

**TOWN OF ENFIELD  
ENFIELD BUDGET COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES NOVEMBER 29, 2022**

**TIME: 6:30 PM**

**LOCATION: Dept. of Public Works Building & Teams Videoconference**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Shirley Green, Dan Kiley, Jane Plumley, Tracy Young, Dimitri Deserranno, Nancy Smith, John Kluge (Board of Selectmen)

**ABSENT:** Mike Diehn

**OTHERS:** Ed Morris, Town Manager; Alisa Bonnette, Assistant Town Manager; Emily Curtis, Recording Secretary/Recreation Commission Chair; Kate Minshall, Library Director; Kevin Marker, Recreation Director; Dolores Struckhoff, Library Trustee; Francine Lozeau, Library Trustee

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Deserranno called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

**MINUTES**

**November 1, 2022**

Ms. Green made a motion to approve the November 1, 2022, minutes as printed. Mr. Young seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (6-0). Ms. Smith abstained.

**BUSINESS**

**Budget Presentations**

**Library**

Mr. Morris stated that the Library Trustees set their own budget and he has met with Library Director, Kate Minshall, and the Library Trustees regarding the proposed budget for 2023. The proposed budget includes the part-time library personnel wages being increased to \$15 per hour, with one long-time clerk at \$16 per hour. He stated that all departments have been reviewing wages, including recreation raising camp counselor wages, and this increase aligns with that practice. He noted that there was a substitute line item that was dissolved, which was used to offset the increase in salary.

Mr. Young inquired if the library anticipated expending the remaining amount of \$7,000 in the books and media budget by the end of the year.

Ms. Minshall stated that her most recent update is \$3,000 remaining until the end of the year. She stated that digital platforms utilize about \$700 per month per platform.

Mr. Young inquired if that usage would be reflected in contracted services or subscriptions instead.

Ms. Minshall stated that the media budget supports two different services, Hoopla and Overdrive. She added that in Hoopla, the charges are assessed when users request the content, whereas in Overdrive, the state provides licensure for borrowing.

Mr. Young inquired about the spending and if it would be curbed due to having a smaller space when Whitney Hall is being renovated.

Ms. Minshall stated that there was no intention to scale back as it is still important to provide a user experience even if it is not in the same physical environment. She added that electronic books and digital

services also take up a lot of the budget and will be just as important to have available to the public during that time.

Mr. Kiley inquired if we are getting money from other towns when we are sharing materials with all five towns.

Ms. Minshall stated that she can track the use and most users are from Enfield, and Enfield is the only town that carries Hoopla at this time. She stated that she does not know the history of the agreement but allowing access to all five towns is because there is a shared school district. She stated that Enfield utilized ARPA funds to bring on a digital service. She confirmed that residents are allowed 5 checkouts per month, which can range from \$.99 to \$3.99 for each checkout.

With no further questions about the library the Committee moved on to review the Recreation Department budget.

### **Recreation**

Mr. Morris stated that the biggest change proposed for the Enfield Recreation Department is to move from 35 to 40 hours. He stated that from a management perspective it is understood the reasoning as to why 35 hours was requested for this budget year, but it is difficult to manage and is not effective. He stated that Rec Desk has been brought up to date and past due payments have been dramatically improved. He noted that Mr. Marker has made a rental proposal to the BOS for the spaces available for public reservations, including the Community Building, Mascoma Lakeside Park, and the Huse Park Pavilion.

Mr. Morris added that he has been working with the Mascoma Youth Sports League (MYSL) and it is an ongoing conversation as to what capacities there are for the recreation department to support their administrative operations.

Mr. Kiley noted that turnover in the organization is an ongoing challenge.

Mr. Morris stated that there has been discussion directly with MYSL regarding the administrative management of youth recreation by the Enfield Recreation Department and it has been made clear that if the town is administratively responsible for youth sports it will fall under the purview of the town to operate and collect fees accordingly. He stated that past meetings were reviewed as well as the Recreation Director job description and all indicate that the intention was for the Recreation Director to be involved with youth sports, but not to direct or administratively oversee youth sports. He noted that there was an expressed focus on developing community events and working with area organizations to enhance and expand recreational opportunities in Enfield.

Mr. Young asked the Recreation Commission Chair, Emily Curtis, regarding the intentions of the plan for the Recreation Department and youth sports.

Ms. Curtis stated that when the Recreation Commission first envisioned the full-time recreation position it was decided that youth sports would not be a part of the proposal as there was already an existing non-profit to support youth sports for the region. She noted that the primary charge the Recreation Commission saw for expanding the position was to further the recreational opportunities in the town and continue to develop community connections and programming for the residents of Enfield.

