

**TOWN OF ATKINSON
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, January 10, 2017
2017 OPERATING BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING
DRAFT**

Members Present:

Bill Smith, Chair
Wendy Barker, Vice Chair
Peter Torosian
Susan Carroll
Tom Mealey

Others Present:

Alan Phair, Town Administrator
Barbara Snicer, Assistant Town Administrator
Phil Consentino, Selectman
Michael Murphy, Fire Chief
Ted Stewart, Road Agent

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

The Budget Committee reviewed the following Warrant Articles.

Proposed Articles for the 2017 Warrant

Article #2017-4 Operating Budget

Shall the Town of Atkinson raise and appropriate as an Operating Budget, not including appropriations by Special Warrant Article and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the Budget posted with the Warrant, or as amended by vote of the First Session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling _____

Dollars (\$4,535,431)? Should this article be defeated, the Default Budget shall be _____ **Dollars (\$4,467,868 ?)**, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Atkinson or by law, or the governing body may hold one Special Meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised Operating Budget only.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes , No , Abstain

Discussion: Chair Smith gave the tentative 2017 budget amount as \$4,535,431 and the default budget as \$4,467,868. It is approximately \$68,000 less than last year and is the same as the 2016 fiscal year budget with some adjustments. Chair Smith asked for final input from the Budget Committee. Once the budget has been finalized Chair Smith will give the budget to the State. Jason Grosky, Phil Consentino and Harold Morse were present at the January 9, 2017 Board of Selectmen meeting and voted on the warrant articles.

Chair Smith opened the hearing to the public.

Article #2017-5 Field Production Cameras

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-one Thousand Dollars (\$21,000) for the purpose of purchasing four (4) UHD-ready video camcorders, including all appropriate accessories, including, but not limited to: Tripods, Dollies and Travel Cases for Atkinson Community Television, such sum to be withdrawn from the Cable

Capital Reserve Fund established March 12, 1994, for this purpose; and to dispose of five (5) cameras by sale, bid or trade? No additional tax dollars will be needed to fund this appropriation. As of December 31, 2016, there were Two Hundred Thirty-nine Thousand Six Hundred Twenty-three and 34/100 Dollars (\$239,623.34) remaining in the Cable Capital Reserve Fund. This will be a non-lapsing article per RSA 32:7, VI, and will not lapse until the purchases are complete, or until December 31, 2021, whichever comes first. This is in addition to Article #2017-4, the Operating Budget.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes , No , Abstain

Discussion: The old cameras are 10 years old. Mr. Williams, Atkinson Television Station Manager, appeared before the Committee to explain the need for the new cameras. Two of the old cameras are SD, tape based and it is difficult to get tape. The memory cards for the other two old cameras cost \$1,000 each. The new cameras will be high definition. Mr. Williams does not know how much money he will get by trading in the old cameras.

Article #2017-6 Control Room HVAC

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Seven Thousand Dollars (\$7,000) for the purpose of purchasing an HVAC system to be used in the Atkinson Community Television Control Room/Office, such sum to be withdrawn from the Cable Capital Reserve Fund, established March 12, 1994 for this purpose? No additional tax dollars will be needed to fund this appropriation. As of December 31, 2016, there were Two Hundred Thirty-nine Thousand Six Hundred Twenty-three and 34/100 Dollars (\$239,623.34) remaining in the Cable Capital Reserve Fund. This will be a non-lapsing article per RSA 32:7, VI, and will not lapse until the purchases are complete, or until December 31, 2021, whichever comes first. This is in addition to Article #2017-4, the Operating Budget.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes , No , Abstain

Discussion: Mr. Williams explained that the Atkinson Television office is a retrofit to the building. There is currently no ventilation and no climate control and the room can be as hot as 80 degrees in the summer and as cold as 50 degrees in winter. Either the existing system can be tapped into or a separate HVAC system can be purchased. Mr. Williams has received some quotes but has not decided on a system.

Article #2017-7 Cemetery Capital Reserve

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty-five Thousand Dollars (\$35,000) to be added to the Cemetery Capital Reserve Fund established in 2015 (Article #2015-7) for the purpose of developing an additional section in the Atkinson Cemetery? As of December 31, 2016, there were Thirty-one Thousand Six Hundred Six and 75/100 Dollars (\$31,606.75) remaining in the Cemetery Capital Reserve Fund. This is in addition to Article #2017-4, the Operating Budget.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes , No , Abstain

Discussion: This is in addition to the \$35,000 raised and appropriated in the 2016 budget. Ms. Snicer explained that the original estimate to develop the additional section of the Atkinson Cemetery was over \$70,000.

