

**TOWN OF ATKINSON
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, September 18, 2018**

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
Sue Killam, Cemeteries
Tom Kelly, Kimball Library Trustee

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

Review Correspondence:

- Email from Tom Kelly, Kimball Library Trustee extending an invitation to the Budget Committee to attend a birthday party for the Kimball Library
- Email from Barbara Snicer regarding changing the calendar, Specifically the last day of a public hearing is January 15, 2019. The schedule on the calendar is January 22, 2019. Changing Tuesday 1/8 to Thursday, 1/3. Tuesday, January 15, 2019 will be Tuesday January 8, 2019. Public hearing on changed warrants will be held January 15, 2018.
- E-mail – recorder is quitting
- Training sessions – if any one is interested, let Barbara Snicer know. All current members have attended previously.

Old Business: updated spreadsheet and print out – the only change is the expended numbers in the 2018 expended column have been updated to 8/31 with total expended at \$3.1 million through August 31st.

New Business:

- Mr. Kelly came before the Committee and gave an invitation to a birthday party celebrating 10 years of the new library. The party will be Friday, October 12, 2018. The party is free and open to everyone in Atkinson. There is an afternoon program for children and from 5:00 on there will be a birthday cake, some speeches and a chance to meet the library. Mr. Kelly discussed how information sharing has changed and how nice it is that the library has been able to keep up with the changes. One reason is the efforts of the Director. Last year of 217 libraries that reported, the Atkinson library ranks in the top 12% of all libraries in the State. In terms of programs, it is in the top 5% and in terms of youth services it is in the top 3%.

The funds for the event are all donated. Mr. Kelly is hoping that Budget Committee members will have a chance to stop in for the event. Jim Cobb is the Chairman, Karen Tresadi is the other new member, Chris Witterville and Marne Finn. That night, people who attend have an opportunity to win a \$100 gift card.

- The Committee needs to find a new recorder. Vice Chair Barker took minutes during the summer.
- Member Torosian stated that as Department Heads come in, he feels it would be helpful for reference purposes to list anything new in their budget. Vice Chair Barker responded that she has that in her template.

Agenda: Conservation, Memorial Day, Cemetery, Elections, Patriotic Purposes, Tax Collector

Conservation– Account Number 46111: Paul Wainwright came before the Budget Committee to present the Conservation Committee budget and passed out the Conservation Commission budget spreadsheet.

The first column of number is what was approved for FY18. The second column is \$900 that is encumbered from FY17 that was not spent because the fields were not mowed. Chair Wainwright explained the term encumbered. Chair Wainwright explained that in the past, it was commonplace to roll over money not spent in the previous year to the next year. Under current law, unspent money must go back into the general fund. Mr. Wainwright explained that there is still money in the budget that is unspent.

The first column is what has been spent in FY 18, the next column is money that is committed but has not been invoiced. The third column is yet to go, things that still need to be done in FY 18. Chair Wainwright explained that not all money has not been committed until he has definite plans. All money in the third column has been committed.

The last column is what the Commission is requesting for FY19. Chair Wainwright requested level funding for level funding, some items have increased and some have decreased. He would like to put some more money into the Recording Clerk Line so that he can pay the final bill. He will go to the Selectmen to request money be transferred into the Recording Clerk account.

Member Carroll asked about signs. Chair Wainwright explained that the Conservation Commission has not been putting up signs but is planning to put signs on all the trails. Mr. Wainwright showed the Budget Committee a brochure with all Atkinson Trails. The Conservation Commission is planning to make a digital map of all Atkinson Trails to put on social media web sites. Another goal is to make a QR code to put on the trail heads and+ which will show all the trails if a picture of it is taken.

Chair Wainwright is still investigating procuring more conservation land for the Town and he is looking for grant money to protect open spaces. There are several sources of grants to procure conservation land. Money in the conservation account will be used as matching funds.

Member Worden asked about Care of Grounds and the mowing schedule. Chair Wainwright informed him that the Conservation Commission plans to mow once a year. The cost is \$900 and is in the yet to go column. Another expense is \$1,500 to replace the gate at the Sawyer Field.

Member Worden asked if the Conservation Commission is looking at any properties and Chair Wainwright responded in the affirmative but is not ready to discuss it publicly.

