that has been learned through past experiences by other contractors. More ideas were exchanged including the potential of purchasing small property easements from property owners to be used for “turn-a-rounds” on the most treacherous roads. And, sometimes, it was noted that just talking with some property owners who may be open to allow using their driveways to turn around may help in bringing people together in finding solutions on this issue.

A motion was made by Justin Reinhardt to accept the Public Works / Repair of Highways Budget of \$170,000 for 2019, as well as, the Public Works / Tarring Budget of \$230,000 for 2019, seconded by Paul Donnellan. Motion passed with all in favor

6. Other business

The Committee reviewed the Master List depicting the remaining list of Department Budget Proposals that had not yet been approved. Some budget proposals were very small and showed a very small increase for 2019 or remained the same. The following department budgets were reviewed and accepted.

Paul Donnellan moved to accept the proposed budget of \$1,500.00 for the Board of Appeals for 2019, seconded by Sue McIntyre. Motion passed with all in favor.

Paul Donnellan moved to accept the proposed budget of \$4,500.00 for the Tree Warden for 2019, seconded by Justin Reinhardt. Motion passed with all in favor.

Paul Donnellan moved to accept the proposed Constables budget of \$100 for 2019, seconded by Justin Reinhardt. Motion passed with all in favor.

Justin Reinhardt moved to accept the proposed Emergency Management budget of \$3,680 for 2019, seconded by Paul Donnellan. Motion passed with all in favor.

The Committee then focused on the ***Animal Control proposed budget of \$15,226.70 for 2019***. It was stated by Board of Selectman Joanne Andrews that the Town of Limerick has a contract with Wade Andrews for this service. She additionally provided some background history for this service going back years. The animal control officer, Wade Andrews, has gone from \$100.00 per week in 2003, to \$140.00 per week in 2017. Some discussion followed pertaining to “contract services” vs. “stipend”. It was additionally noted that his services are provided on a 24/7 schedule with some trips consisting of driving all the way to Augusta and back, more than once per year.

Paul Donnellan moved to accept the proposed Animal Control budget of \$15,227.00 for 2019, seconded by Bill Jones. Motion passed with all in favor.

Paul Donnellan made a motion to adjourn. It was seconded by Justin Reinhardt. Motion carried with all in favor.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 15, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Suzanne McIntyre
Recording Secretary