Article #2017-8 Elder Services' Expendable Trust Fund

Shall the Town raise and appropriate Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) to be added to the Elder Services' Expendable Trust Fund, established March 8, 2016 (Article #2016-5) for the purpose of replacing Elder Services' vehicles and equipment? As of December 31, 2016, there were Five Thousand Twenty-two and 02/100 Dollars (\$5,022.02) in the Elder Services' Expendable Trust Fund. This is in addition to Article #2017-4, the Operating Budget.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes , No , Abstain

Discussion: Member Carroll asked if this should be worded specific to the handicap van. Ms. Snicer explained that the expendable trust was worded specific to the handicap van and is what the capital reserve calls for. Ms. Snicer confirmed that the amount appropriated last year was \$5,000. The expendable trust fund is strictly tax money.

Article #2017-9 Fire Department Capital Reserve

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$130,000) to be added to the Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund, as modified March 14, 2000 (Article #2000-28) for the purpose of acquiring fire equipment and vehicles, as outlined by the Board of Engineers' Capital Improvement Plan? As of December 31, 2016, there were Ninety-one Thousand One Hundred Ninety Three and 23/100 Dollars (\$91,193.23) in the Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund. This is in addition to Article #2017-4, the Operating Budget.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes , No , Abstain

Discussion: Chief Murphy appeared before the Budget Committee to explain that the Fire Department will have a \$200,000 shortfall for the funds necessary to purchase the required equipment as planned in 2022. Chief Murphy gave the Committee a thirty year budget plan for the Fire Department. If the Town raises and appropriates an additional \$30,000 from the \$100,000 originally planned for the next five years, there will not be a shortfall in 2022. Some equipment failed prematurely and had to be replaced in the past.

Mr. Mealey asked about the proposed purchase of an ambulance in 2028. Chief Murphy explained that the Town currently has a contract ambulance service and also has its own ambulance. The Department makes multiple transports a year with its own ambulance when the contract ambulance service is not available. The Fire Department bills for ambulance transport. Trinity Ambulance Service is the contract ambulance service and it covers five other towns. The ambulance service maintains a paramedic unit stationed 24/7 at the Atkinson Fire Department. Having the paramedic unit stationed full time at the Atkinson Fire Department has allowed the Town to continue to operate solely as a volunteer Fire Department. If Trinity Ambulance

dedicated an ambulance to Atkinson, there would be a huge increase in the cost of the contract. Chief Murphy also explained that the other Towns neighboring Atkinson already have full time personnel. He informed the Budget Committee that by 2028 the Town of Atkinson will have to hire full time fire personnel. The ambulance service does not assist with fire. It takes about 2 hours for an ambulance transport. Chief Murphy is forming a Committee to plan for full time personnel. Chief Murphy also explained that the current volunteer personnel are aging and it is difficult to get younger volunteers.

Chief Murphy explained the need for protective bunker gear and also explained that fire gear is dated and has a ten year life expectancy. Several years ago, the Fire Department sent some volunteers to the fire academy and they were sent back because their gear was outdated. The Department had to replace 25 sets of gear and the Fire Department budget was overspent by \$25,000. Therefore, the fire gear has become part of the capital improvement plan. Also, the SCVA's have a 15 year life expectancy and the cost of replacing them also needs to be incorporated in the capital reserve plan. The fire protective gear costs \$2,000 per set and the breathing apparatuses cost \$160,000 to replace. Vice Chair Barker asked if Chief Murphy is confident that the plan is sufficient. Ms. Snicer explained that all Town money is deposited in the New Hampshire Public Deposit pool. Chief Murphy stated that he believes his numbers are good. Chief Murphy stated that he will attempt to get grant money to cover at least some of the cost of proposed capital expenditures. These are federal grants. The Department obtained \$290,000 in grant money in fiscal year 2016.

Article #2017-10 Shim and Overlay Roads

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Three Hundred Thirty-five Thousand Two Hundred Eighty-Six Dollars (\$335,286) to shim and overlay the following roads with approximately 5,588 tons of New Hampshire Department of Transportation-approved asphalt: Brookside Terrace, Belknap Drive, Emery Drive, Commerce Drive, Industrial Way, Island Pond Road from Main Street to Brookside Terrace, Conley Road, Hall Farm Road and Westside Drive (shim only from Island Pond Road to Oakridge Drive and spot-shim to Town line)? All work is to be done under the supervision of the Road Agent. This will be a non-lapsing article per RSA 32:7, VI, and will not lapse until this purchase is complete, or until December 31, 2021, whichever comes first. This is in addition to Article #2017-4, the Operating Budget.

*Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain
Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes, No, Abstain*

Discussion: Ms. Snicer explained that the cost of shim and overlay varies year to year.

