

**TOWN OF ATKINSON**  
**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Tuesday, October 10, 2017**

Members Present:

Bill Smith, Chair  
Wendy Barker, Vice Chair  
Sue Carroll  
Bob Malo  
Bob Worden  
Peter Torosian

Others Present:

Alan Phair, Town Administrator  
Paul Wainwright, Conservation  
Commission  
Debra L. DeSimone, Tax Collector  
Sue Killam, Cemetery Trustee  
Kathleen Friel, Cemetery Trustee  
William M. Baldwin, Selectman

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

Agenda: Tax Collector, Patriotic Purposes, Cemetery, Conservation

**Conservation Commission – Account Number 46111:** Paul Wainwright, Vice Chair Conservation Commission came before the Committee to present the Conservation Commission budget. Vice Chair Wainwright proposed a level budget. Chair Smith informed the Budget Committee that the Conservation Commission proposes a level funded budget every year. Vice Chair Barker asked about logging on Roby Lane and Mr. Wainwright explained that it was selective logging of conservation land behind the Community Center. Mr. Wainwright also explained that the Conservation Commission is attempting to purchase some land at the back of the former Gordon Brown property. Mr. Wainwright also explained that field mowing has not been done; it is always done at the end of the year.

**Cemeteries – Account Number 41951:** Sue Killam and Kathleen Friel, Cemetery Trustees, appeared before the Budget Committee to present the Cemeteries budget. Mr. Phair explained that the Budget Committee has a full print out of the cemetery trustee budget.

Ms. Killam explained that there are a couple of small increases.

**Other Professional Services – Line Number 41951.390.00:** an increase to pay for roadwork because a lot of the gravel washed away this past summer due to the rains.

**Care of Grounds – Line Number 41951.650.00:** The cost has gone from \$18,000 to \$21,000 because the area of the cemetery has grown.

Mr. Torosian asked about the number of plots. Ms Killam explained that so far the trustees have sold about 100 deeds. The most significant need is for single plots. Ms. Friel explained that there were not a lot of burials in FY 2017 compared to other years which is the reason not as much was expended. There were not that many deaths and some people opted to be buried elsewhere. The Budget Committee members praised the Cemetery Committee for their efforts.

**Tax Collector – Account Number 41504:** Ms. DeSimone, Tax Collector, came before the Committee to present the FY2018 tax collecting budget. She reviewed the two areas with an increase.

**Other Professional Services – Line Number 41504.390.00:** \$50.00 increase due to an increase in rates.

**Office Supplies – Line Number – 41504.620.00:** increase of \$100 to \$1200. The office supply line was overspent for FY2017 because Ms. DeSimone needed to buy the laser printer stock for certified letters. It has to be bought in bulk.

Member Torosian asked if he could meet with the Tax Collector regarding tax revenue from new properties. She replied that she would give him the warrants.

**Patriotic Purposes 45831:** Alan Phair presented the Patriotic Purposes budget. Mr. Phair gave the Committee a spreadsheet of the proposed budget. The Patriotic Purposes Committee is in the process of purchasing new flags.

**Memorial Day - Account Number 45832:** flat

**Flags – Account Number 45832:** flat

**Minutes:** September 19, 2017 –

**Chair Smith made a motion to accept the minutes of the September 19, 2017 meeting of the Atkinson Budget Committee as amended. Member Torosian seconded the motion. All members of the Atkinson Budget Committee voted in favor. Vote: 6/0/0.**

**Minutes:** September 26, 2017

**Member Carroll made a motion to accept the minutes of the September 26, 2017 meeting of the Atkinson Budget Committee as amended. Vice Chair Barker seconded the motion. All members of the Atkinson Budget Committee voted in favor. Vote: 6/0/0.**

**Other Business:**

**Town Employees:** scenarios regarding increasing the number of Town employees to over 50. Mr. Phair gave the Committee a memo but explained that he has not had time to review the issue thoroughly. He added that the number of employees is taken from the previous year. Also, equivalent hours are calculated.

There are presently 48 full time employees in Atkinson. There have been requests from different departments for full time employees. The Highway Department has requested one full time employee, the Police Department has requested a full time employee, and the Fire Department is requesting as many as 8 full time employees.

Member Torosian discussed asking the Police Chief if he would consider cutting one part time position if a full time position is added to the budget.

Chair Smith summarized by stating that there are two employees who are borderline and may go full time. The Police Chief would like to hire a full time officer and the Fire Chief is also considering hiring as many as 8 new full time employees. Member Torosian informed the Committee that the Fire Department will be proposing between 2 and 8 full time employees.

This would bring the number of full time employees to over 50 by October of 2018. The Committee would like to know the impact to the Town.

Vice Chair Barker asked about the second paragraph in health coverage about a mandate from the ALE stating that a municipal employee should not be required to contribute more than 9.5% of annual income to health insurance.

Mr. Phair requested that the Committee email him with their questions.

**Fire House Damage:** Mr. Phair explained that the Town hired two architects and they went through the Fire Station. Mr. Phair emailed copies to the Committee. The architects could not give an estimate of costs, but he could put together a rough number and suggested hiring someone who does cost estimates. He estimated that it would cost \$1,000 - \$2,000 to hire someone to do cost estimates.

Member Torosian asked about the cost of repairs. Mr. Phair responded that the Selectmen are considering two options, going to emergency expenditures or a warrant. One issue with a warrant is it might fail.

The Committee discussed oversight of the project. Selectman Baldwin informed the Committee that the Town of Plaistow hired a company to oversee the building of the Fire House and it saved them money. The Committee also discussed the best time to start construction.

**Member Torosian made a motion to adjourn the October 10, 2017 meeting of the Atkinson Budget Committee. Vice Chair Barker seconded the motion. All members of the Atkinson Budget Committee voted in favor. Vote: 6/0/0.**