

**TOWN OF ATKINSON**  
**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Tuesday, October 14, 2014**

Members Present:

Chairman Bill Smith  
Wendy Barker, Vice Chairman  
Craig Schuster  
Sue Carroll  
Tom Mealey  
Kay Galloway  
Phil Consentino, Selectman Liaison

Others Present:

Bill Innes, Town Administrator  
Leslie Barbera, Elections - not present  
Rose Cavalear, Town Clerk  
David Weymouth, Buildings  
Sue Ober, Recreation  
Noriko Yoshida-Travers, Community Center  
Ted Stewart, Highway, Street Lights, Solid Waste  
Disposal, Recycling, Care of Grounds

Chairman Bill Smith opened the meeting at 7:00 PM, Tuesday, October 14, 2014.

Minutes - deferred.

**Town Clerk:** Rose Cavalear presented the Town Clerk's Budget.

**Town Clerk Assistants, Line Number 41401.110:** \$58,850 includes the five hour increase for the deputy and a 10 hour increase for the assistant. There is also an increase in salary for the deputy. FICA and Medicare also went up.

**Printing & Binding, Line Number 41401.550:** \$6,150 includes 5 years of annual reports that were preserved and the last of the five year plan for preservation which is required by the RSA. The final cost for preservation is \$5,000 and the Town report is \$500.00. The RSA requires paper storage. Mr. Mealey asked where the Town would put all the documents they need to store. Mr. Innes replied that he has been going through and shredding documents that they are no longer required to store, making room on the shelves. Off site storage with a company like Iron Mountain is a possibility. Also, the State may approve electronic storage of some documents. Mr. Innes assured Mr. Mealey that the Town would not reach a point where they would need more storage, but they may need to buy some cabinets.

**Office Supplies, Line Number 41401.620:** \$3,100: The increase is due to the fact that the State is no longer supplying title application forms.

**New Equipment 41401.740:** \$17,302. Ms. Cavalear is requesting 6 fireproof cabinets; 2 vertical, 2 lateral and 2 shelf systems for storing permanent records per RSA 41.59. All the fireproof cabinets the Town currently owns are full. Ms. Barker asked if they have an end of life. Mr. Innes replied that if they are stacked correctly, they should last about 20 - 30 years. Mr. Smith questioned how many boxes are used each year. Mr. Innes replied that 2-3 file cabinet drawers per year are needed. Town Reports go on vertical shelving. The cabinets they are requesting today will be adequate for another 2 years or so. Not all documents generated require permanent storage. The State allows microfilm, the Town has a machine but no one knows how to use it. No one uses microfiche anymore.

Mr. Schuster asked if the assistant has become full time. Ms. Cavalear replied that she will become full time on January 1, 2015. The salary has increased 12% plus \$8,000 built into the Town Clerk salary line. Ms. Cavalear explained that the \$8,000 is for the 10 hours. Ms. Cavalear does not have the figures for health insurance or retirement. She has included the increase for FICA and Medicare.

Ms. Barker asked about the Assistant Clerk. Ms. Cavalear explained that the assistant clerk is receiving a COLA raise. The current assistant clerk is leaving. The cola raise is for the assistant. The deputy tax collector will receive the 12% raise. Ms. Cavalear explained that the workload for the Town Clerk's office has increased. The numbers for the retirement and health insurance can be expected within a few weeks.

There were no more questions.

**Community Center, Account Number 45208:** Noriko Yoshida-Travers presented the Community Center budget.

**Director's Salary, Line Number 45208.1101:** The only line that has changed is the Director's salary. The Selectmen voted to make the position full time and raised the salary. The salary has increased to \$39,998 from \$27,128. Ms. Yoshida-Travers is not taking health insurance this year. However, she would like approval to take the opportunity later. The Selectmen will add lines for health insurance and retirement. Mr. Smith pointed out that lines for health insurance and retirement needed to be added to the budget. All other lines are level funded. The total increase is 28.81%.

Ms. Yoshida-Travers informed the Committee that the Community Center revenue from January to August has been \$8,428.00. 2011 revenue was \$8,750 and 2012 was \$11,345. 2014 will be close to 2012 or more this year.

**Recreation, Account Number 45201:** Sue Ober and Noriko Yoshida-Travers presented the Recreation budget.

The big change in the Recreation budget is the extended hours for Sun and Fun. Expenses were higher but revenues were higher, too. There is a one hour extension to 3:30 PM. Expenses for 2015 should stay level although revenue may increase. Total revenue was \$40,365. There were 252 registrations. This year there were only 210 registrations, but there were more single registrations. The Committee discussed how much of the Recreation budget was Sun and Fun. The total cost for Sun and Fun is between \$47,000 and \$48,000. It generates revenue however the program is not quite self sustaining. The expended amount for counselors was less than budgeted.