Article #2017-11 Highway Department Truck

Shall the Town authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a long-term lease-purchase agreement in the amount of Eighty-four Thousand Three Hundred Seventy-one Dollars (\$84,371) subject to annual funding, for the purchase of a Ford F-550 or equivalent, to include a wing, plow and accessories for the Highway Department; to raise and appropriate the sum of Eighteen Thousand Three Hundred Eight Dollars (\$18,308) for the

first year's payment; and to authorize the Selectmen to dispose of the 2008 Ford F-550 by trade, sale or bid? This will be a non-lapsing article per RSA 32:7, VI, and will not lapse until this purchase is complete, or until December 31, 2021, whichever comes first. This is in addition to Article #2017-4, the Operating Budget.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes , No , Abstain

Discussion: Ms. Snicer explained that the current truck is 8 years old. The Town currently has two trucks. This article is to replace the older truck. It will be over ten years old when a new truck arrives and it has required over \$5,000 in maintenance in FY2016. The Committee discussed issues with purchase of the truck in 2012. Mr. Ted Stewart, Road Agent, appeared before the Budget Committee to explain the new quote for a highway department truck. It is the same chassis but a different body manufacturer. Mr. Stewart believes delivery time should be better than the previous truck and the new truck should arrive before August. The Temco body is stainless steel and is a four season body. The sanders are built in to the bed of the truck which makes it safer to sand. Mr. Stewart can stay in one lane. Member Torosian asked if two trucks were sufficient for the Town and replace them every eight years. Mr. Stewart responded that it is also in the Highway Department capital plan to purchase a pickup truck three to five years from now. The truck in this warrant is to replace a truck currently owned by the Town.

Article #2017-12 Winter Expendable Trust Fund

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) to be added to the Winter Expendable Trust Fund established March 9, 2010 (Article #2010-15) for the purpose of funding additional costs, in excess of the annual Operating Budget, for plowing and removal of snow and winter weather management, such funds to come from the Undesignated Fund Balance? No additional tax dollars will be needed to fund this appropriation. As of December 31, 2016, there were Forty Thousand Two Hundred Ninety-eight and 65/100 Dollars (\$40,298.65) in the Winter Expendable Trust Fund. This is in addition to Article #2017-4, the Operating Budget.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes , No , Abstain

Discussion: Ms. Snicer explained that the winter expendable trust fund was started several years ago to target \$50,000 for a trust fund. Two years ago the Town was \$71,000 in snow removal costs and had to request emergency funds from the State.

Article #2017-13 Facilities' Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund

Shall the Town vote to establish a Facilities' Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund for the purpose of providing funding for unanticipated maintenance expenses for Town facilities; to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500); such funds to come from the Undesignated Fund Balance; and name the Selectmen to be the Agents-to-Expend these Funds? This is in addition to Article #2017-4, the Operating Budget.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain
Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes , No , Abstain

Discussion: Ms. Snicer explained that there has been around \$200,000 in unexpected maintenance for various Town buildings in the last several years. If there is an unexpected expense, then routine maintenance is sacrificed. This will establish a new fund. The funds will not necessarily be spent for fiscal year 2017.

Article #2017-14 Mosquito Control Expendable Trust Fund

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Forty-nine Thousand Three Hundred Ninety Dollars (\$49,390) for the purpose of insect control, such funds to be put into the Mosquito Control Expendable Trust Fund, established March 14, 2006 (Article #2006-11) for that purpose? As of December 31, 2016, there were Three Thousand Thirty-six and 95/100 Dollars (\$3,036.95) in the Mosquito Control Expendable Trust Fund. This is in addition to Article #2017-4, the Operating Budget.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain
Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes , No , Abstain

Discussion: The Budget Committee discussed mosquito control methods.

Article #2017-15 Police Department Computers

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) to purchase five (5) specialized Patrol Tablet Computers and associated equipment for the Police Department, if and only if Fifty percent (50%) of which comes from the New Hampshire Department of Highway Safety and the balance to be raised by taxes? This will be a non-lapsing article per RSA 32:7, VI, and will not lapse until this purchase is complete, or until December 31, 2021, whichever comes first. This is in addition to Article #2017-4, the Operating Budget. Should this article fail to pass, Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) will be used from the Computer Technology Operating Budget to replace the 5-year old laptops currently in use.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain
Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes , No , Abstain

Discussion: Member Torosian asked if the tablets are replacing the laptops. Vice Chair Barker informed the audience that the \$10,000 to purchase the laptops if this article fails to pass was not appropriated in the Computer Technology Operating Budget. The Budget Committee requested that the \$10,000 for laptops also go to warrant and that the grant would pay for it. Ms. Snicer explained that the Selectmen passed the warrant as-is. If the Budget Committee wants to put the money in the operating budget, it can be done on the floor of the public hearing or on the floor of the deliberative session. If the warrant fails and there is no money in the operating budget, then the old laptops will not be replaced. Mr. Wolff explained that all the laptops currently in use by the Police Department are at the end of their life cycle and new ones need to be purchased.

