

**TOWN OF ENFIELD  
ENFIELD BUDGET COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES DECEMBER 14, 2023**

**TIME: 6:30 PM**

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

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jane Plumley, Dan Kiley, Nancy Smith, Mike Diehn, Jim Fickett, John Kluge (ex-officio), Shirley Green, Tina Stearns (online), Dimitri Deserranno (online)

**OTHERS:** Ed Morris, Town Manager; Alisa Bonnette, Assistant Town Manager

**Members of the Public:** Bridget Labrie, Cemetery Sexton; Rob Taylor, Land Use and Community Development Administrator; Jim Taylor, Department of Public Works Director; Tracy Young,

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Green called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

**MINUTES- November 30, 2023**

Mr. Kiley made a motion to approve of the minutes as presented. Mr. Kluge seconded.

Ms. Smith stated that Ms. Patten made an inquiry about the cost of concrete which was addressed at the meeting. It was noted that, while Mr. Morris was not present at the meeting to address Ms. Patten's inquiry; the correct information was provided.

Ms. Plumley stated that Mr. Diehn was also not present at the meeting and attendance would need to be corrected.

Ms. Plumley made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Ms. Green seconded. A roll call vote was held. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (9-0)

**BUSINESS**

**Cemetery Budget Review**

Bridget Labrie, Cemetery Sexton, presented changes to the cemetery budget as approved by the Cemetery Trustees. She noted that there is an increase in the stipend to the Cemetery Sexton, tree work that needs to be completed, and stone repairs which will

Mr. Morris stated that the overall cemetery budget decreased. He stated that it is possible the stone repair funding could come from the maintenance reserve. He noted that the maintenance reserve was used to help with the expense for updating the signs last year as well.

It was noted that the funding from selling lots in cemeteries goes to the maintenance reserve fund.

Mr. Morris stated that \$1,000 for stone repair could come from the maintenance reserve and have another \$800 budgeted, instead of having all \$1,800 in the budget.

Ms. Labrie agreed with Mr. Morris' proposal. She noted that the cemetery continues to be maintained and noted that there have not been a lot of plots sold this year, which ebbs and flows year-to-year.

Mr. Morris stated that the budget line for patriotic purposes was done a little differently this year so that it is broken out between flags for streets and roads and flags for the cemeteries. The flags along main street as well as the ones the scouts put out.

Ms. Labrie stated that the Legion has offered to order flags for the town as they can get them at a special rate.

With no further comments or questions, Ms. Green moved on to the next agenda item.

### **Land Use Budget Review**

#### **Planning & Zoning**

Mr. R. Taylor presented the budget for Planning and Zoning. He stated that travel has gone over a little this year as he was invited to attend the Housing We Need Conference hosted at the Center for Ethics and Society. He stated that the state has taken notice of changes Enfield has made related to Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) and there is a proposed piece of legislation that could move having two ADU's statewide.

Mr. Morris stated that the increase in the budget is due to the slated increase in salaries.

Mr. R. Taylor applied for a grant through the state to support hiring a contractor to review the zoning ordinances. He noted that the Planning Board strongly supports the review of the ordinances.

Mr. Morris stated that the project of \$25,000 for the Master Plan out of Fund Balance will be encumbered to be utilized next year to move forward with the next five chapters.

Mike Diehn inquired if other metrics could be brought forward to the committee, such as the number of building permits issued, changes in tax valuations, the number of hearings in Planning and Zoning, the number of variance requests, etc.

Mr. Morris stated that the departments are currently working on a dashboard that will help collect that information.

Mr. R. Taylor stated that, regarding increased expenses, dues for area organizations such as Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission, Vital Communities, and others relevant to the planning department have increased this year.

#### **Building Inspection**

Mr. R. Taylor stated that Mr. Ehrenzweig, the inspector, requires a new copy of the updated inspection guidelines for his reference. He noted that having a physical copy each year is beneficial as it allows him to mark the materials and have references as codes change.

#### **Public Works Department Budget Review**

Mr. J. Taylor and Mr. Morris reviewed updates and changes to the department of public works budget. It was noted that, with Whitney Hall under construction, the Whitney Hall expenses are being utilized for the La Salette utilities and lease expenses.

Mr. Morris stated that inflation was budgeted within the building cost brought forward to Town Meeting, but the moving and temporary housing of the Town Offices are not a part of that budget and are reflected in the operating budget. He stated that the expense for a General Maintenance Owners Representative (clerk of the works), will be portioned into each building project and the operating budget.

Mr. Kiley stated that there is a warrant article for the total amount of the project and an Owner's Representative should be a part of that budget and he didn't believe it should be a part of the general operating budget.

Mr. Morris stated that the two projects are currently coming in over budget and he is trying to keep the expenses spread out as much as possible.

Mr. Deserranno inquired if it should be a warrant article.

Mr. Morris stated that the contract with the Owner's Rep is signed as it was approved by the Select Board.

