

TOWN OF ATKINSON
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, June 16, 2020

Members Present

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

Others Present

David Cressman, Town Administrator
Bob Worden, Selectmen Liaison

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda: Reading RTK Checklist, Attendance, Selectman Liaison Report, Liaisons' Reports, Goals for Budget Percentage

Chair Smith read the public notice regarding COVID-19.
Attendance was taken.

Selectman Worden thanks Member Torosian addressing the Selectmen in regards to the Budget Committee meet in person. Unfortunately, due to the COVID environment and protecting town employees it would not be possible at this time but hopeful that it may be within the first or second week in July. Also, the area where the Budget Committee meets is a transition site for valuable records and equipment boxes. The technology was not available for the Community Center. Once the Committee is able to meet in person, there will also be the Zoom Rooms for people who require it.

In regard to the Warrant Article for the police cruiser lease agreement which is due every year, the lease is for \$31,721.60. The Selectmen, Budget Committee. Administration and the writers of the Article failed to write a source as to where the money was coming from. In order to pay the bill, the amount was taken from the Overlay Account which had a balance of \$37,000. Because the account is rarely used, this was a hefty amount to withdraw. This is a learning opportunity to make sure the proper allocations are met.

The Town Clerk's Office has three shifted position changes.

- Asst. Town Clerk, Shirley Harbor, was part time per diem and has moved to strictly per diem at \$16.37 per hour
- Bonnie Jordan, Asst Town Clerk, has retired to part time for 20 hours per week at \$18/hour.
- Carrie has moved from part time to full time Deputy Town Clerk position starts at \$18/hour and increases to \$18.50/hour pending review of the Town Clerk and Town Administrator.

While there is no significant change, one of the positions does not carry health insurance which offers an increase in savings for now.

Member Torosian asked if the Town Clerk personnel are working in the office and not at home.

Selectman Worden said they are working in the office and are very busy and doing a great job.

In regard to the Sun n Fun program, there will be a 4-week program with 40 children/week. The proposed fee is \$120. The estimated income will be \$19,200. \$7,000 will be taken from the town budget and \$2,560 will be taken from the Cares Act. The program will run in the last two weeks in July and the first two weeks in August. For those unable to join this program, they will be advised to go to the YMCA where the town runs a vigorous program.

Administrator Cressman stated that the Town Clerk, after five months, has seen a decline in the Budget of \$81,829. Out of that number, \$42,776 represents new vehicles; the rest represents transfers and renewals. The total possible loss would be \$102,000 in new vehicles. There is an estimate of \$21,000 loss on interests on deposits. Gov. Sununu has no plans to reduce state aid to NH municipalities. There could be a revenue loss of \$300,000. But, in terms of expenditures, the departments have under spent by \$300,000. In terms of expenditures, our bookkeeper stated that, at the end of May, the remaining balance was 64% of the budget which is the highest it's been over the past six years.

Member Malo asked if the residents are paying their taxes with credit cards.

Administrator Cressman said there was an indication that payments have been made online by credit card or electronic check.

Selectman Worden said that the department heads did a good job with the 5% cut; the library has been spectacular keeping their expenses down; \$151,627 has not been spent on snow and ice due to the mild winter. Selectman Worden is optimistic that the budget will be under control.

Member Torosian anticipates the state budget being cut substantially due to the fact that the state budget expires in June and legislative discussions of deep cuts for the next two-year cycle. He cautions the committee to tread lightly with the 2021 Budget.

Vice Chair Barker asked, in regards to budget cuts, if anyone is analyzing the utilities lines to see if the buildings aren't open, are the utilities being used, are we going to expect a lower expense in regard to these utilities, such as propane usage electricity, gas mileage for elder services and town garage; mileage and travel for expected training for the library and town clerk, maintenance manager, highway department; office supplies; and considering another 5% decrease in spending in each department.

Selectman Worden said he will address these lines at the next Board of Selectmen meeting.

Chair Smith asked if any liaisons had reports for their departments.

Member Torosian asked the Town Clerk for a report which he received.

Vice Chair Barker said she has not been in touch with her departments but is looking forward to being in touch with them.

Chair Smith encourages all liaisons to contact your department heads before the Fall Budget season. He also asked what should be the goal for the budget increase percentage for the next year. His recommendation is for a 0% change (flat budget).

After all members had a lengthy discussion, most agreed to a flat budget at this time.

Minutes for 5/19/2020

Member Torosian made a motion to approve the minutes as amended; **Member Sakakeeny** seconded the motion. All members were in favor. **Vote: 6/0/0**

Member Torosian made a motion to adjourn. **Vice Chair Barker** seconded the motion. All members were in favor. **Vote: 6/0/0**

The Atkinson Budget Committee Meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.