Mr. Morris stated that youth sports are a really important part of recreation for the Town of Enfield, and it will continue to be discussed as to the best means of implementation. He continued to review the outlined budget for the recreation department.

Mr. Marker stated that there was money moved among line items to better track the usages for winter and summer programming.

Mr. Morris stated that the 2022 budget merged the two part-time budgets and the programming expenditures were merged as well. He noted that the 2023 budget reflects the re-allocation of those funds.

Mr. Marker stated that Shaker Ball Field has a path that is being reestablished for recreational use, and there are areas around Smith Pond that could be used for snowshoeing.

Mr. Young inquired if the recreation department will be involved with the Mascoma Lake Skating Association.

Mr. Marker and Mr. Morris confirmed that the town is working with the Skating Association and with Jim Taylor to coordinate efforts.

Mr. Morris stated that recreation will continue to host special events and partner with area agencies to promote activities in the town.

Mr. Marker noted that the repair and service contract line is regarding Rec Desk. He stated that there are beach maintenance costs which have increased due to fighting the erosion going down the hill toward the beach— including bringing in sand every year and filling areas that could be hazardous. He stated that this year the buoys had to be replaced, which is why the expenditure is higher than in the years prior.

#### **Fund Balance Project Possibilities**

Mr. Morris presented ideas regarding special projects that can be paid for with the fund balance so as to not impact the budget. He stated that the website upgrade is in the budget right now which is a one-time expense for the upgrade which will then have an annually budgeted maintenance fee.

Mr. Deserranno inquired if the use of fund balance needs to be voted on.

Mr. Kiley stated that if it is put in the budget, it does not need to be voted on at the Town Meeting, it is only when the funds are allocated after the budget is set would it need to be put forward as a warrant article.

Mr. Morris stated that the current recommendations for utilizing fund balance include \$25,000 for continuing the next five chapters of the Master Plan and \$20,000 for a compensation study. He stated that he is working with a consultant to get a quote for the facilitation of strategic planning, which would also be an ideal project to review for use of fund balance. He stated that the goal with the compensation study would be to have all departments studied at one time, followed by having a scheduled cycle of department compensation studies thereafter.

Members of the committee discussed that the Selectboard has the authority to allocate fund balance to offset tax rates but noted that it is not an ideal practice and is not sustainable.

Mr. Morris stated that it would be prudent to use the audited financials from the previous year when discussing the Undesignated Fund balance. He stated that one-time purchases or one-time projects are ideal for utilizing undesignated funds that go over the 12% goal balance.

Mr. Kiley stated that the auditors can make adjustments and changes based on their findings and, in the past, what started as \$300,000 undesignated ended up being roughly \$100,000 based on auditor adjustments and allocations. He stated that is why it is ideal to work off the previous years' audit.

Mr. Morris stated that projects such as cemetery signage, replacing computers, updating the Emergency Operations Plan, and repairing the rock façade outside the Community Building are all one-time expenses that could also be considered. He stated that there are welds breaking on the backstop at Huse Park and Mr. Marker is looking into details to get estimates for repairs.

Mr. Marker stated that he got a quote from Springfield Fence out of Springfield, Vermont, and they quoted up to \$9,000 if it needs entire replacement.

Ms. Plumley stated that the area of Huse Park and the Community Building are highly visible places in town and how they are upkept speaks for us. She added that there is not enough parking in Huse Park and that should be looked at as well.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Public Comment**

Mr. Deserranno stated that he was asked questions regarding tax rates by a member of the public and wanted to bring them forward to the committee for discussion. He stated that the taxes only increased by \$.64 last year and he was asked how that is possible with all the new projects that were approved.

Mr. Morris stated that we are being smart about spending and not borrowing, and as of now there have been no payments on the projects. He stated that next year we will start making payments on the public safety building, but there may be an opportunity to use the unassigned fund balance to help offset those costs. He stated that over the course of the next two to three years the taxes will go up, but we are working hard to phase things in, so it is not one large raise. He stated that the first payment on the Public Safety building will be in June 2023, and there will not be a payment on Whitney Hall until the following year. He added that we will not know the interest rates until they are set, which may affect the overall costs.

Mr. Morris stated that the SRF loans for the water and sewer projects are set after the project is completed and that is when the loan is issued for the billed amount of the project. He stated that we won't know what the interest rate is until after the project is completed, but SRF loans are typically lower than the market rates.

Mr. Kiley added that 2/3 of the tax bill is from the school district.

Ms. Plumley noted that Mr. Morris is working hard to get grants and there are other funds that are coming in that can help offset those costs as well.

## **NEXT MEETING**

The next Budget Committee meeting will take place on Tuesday December 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Kiley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 PM. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (7-0).

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 pm.