Mr. Kiley stated that the library funding was not a part of the warrant article or project plan, which could relieve some of the budget constraints.

Ms. Plumley stated that if the projects are already over budget, where else can it come from? She stated that there are clear examples of when we make cutbacks to a project it has a direct impact and will need to be rectified down the road, such as not putting the eaves on the DPW or having the school split the gym and cafeteria. We should not omit things from the building, and while she agrees that ideally this would have been anticipated, it wasn't and not we have to deal with it.

Mr. Kluge stated that we are caught in a weird economic climate, and we need to be flexible.

Mr. Kiley agreed that compromise would be necessary, and he would rather see us showing it up front rather than moving the money at the end of the year. He noted that the Owner's Rep can also save money in the construction.

Members of the BC agreed that the position having an Owners Representative is vital in the building process and expressed their support.

Mr. Morris stated that a member of the public asked how the position would be paid for at the Select Board meeting when he asked for approval to hire an Owners Rep and he stated in the meeting that there would be some funding from each project budget and some from the general fund.

Mr. J. Taylor reviewed the anticipated general building costs, including the utilities for the La Salette property which will serve as the temporary location for the Town Offices and the Library. He noted that the Community Building is in need of having the floors refinished and the ramp fascia needs repair as well.

It was noted that \$10,000 which had been planned for replacing the back stop at Huse Park is hoping to be redirected to be utilized for the refinishing of the wood floors at the Community Building. It was noted that the back stop was inspected and is not in immediate danger of falling and the funds can be redistributed.

Mr. J. Taylor stated that there is funding allocated to finalize the Shed Street garage for demolition in 2024. He stated that the chemical toilet rental costs have gone up, in large part due to vandalism that occurred this year. He noted that the DPW Staff constructed a 36x72 storage shed for materials under \$10,000; which would have cost the town about \$100,000 if it was contracted. He stated that the storage shed houses the chipper, mower, grading tractor, and other equipment.

Mr. J. Taylor stated that the DPW has had a full-time seasonal plow driver for the last two years at \$21.50/hour, but this year the City of Lebanon offered \$26.00, and he went there. He stated that not filling this position may lead to higher overtime budget.

Members of the BC discussed how paying overtime compares to increasing an offer in pay for the seasonal position.

Mr. Morris noted that there is a balance to be found as if that one seasonal position is raised to be more competitive then there may be other workers within the department that aren't making as much, which could lead to further complications.

Mr. Morris and Mr. J. Taylor noted that \$25,000 is budgeted in contracts for the invasive species project.

Mr. J. Taylor stated that he would be comfortable dropping the diesel fuel budget by \$4,000 as when he developed the budget, he didn't have a clear picture of how fuel was being billed across departments. He noted that there has been an increase in costs for maintenance and materials.

Mr. Morris stated that there is a \$12K marker in the budget for the road management plan as well.

Mr. J. Taylor noted that the cost of culverts has doubled. He noted that the DPW routinely replaces about 20 culverts per year, as there are over 600 in town, and we need to keep pace with replacing 20-25 per year. He added that the DPW does increase the size of culverts if necessary, when they are being replaced.

Mr. Morris stated that Jeremy Clay, the Highway Supervisor, applied for and secured a grant from Volkswagen Trust which secured \$180,000, 80% of the cost of a new truck, which is on the CIP and will be ordered and then the grant awarded.

Mr. Morris and Mr. J. Taylor reviewed information related to solid Waste collection. It was noted that trucking costs have gone up substantially and keeping trucks on the road has gotten more expensive, and Casella will not do fixed pricing for recycling anymore. In addition, the Lebanon Landfill costs have also gone up 15% and they are permitting their next cell for solid waste.

Members of the BC discussed the benefits and drawbacks of having curbside pickup service versus reverting back to having a full-time transfer station. Members agreed that it was still of benefit to continue curbside pick-up services.

Mr. J. Taylor stated that radio meters for water usage reading has greatly improved the process and has saved the town a tremendous amount of time and money already.

Mr. Kiley requested a thank you to be extended to Mr. Jeremy Clay for his contributions to getting the Volkswagen Trust Grant.

With no further comments or questions, Ms. Green moved on to the next agenda item.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Public Comment**

Ms. Green requested comments or questions from the public.

Mr. Morris stated that there is a 5% placeholder for the budget for payroll increases, while also referring to the wage study. He stated that he will bring a 12-step matrix program forward to the next meeting with a proposal.

With no further comments or questions, the BC moved on to adjournment.

## **NEXT MEETING**

December 28th @ 6:30pm, @ Public Works; Budget Review: Library, Recreation, Regional Organization and final department presentations

## **ADJOURNMENT**

206 Mr. Kluge made a motion to adjourn at 8:43pm. Ms. Plumley seconded. A roll call vote was cast. Vote  
207 unanimous in favor of the motion (9-0).  
208  
209 The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 pm.