There were no more questions.

**General Government Buildings, Account Number 41941:** Mr. Bill Innes and Mr. David Weymouth presented the budget for General Government Buildings. Mr. Innes handed out the latest draft. The first two pages are the budget. Page 3 is a budget comparison. It shows 2013 and 2014 year to date. Mr. Innes explained that the professional services and general maintenance lines are two separate line items. Those lines constitute what it takes to maintain the building and run the business. Those numbers are on the left hand side of the page. On the right hand side of the page is maintenance. It is broken out differently this year. The 2015 budget line is the average of what it takes to run the building. The next line is for special projects are broken out separately. For example, \$23,000 for the Town Hall, of that \$7,000 is for a new boiler. Another project is \$23,000 for an air cleaning system for the Town Garage

The next 4 pages are a breakdown of the kinds of expenses that they see every year. The left hand side, other professional services, like alarm checks. The middle column is expenses through August year to date. It is for general maintenance items, like cleaning out drains and replacing faucets. The next 3 columns are projects. Mr. Innes will ask the Selectmen to prioritize. One example is entry carpet, \$700 will be included in the \$7,500 for special projects in the Town Hall. Mr. Innes should have all the information in a couple of weeks.

Ms. Barker stated that preventative maintenance, and capital projects were broken out the way she requested. Mr. Innes explains that preventative maintenance falls under other professional services.

The Committee discussed prioritizing projects. Mr. Innes has gotten at least one quote from a vendor for everything that has a cost. He has tried to select vendors that the Town has used before, are known for quality work and are reasonable. Mr. Innes explained that he will try to keep the building maintenance costs within budget. If he has to spend more for one expense, he will cut an expense somewhere else.

The big concerns that Mr. Innes has are for the HVAC systems. Ms. Barker suggested a contingency fund in case of large unexpected expenses. Mr. Innes can look at the numbers and try to come up with a contingency line. The Committee discussed a contingency line in the building account. The Committee agreed to discuss a contingency line at a later date

and requested Mr. Innes prepare a proposal. The Committee agreed that a contingency line should be for emergencies, for structural issues or for health, safety and welfare and must be approved by two thirds vote of the Selectmen.

Mr. Innes explained that the increase in the maintenance supervisor, line number 41941.110 is an increase in salary from \$16,823 to 19,003 and corresponding increases in FICA and Medicare is due to the fact that Mr. Weymouth is spending more time on maintenance. The other major difference was in line number 41941.430, general maintenance because of projects. The rest of the expenses are fairly consistent from year to year.

The Committee discussed problems with Town buildings, especially the Fire Department building. Mr. Schuster asked about page 5 in the Police section of the Buildings budget, replacing the fence. Mr. Innes explained that the old fence is broken and people are shooting beebees at the police vehicles.

Community Center expenses were discussed. Mr. Innes explained that some were included in the \$8,500 for maintenance. Some money was left over from last year which may cover the cost for lighting for the parking lot. The lally columns in the basement are deteriorating. The cost is for materials. Mr. Weymouth and Mr. Innes will replace the columns. If a contractor does it, it will cost \$3,000. This is in the old building in the Community Center. They will supplement the old columns and sister the cracked joists. The rotted window sills in the basement will be replaced. The table room will be repaired to make another meeting room. Also, an old bathroom will be redone for storage. The Trinity Room will be turned into the table and chair room and the table and chair room will be turned into a meeting room. There will not be a Senior Lounge. Mr. Mealey asked about the \$500 in maintenance to paint the Trinity Room in this year's budget. Mr. Innes responded that he would prefer that the money not get used and the work be added to the 2015 budget. The \$500 can go into the general fund. The Lions Club also donated \$2,000.

The Committee discussed Scout projects, including one Eagle Scout project that was just completed. Mr. Innes asked Mr. Schuster to send him a write up and Mr. Schuster asked if he could meet with Mr. Innes about possible Scout projects.

There were no other questions.

**Elections Administration, Account Number 41403:** Included in the Town Clerk's budget. Ms. Barker asked about Election Checklist Supervisor. Mr. Innes will give the Committee the figures.

