

TOWN OF ATKINSON
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, April 27, 2021

Members Present

Bill Smith, Chair
Wendy Barker, Vice Chair
Bob Malo
Peter Torosian
Mark Sakakeeny
Ray Fournier

Others Present

Chair Smith called the in-person-only meeting (no Zoom) to order at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda: Choose 2021 department primary and alternate liaisons, review calendar and previous Minutes

Chair Smith asked members to state their preferences on which departments they would serve as primary and alternate liaisons to. Adjustments were made accordingly to the draft calendar.

General Discussion

Vice Chair Barker said that, to address complaints about Committee voting when relevant departments not watching, we should remind people that the meetings are public, and if they are interested they should show up or watch the meetings. The Budget Committee calendar has been re-arranged, to designate specific days for first-pass voting on departments. The Committee may potentially discuss and have 2nd-pass votes at any time. The Committee may review everything but payroll and energy at any time, and discuss payroll and energy near the end of the process. The Committee's next step is for liaisons to notify their departments who they are. Wendy will contact Pat, to discuss details of what reports with more granularity on expense statistics, to better understand departments' expenditures in more detail, as well as more detail on revenues.

Member Torosian said he would like to see a contract calendar, showing when contracts expire and when negotiations/discussions start.

A conversation on a percentage overall budget increase target included ideas such as 2%, 1-1/2%, TBD based on inflation data, TBD after meeting with departments, and TBD after seeing contract data. No consensus was reached at this time.

Member Malo reported on a Selectmens' meeting he attended. The cost of equipment for 7 new part timers was approximately \$3,500 each, and 4 extra pieces of rappelling equipment at \$4,500 each (since a ladder truck can reportedly barely reach the 5th floor of a new development). Many questions and ideas were discussed. Can gear be reused (like Marine Patrol equipment is)? E.g. helmets--why buy 7 new helmets? Disappointing to see so much turnover, when we lose investment in training--contracts might help. Maybe hire one at a time per year incrementally? Maybe instead of increase, go for 5%

less--maybe it's doable w/ planning. When people leave, maybe have lightly-used property stay with the town. Where did the clothes of those who left go? When assigned gear, do they sign for it?

Minutes for 4/13/2021

Small editorial corrections were noted, and **Member Torosian** made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by **Vice Chair Barker**. All members were in favor. **Vote: 6/0/0**

Chair Smith made a motion to adjourn.

Member Fournier seconded the motion. All members were in favor. **Vote: 6/0/0**

The Atkinson Budget Committee Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.