

**TOWN OF ATKINSON
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, September 10, 2019**

Members Present

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

Others Present

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

Agenda: Spreadsheet Update, Liaison Reports, Calendar Updates, Action Items, Minutes, Future Agenda

Chair Smith suggested discussing the Spreadsheet. He stated that it shows through the end of August, the town had expended \$3.12 million out of the budget of \$5.11 million. Chair Smith said that Dave Cressman, Town Administrator, had given the Budget Committee proposed numbers and Chair Smith will try to learn if these numbers are still proposed or firm numbers before transferring them into the master spreadsheet.

Chair Smith moved on to the Calendar which shows the department lineup for our next meeting: Conservation, Memorial Day, Cemetery, Elections, Patriotic Purposes, Tax Collector. Chair Smith asked if the liaisons spoke to the Department Heads to remind them.

- Vice Chair Barker stated that she is planning to speak with Noriko/Paula Holigan (Memorial Day/Patriotic Purposes) and Dave Cressman (Town Government) this week.
- Member Torosian said that he will speak with Paul Wainwright (Conservation), Kathleen Friel (Cemetery) and Debbie DeSimone (Tax Collector) this week.
- Member Malo stated that the Tax Collector is putting in the budget software that will allow residents to pay their taxes online. The bottom line to consider is the cost of maintenance will be an additional charge, eventually, to taxpayers.
- Member Fournier said that he would call Leslie Barbera (Elections).
- Chair Smith went down the list on the calendar for departments' schedules from September 24 through October 8.

- Member Malo mentioned that the Library is getting bids for the parking lot expansion and also looking to add a full time position.
- Member Fournier said that he spoke with Ted Stewart (Highways, etc.) and learned that his proposed budget is down.
- Member Worden stated that Chief Mike Murphy (Fire) was on target. Member Worden will be meeting with Chief Tim Crowley (Police).
- Vice Chair Barker said that Noriko (Recreation) is planning the following:
 - to request an increase to the pay rate for the camp counselors to NH minimum wage of \$10/hour in 2020 and \$11/hour in 2021.
 - She would like to increase the number of counselors.
 - There will be a small increase of \$300 for custodial supplies.
 - She's considering a Staples membership to cut down administrative costs.
 - She is adding her husband to health insurance next year.

Member Torosian asked Member Fournier if there had been any change in Ted Stewart's (Recycling) budget in regards to savings. Member Fournier said that Ted's proposed budget has, basically, remained unchanged.

Chair Smith mentioned receiving mail from charitable groups asking for support:

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| • Red Cross asking | \$300 |
| • Friends Program | \$125 |
| • Lamprey Healthcare | \$1800 |
| • So. NH Services | TBD |
| • Child Advocacy Center | \$1250 |
| • Rockingham Meals on Wheels | \$3811 |

Member Torosian had some comments/concerns:

- Feels that holding the budget to 2% is fair, considering the Town Administrator's numbers were at 2.7%. The Town of Plaistow is holding it at 2.5% and, last year, held it at 3%.
- Would like to learn more about the Library siding issue. Member Malo said it was in the hands of the Buildings department.
- Learned that we lost one Full-Time Fire employee. Member Worden said it was being resolved and there will be no other additions this year.
- While it was agreed that the Selectmen/Budget Committee meeting was productive, Member Torosian has yet to hear back from the Selectmen regarding the recommendations that were made.

- Filling the Assistant Town Administrator position or possibly merging the position with another. Chair Smith asked if anyone would draft a letter to the Selectmen; Member Torosian said he could start one to pass around for comment.

Member Malo mentioned that one of the Selectmen/Budget Committee meeting recommendations was the Volunteer list. In order to get that started, someone needs to be put in charge of the task. He plans to pursue this along with recognition of volunteers.

Chair Smith asked for a motion to approve the minutes of August 13, 2019. Member Worden made the motion to approve the minutes; Member Torosian seconded the motion. All attending members were in favor. Vote: 5/0/0

Member Worden made a motion to adjourn and Member Torosian seconded the motion. All members were in favor. Vote: 6/0/0

The Atkinson Budget Committee adjourned at 8:10 p.m.