Vice Chair Barker asked about special programs. Chair Wainwright explained that it is for Eagle Scout projects. There is one Eagle Scout project that may be completed in FY 18. Another project is money to send youths various summer programs. There have been no takers, but the Commission plans to seek out young people to send earlier. Another possibility would be more bat houses. There was a bat house project in the Sawyer Forest last year.

Chair Wainwright explained that what makes Atkinson unique is that there are a number of Conservation areas located throughout the Town which makes it more difficult to manage. He has done some recruiting and now has a full Commission.

One of the signs that will be going up will be one asking people to volunteer to maintain the trails. Vice-Chairman Wendy Barker suggested an “Adopt A Trail” program.

Cemetery – Account Number 41951: Sue Killam, Cemetery Trustee, presented the Cemetery budget.

Numbers as expended are through the end of August. Ms. Killam explained that there was only one change in the FY19 budget. There is a small increase in the wage column for one employee who works part time while the Cemetery is open, from early spring until first snow.

Wages – Line Number 41951.110.00: a small increase

Computer software and deeds – Line Number 41951.342.00: This line is level and is for recording cemetery deeds.

Telephone – Line Number 41951.341.00: \$100 less

Other Professional Services – Line Number 41951.390.00: For excavating the graves. This line will be the same for FY19. Member Carroll asked if that money was repaid. Ms. Killam stated that she believes so and agreed to verify it.

Office Supplies and Postage – Line Number 41951.620.00: \$200 less. Postage is the same

Minor Equipment – Line Number 41951.630.00: same

Care of Grounds – Line Number 41951.650.00: hiring someone to mow. The Trustees are asking \$25,000 in order to get a quality professional for the job. It is slow, careful work. Bids for FY18 ranged from \$17,000 to \$25,000 or \$26,000. They were not happy with the service for the company they contracted in FY18. Another issue is the way the contract was written. They did not go with lowest bidder for FY18 because of reference concerns. For FY18, it was a flat fee for the season and it needs to be structured to show more for mowing.

Mileage – Line Number 41951.820.00: same

Gasoline – Line Number 41951: same

Discussion: Ms. Killam informed the Committee that the bid for mowing would go out in February. Vice Chair Barker asked about the increase in wages. The worker in question has worked for the Cemetery trustees for many years and is an excellent worker.

Ms. Killam explained that she asked about buildings at the Selectmen's meeting but Mr. Phair explained that it would go under the general government fund.

Member Worden asked about road repairs. Ms. Killam explained that the repairs were done, but the roads wash out regularly because of the slope.

Returning to buildings, there is some wood rot that needs repair.

Another issue is space. All the available space at the present site will be used within 10 years. One of the selectmen suggested building a cache of money for purchasing cemetery land.

Elections and Registration: Mr. Phair presented the Elections and Registration budget

Moderator – Account Number 41402.110: This coming year there is only the deliberative session and one regular Town election so the numbers are down. For example, \$1,500 was budgeted for ballot clerk in FY18. \$450 is budgeted for FY19. Printing and binding are down from \$5,700 to \$3,00. New Equipment is down from \$300 to \$200 and food is down as well.

The total proposed is \$6,851 for FY19.

Election Administration – Account Number 41403:

Checklist supervisor is down from \$2,481 to \$1,675 based upon anticipating 141 hours at \$11.88 per hour.

\$75 for supplies from \$150. The postage line is the same

New Equipment Account Number 41403.740.00: This line has been blank, they are requesting a new scanning pen because there are three checklist supervisors at a cost of \$85.00.

The total moderator budget has dropped 30% for FY19.

Patriotic Purposes – Account Number 45831: level funded from year to year.

Alan Phair presented the budget for Patriotic Purposes. It is for Memorial Day and Flags.

Memorial Day - Account Number 45832: flat at \$1,775

Flags – Account Number 45832: flat at \$2,000. Mr. Phair explained that flags are purchased yearly.

