

TOWN OF ATKINSON
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, October 15, 2019

Members Present

Bill Smith, Chair

Wendy Barker, Vice Chair

Ray Fournier

Peter Torosian

Bob Malo

Bob Worden

Others Present

Ted Stewart, Road Agent

Diane Herr, Library Director

Kathy Watson, Library Asst. Director

Tom Kelley, Library Trustees Chair

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Agenda: Department Presentations of Library, General Government Buildings, and Highway; Minutes

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Library – Diane Herr

- Director Herr informed the committee that she will be retiring at the end of the year.
- The job is posted and interviews will begin some time in November. Since no one knows what the new director will need, in terms of a family plan, health insurance, etc., the salary is on hold until more is revealed.
- There is a 2% increase for both the Director and Assistant Director.
- Increase the children's youth librarian position from 32 hrs/week to 40 hrs/week.
- They are requesting a 2% merit increase for the library assistants which is down from last year (2.5%)
- Health insurance numbers are not available at this time.
- Heating numbers are not available at this time.
- Other Professional Services decreased. Hopefully they won't need this service for another five years.
- Computer Software decrease of \$1,250
- Computer Hardware decrease of \$6,585

Member Torosian asked about a full-time additional employee.

Director Herr said she was not full-time; she was at 24 hours and it was increased to 32 hours. There is no longer anyone in that position. The job is posted for a skilled person and interviews will take place soon.

Asst. Director Watson said it was posted as a part-time position but the Trustees voted to post it full time.

Member Torosian asked if the potential new employee's job description is acquiring funding.

Director Herr agreed.

Member Worden asked about hiring Director Herr's replacement.

Chair Kelley said they've set a target date of October 25 to get as many applicants as possible and interviewing will begin after that date.

Member Worden stated that he has a passion for promoting within and strongly recommends they look into it.

Chair Kelley said they have.

Member Malo pointed out that there are three internships at the library and one at the police department. He feels there could be more but it is nice to see.

Member Torosian asked about building repairs.

Director Herr said there is no problem inside the building. She is not aware of any problems with the outside.

Member Malo asked if there was any additional information on the parking lot expansion.

Chair Kelley said the Trustees tried to get some seed money to allow the town engineer to do an up-to-date survey with some accurate information in terms of boundary delineation, water runoff, engineering issues, etc. The Trustees will be seeing the update on Friday, October 18. After that point, they will share the information with the budget committee.

Member Torosian asked how many parking spots are there now.

Chair Kelley said there are 30 and they are looking double it.

Highway – Ted Stewart

- Agent Stewart stated the budget is down 4.11%. There's a 65% decrease in the lease line because leases are being paid off.
- Agent Stewart will be putting out a warrant article to start a capital reserve fund using \$60,000 a year going forward.
- The administration lines show 2% COLA increase per the Selectmen's recommendation.
- Engineering lines show no increase/change.
- Cleaning and Maintenance shows the Labor line increased for \$2/hour raise for two employees.
- Equipment repairs is increased by 50%. He has \$4000 for tire replacements. He is requiring maintenance of vehicles that he is still paying for.

Member Malo commented that next year the vehicles will be a year older. If we spend over \$8000 this year, why would we assume the expenses will be less if the equipment is a year older?

Agent Stewart said when tires wear out, he gets them retreaded and save them for the winter rather than buying brand new tires at \$400 each.

Vice Chair Barker asked for clarification about leasing the vehicles.

Agent Stewart said he leases the vehicles for five years and hopes to keep them for seven.

Member Malo asked if there are plans for a warrant article to position us to have the cash we'll need to pay.

Agent Stewart said instead of having a lease line in the budget, we'll have a capital improvement line. Agent Stewart said he asks for an increase on tree cutting. He over-expended this year by \$1600 and could have over-expended by double.

Member Torosian asked what for the balance of the snow fund.

Agent Stewart said \$52,000.

Member Torosian asked how much would he be asking for in the warrant article.

Agent Stewart said he hopes to present two warrants: one is for paving for \$420,000; the other will be to establish the capital reserve fund starting off at \$65,000.

Member Torosian asked if the warrant is approved, will the lease line disappear out of the budget?

Agent Stewart said yes.

Vice Chair Barker asked if there is enough money to get through to the end of this year.

Agent Stewart said he is very comfortable with a little over 50% left for the remainder of the year for the contract labor. Approximately 30% for the salt line will get us comfortably to the end of the year.

Recycling – Ted Stewart

Agent Stewart just reflects the \$2 an hour raise for the attendant which equated to a 5% increase in the total budget. All other line numbers stayed the same.

Elections

Chair Smith spoke with Mr. Garrity, Elections Moderator, who expects to hire more ballot clerks due to the increase in the number of voters and expected high turnout. He does not know how many warrants there will be, equipment may need repairs.

Chair Smith made a motion to approve the Moderator and Elections Administration sections; Vice Chair Barker seconded the motion. All members were in favor. Vote: 6/0/0

Minutes

Chair Smith made a motion to approve the amended minutes of 9/17/19; Member Worden seconded the motion. All members were in favor. Vote: 6/0/0

Member Fournier made a motion to approved the minutes of 10/8/19; Vice Chair Barker seconded the motion. Five members were in favor; one abstained. Vote: 5/0/1

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

The Atkinson Budget Committee adjourned at 9:00 p.m.