**Highway Department, page 12, Account Number 43111:** Mr. Stewart presented the Highway Department budget. Mr. Stewart explained that the budget he presented to the Selectmen last week is different from the budget he is presenting to the Budget Committee today. The biggest change is salary. There is money in the lease line and the contract labor line has been reduced. The Road Agent's salary is increased. The Health Insurance line is not yet known. Two employees have health insurance. The line for the superintendent's office is up 7.14% due to the salary increase. The telephone line is up 10%. The number of September was pro-rated. The engineering line is the same, electricity is the same. It will be over the budgeted amount this year and they prorated the amount from September for electricity, too. The heating bill is also prorated from September.

**Cleaning and Maintenance, Account Number 43122:**

**Labor:** includes salaries for 3 men including the Superintendent and his assistant. The big jump is because the assistant was not brought to full time until March of this year. FICA and Medicare were also adjusted.

**Radio Repairs, Line Number 43122.341:** Is the same.

**Equipment Repairs, Line Number 43122.430:** The Highway Department owns one truck and five sanders. The truck is six years old. Luckily, there have not been any major repairs.

**Small Tools and Equipment, Line Number 43122.630:** \$1,800 budgeted for 2015.

**Gas and Oil, Line Number 43122.635:** is up related to the lease line. If the Town purchases or leases equipment, it will need fuel. The reason it is going up so little is because they will not start paying for fuel until after July. The Selectmen have not seen the request. Mr. Innes has not had an opportunity to put a presentation together for the Selectmen.

**Truck Lease, Line Number 43122.660:** The amount for the leasing line only reflects 9 months.

**Gravel, Line Number 43122.680.01:** was cut, in the past the Town has spent anywhere from \$5,000 to \$8,500 for gravel. This year, the gravel line was not used as much because the cost of gravel was included in the cost of new roads. The next 3 years will be shim and overlay so the gravel line will be increased.

**Patch Material, Summer and Winter, Line Number 43122.680.03:** is \$4,000.

**Culverts, Line Number 43122.680.04:** is the same at \$2,000.

**Sealers, Line Number 43122.680.05:** is a contract and should be about \$15,000. Crack sealing finished Friday so the money was spent.

**Other Materials, Line Number 43122.680.06:** is \$2,500 and is a catch all line for things like geotextiles for drainage projects.

**Catch Basins, Line Number 43122.680.07:** is \$2,000 and was cut to reflect the overall average the department has spent.

**Stone, Line Number 43122.680.09:** is \$1,000 and was cut by 50% to show what has been actually spent historically.

**New equipment - summer, Line Number 43122.740.00:** is \$4,000 and covers hand tools, weedwackers and chain saws.

**Equipment rental - summer, Line Number 43122.740.01:** is \$4,000 and includes things like hot top rollers and an asphalt cutter.

**Mileage, Line Number 43122.820.00:** is the same at \$500.

**Signs and Line Painting, Line Number 43122.875:** not changed at \$12,000.

**Contract Labor, Line Number 43122.890:** is \$20,000 and was reduced by 23% to reflect lease equipment for the second half of the year.

**Tree Removal, Line Number 43122.890.01:** is the same at \$15,000.

Mr. Innes is concerned by the EPA Storm Water permit. The potential costs are significant for the Town. The permit was supposed to be out in February of 2014, but the Town was able to push it back 6-9 months. It should come out this year. It has 5 or 6 major requirements. One is training. The Town has to be able to track all water that falls through the Town and measure the chemical content, illegal chemicals at input to the Town and output from the Town. The estimated costs for a Town of Atkinson's size is between \$40,000 to \$80,000 per year. The Town will have to hire someone or contract it out. Reporting requirements are significant. The State is looking at things like issues at Big Island Pond. The Town will have to check all runoffs and backtrack them to the source. This is a Federal EPA issue. The Towns on estuaries have active programs. The Committee discussed the new EPA requirements. Atkinson is falling under the umbrella of storm water management because it borders Haverhill, Massachusetts and therefore falls under the EPA in Boston. Ms. Carroll suggested moving jurisdiction to New Hampshire. Mr. Innes has worked to push back against the regulations. However, it is a real concern that the Town could have to spend around \$50,000 for storm water management. The Committee discussed the new storm water regulations and how to manage them.

**Snow and Ice Control, Account Number 43125:**

**Minor equipment/Winter, Line Number 43125.630:** is the same at \$2,000.

**Salt, Line Number 43125.680.01:** is the same at \$60,000. \$59,564 has been spent to date.

**Sand, Line Number 43125.680.02:** is the same at \$1,000.

**Cutting Edges/Winter, Line Number 43125.740.00:** is the same at \$3,000.

**Contract Labor, Line Number 43125.890.00:** is \$95,000 and is reduced by \$20,000, a 17% decrease. It reflects the Town having a back hoe the last 6 months of 2014.