The Budget Committee looked at the Computer Department operating budget. There is \$10,000 in the hardware purchase line, there was \$19,000. Mr. Wolff explained that the current licenses are for the station. Chair Smith asked what else would be purchased with \$10,000. Mr. Wolff explained that it is for equipment other than Police Department Laptops, such as the copier, card readers, and two other laptops.

\$10,000 for Police Department computers would be needed even if the grant passes. The Committee questioned if the grant could be used for laptops and what the amount would be. It is a 50% grant. The durable notebooks are \$1,800 each. The question is what the Town can purchase with \$10,000 currently allocated in the IT budget. If the warrant for the tablets is not approved, then the grant can be written for laptops. Chair Smith stated that there are several issues. First there are two choices, the more expensive tablets or the less expensive laptops. Chair Smith polled the Committee to see if the Police Department should get new computers. All members agreed. Then, Chair Smith polled the Committee to see if the Police Department should still get something if the grant fails. Next Chair Smith polled the Committee to see if the Police Department should get the new tablets. Two members agreed. Third, Chair Smith polled the Committee to ask if the Police Department should get new laptops rather than the tablets. All members agreed.

Vice Chair Barker made a motion to increase Line 41506.740, Hardware Purchases in the Computer Group by \$9,000. Member Torosian seconded the motion. All members of the Atkinson Budget Committee present voted in favor. Vote: 5/0/0.

The Budget Committee discussed how the money should be spent if the warrant article passes. The Budget Committee agreed that if the warrant article passes, then the Police Department can have the tablets.

Article #2017-16 Police Vehicle

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty-six Thousand Six Hundred Dollars (\$36,600) to purchase and equip a new Police Utility Vehicle; and to allow one of the Town's cruisers to be transferred to the Elder Affairs's Department, or to be disposed of by trade, sale or bid? This will be a non-lapsing article per RSA 32:7, VI, and will not lapse until this purchase is complete, or until December 31, 2021, whichever comes first. This is in addition to Article #2017-4, the Operating Budget.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain

Recommended by the Budget Committee: Yes , No , Abstain

Discussion: The Committee asked if the old cruiser would replace an existing vehicle in the Elder Affairs Department fleet. This is the last cruiser. All new Police Department vehicles will be Police Utility Vehicles.

There are a couple of other items. Ms. Snicer explained that some other articles were put forward but were not passed by the Board of Selectmen. Article not passed by the Board of Selectmen do not go to the Budget Committee. There were no petition articles put forward.

Mr. Mealey asked if the Youth Service Director is on contract. Chair Smith stated that the Federal Law did not pass and the Board of Selectmen did not approve it. Mr. Phair stated that the Library Trustees voted to give her a contract effective January 1, 2017. Chair Smith requested documentation on all employee contracts. Vice Chair Barker explained that the Library Director has always been under contract and the Youth Service Director has been made Assistant Library Director and is under contract effective January 1, 2017. They are two year contracts.

Member Torosian stated that the Conflict of Interest Committee would like to increase the postage line to \$100. It is \$70 now. That was the default amount.

Member Torosian made a motion to increase Line Number 41305.625.00, Postage in the Conflict of Interest Committee budget to \$100. Vice Chair Barker seconded the motion. All members of the Atkinson Budget Committee present voted in favor. Vote: 5/0/0.

Minutes:

January 3, 2017:

Chair Smith made a motion to accept the minutes of the January 3, 2017 minutes of the Atkinson Budget Committee as written. Member Torosian seconded the motion. All members of the Atkinson Budget Committee present voted in favor. Vote: 5/0/0.

Mr. Phair asked about the raise for the Road Agent. The Selectmen voted to increase his salary to \$57,200, but the Budget Committee recommended \$52,000. It is not in the operating budget and there is no warrant. Mr. Phair stated that it is a merit raise. Vice Chair Barker explained that the Budget Committee prefers that raises for elected officials go to warrant. Mr. Phair asked about a raise for the Assistant Town Manager. Chair Smith stated it was reduced by 2%. Mr. Phair explained that part of the raise was a 1.2% longevity and part was a merit based increase. There is also overtime. Chair Smith asked Mr. Phair to email him the figures.

Mr. Phair also asked about the recycling budget: Other Professional Services – Line Number 43234.390.00. This line is mainly for Household Hazardous Waste. The increase for FY 2017 is due to the fact that one Town dropped out of the program. Vice Chair Barker stated that the Road Agent informed them he would be comfortable with \$9,000. After discussion the Budget Committee agreed to leave the line at \$9,000.

The Budget Committee discussed trash pickup service. Mr. Phair has started a policy that the trucks have to be inspected by Town personnel when they come to Town.

Member Torosian made a motion to adjourn the January 10, 2017 meeting of the Atkinson Budget Committee at 9:30 PM. Vice Chair Barker seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor. Vote: 5/0/0.