Tax Collector – Account Number-41504: The tax collector was not present, but Mr. Phair explained that the tax collector budget is level funded except supplies. Mr. Phair explained that the Tax Collector is proposing either a new, fireproof filing cabinet or a safe. The fireproofing in the cabinets goes bad. A safe would cost about \$800. The quote from WB Mason for a four drawer, fireproof Fire King safe is \$1673. It meets all the requirements for fire safety. This is the only change. The current file cabinet can be used for other purposes. Member Carroll asked the number of tax payers in Town and Mr. Phair stated he would get it for the Committee.

Minutes: June 26, 2018

Member Worden made a motion to accept the minutes of the June 26, 2018 meeting of the Atkinson Budget Committee as amended. Member Carroll seconded the motion. The Atkinson Budget Committee voted five in favor with Chair Smith abstaining. Vote: 5/0/1.

Action Items:

Set up a shared drive with the Technology Committee – Member Malo has discussed it with the Block 5 Technology, the company that is contracted to support Atkinson computer equipment. Security needs to be very tight. Unless you have a Town issued laptop, it is not possible to log into the server. Having a spreadsheet on a shared drive would not make it available to the Committee. Member Malo stated that the only way to share the spreadsheet would be to put it on the Town web site. The next issue is Office 365, which will be in the cloud rather than on the server. It will be \$5.00 for each email address and \$50.00 for each license. If the spreadsheet is put on the website, it is free and anyone can look at it. If there are issues, then they can contact Chair Smith. There is no other way to do it without incurring additional cost.

Chair Smith polled the Committee. Vice Chair Barker responded that it is a draft, not a final version and needs to be labeled as such. Member Malo agreed that as long as it is clearly marked draft, it should be ok. Chair Smith stated that he gives the Town Administrator a copy of the spreadsheet and he puts changes from the Department heads and sends the changes to Chair Smith who sends an updated copy of the budget to all Budget Committee members every week. Chair Smith explained that he maintains the master copy and the Town Administrator sends him the information. Chair Smith agreed that he can post updated copies of the Budget on a website. There are 30 tabbed sheets, so it would be difficult to put a PDF copy on a website.

Statements to department heads – Vice Chair Barker has a draft.

Liaisons meet with department heads – still being worked on.

Flow Chart of Budget Process – Mr. Malo has a process document and would like to meet with the Town Administrator. He should have something by the next meeting.

Organize a Public Notice for a meeting to vote on the final budget January 29, 2019.

Keep track of action items

Interns – Member Malo stated that this item can be dropped. That question shows up on the questionnaire to the department heads, so the benefits of interns can be seen shortly.

Reformat the building maintenance spreadsheet – Vice Chair Barker stated it is completed and needs to meet with the Town Administrator to review it with him before presenting it to the budget committee

Printed agenda for each meeting - done

Department fact sheets – Mr. Malo stated that Elder Services is nearly complete, a questionnaire has been submitted and the answers are complete, the Police Department questionnaire is nearly complete. The next one will be for the Tax Collector. Member Worden is working on one for Atkinson TV. Member Malo stated that he has some generic questionnaires, too. The Town Clerk fact sheet is complete

Talk to State about Road Maintenance – Member Torosian explained that there was limited money for FY18. The money is distributed twice a year. Some of the money comes from FEMA for disaster relief. Until still has money for tree trimming. Tree trimming is ongoing. Member Torosian is seeking State and/or utility money.

Train other Committee members on the MS37 DRA software, the Budget Committee spreadsheet using imbedded macros and converting the Budget Committee spreadsheet to FY19 - The spreadsheet was developed by Dave Paquette and invented a lot of the macros. Vice Chair Barker agreed to sit with Chair Smith to learn the MS37 DRA software and how to do the budget.

Ask that Revenue be included in budget – Vice Chair Barker stated that it is not completed. She is also working on a template for line item summaries. Member Malo explained that he has a template for the Tax Collector and the Town Clerk. Vice Chair Barker and Member Malo to work on it.

Summary after line items – template still in progress

Member Torosian to speak to Tax Collector about tax revenue.

Member Carroll to follow up with Elder Services regarding donations for rides.

July minutes – Vice Chair Barker to complete.

Chair Smith requested a motion to adjourn.

Member Sue Carroll made a motion to adjourn the September 18, 2018 meeting of the Atkinson Budget Committee at 9:00 PM. Member Torosian seconded the motion. All members of the Atkinson Budget Committee voted in favor. Vote: 6/0/0.