The total proposed budget is \$496,566, a \$30,000 increase. \$12,000 of this amount is the change in salaries and positions. Capitalization had a low impact. Mr. Stewart is requesting to lease a backhoe and a truck. The backhoe will come after Town meeting and the truck will not come until after July. The backhoe will come after Town meeting. A yearly cost is \$33,000 for both.

Member Craig Schuster asked about the 6.7% salary increase for the Road Agent. Last year there was an increase of \$5,800 due to an increase in hours. This year the rate was increased. The Road Agent is not getting COLA. The Retirement line was populated although it was not budgeted. Mr. Stewart is proposing \$4,000 for himself and his assistant. The assistant was brought on in April. Member Craig Schuster asked if the labor line will be over expended. It was turned down. Mr. Stewart thinks he will stay on budget for this year. The \$11,000 increase is the difference between paying the assistant for 9 months last year and 12 months this year. A full time assistant did not pass the deliberative session. Mr. Schuster asked where the \$9,700 came from. Mr. Stewart explained that he was short handed 2 people for over 8 weeks, so he is hoping he will not go over budget for labor this year.

Vice Chair Wendy Barker asked if Mr. Stewart was planning on using Warrant Articles for Highway Department expenditures for budget year 2015. Mr. Stewart responded that he would be. Mr. Innes informed the Committee that the Warrant Articles are for fixing roads. Mr. Stewart made a presentation to the Selectmen about Warrant Articles for improving roads. It includes paving Belknap, Emery and Brookside. However, the water hookups are not completed on those roads so Mr. Stewart wants to do the roads planned for 2016 which are the roads in Hemlock Heights. Mr. Stewart informed the Committee what roads he is requesting Warrant Articles for. Ms. Barker asked if the lease and purchase of equipment would be put in a Warrant Article or put in the budget. Mr. Innes replied that the Selectmen have not decided. Mr. Stewart explained that if the Selectmen decided to put the new equipment to a vote, then the Highway Department budget would be reduced. He will give the Committee a breakdown of all leasing costs. Ms. Barker asked about truck auctions. She informed the Committee that other Towns get trucks from the truck auction and save money. Mr. Stewart explained that those Towns got free trucks from the Federal government because of CTAP and did not have to worry about having a second hand truck as a front line truck. Mr. Smith asked about the \$16,500 in the equipment line. Mr. Stewart explained that it is to replace the 2008 truck and expand the fleet from one to two trucks plus the backhoe.

Ms. Barker asked about the decrepit condition of the State roads. Mr. Stewart informed her that the State is working on East Road now. North Broadway effects a lot of people and as of May the State did not have a plan. However, at the last meeting, the State informed Mr. Stewart that they have a plan to repair State owned roads in Town. As yet, there is no time line, but 2015 was mentioned. Ms. Barker would like to see something in writing.

**Street lighting, Account Number 43163.410:** is level funded at \$41,500.

**Recycling, Account Number 43234:** Custodial, line number 43234.120 went up due to the increase for labor. The Recycling Center needs someone there when it is open. The 37% increase is because the rate went from \$9.30 per hour to \$13.30 per hour for base pay. It is from the labor matrix voted for by the Board of Selectmen. When Mr. Stewart hired someone in May, all pay had to be adjusted. FICA and Medicare also went up. There was a \$4,000 increase for recycling. Atkinson is not hosting this year.

**Solid Waste, Account Number 43241:** The Selectmen extended the contract with Northeast Carting, it is a 3.5% increase for solid waste and a 6.2% increase for the total contract. It was renegotiated and extended for 3 years. The increase is about \$16,000 per year. The Town is still saving \$90,000 to \$100,000 per year. The Committee discussed complaints concerning trash. They have dropped significantly over the past 3 months.

**Care of Grounds, Account Number 45202:** There are two contracts, mower and fertilization. Not all bids have been sent out, and it will not be reflected in the budget for three to four weeks. Mr. Stewart is hopeful the lines will be nearly the same as 2014.

No more questions.

The next regular meeting of the Budget Committee will be Tuesday, October 21, 2014 at 7:00 PM.

**Member Craig Schuster made a motion to adjourn the Tuesday, October 14, 2014 meeting of the Town of Atkinson Budget Committee at 9:30 PM. Vice Chair Wendy Barker seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Vote: 6/0.**