

TOWN OF ATKINSON
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, October 20, 2020

Members Present

Bill Smith, Chair
Wendy Barker, Vice Chair
Ray Fournier

Bob Malo
Peter Torosian
Mark Sakakeeny

Others Present

Bob Worden, Selectmen Liaison
Mike Murphy, Fire Chief
Ted Houlihan, Interim Elder Services Director

Noriko Yoshida-Travers, Incoming Elder Svcs Director

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

Agenda: Reading RTK Checklist, Attendance, Selectmen Liaisons' Report, Fire Dept and Elderly Services Budget Reports

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

Selectman Worden reported the following:

- The Selectmen accepted the resignation of the building supervisor
- The health insurance for 11 town employees will see a 6% increase this year.
- The police department's health insurance will show a decrease.
- The current insurance plan is 80/20.

Fire Department – Mike Murphy

Chief Murphy reported the following:

- No change in Ambulance
- No change in Homeland Security
- Unable to present the Fire Department budget until the consultant study comes back which is due on November 1
- May hear about the grant in February. Past denials have been based on Atkinson's financial statements.

Chair Smith has suggested that the Fire Department report be rescheduled, tentatively, for November 17.

Elderly Services – Ted Houlihan / Noriko Yoshida-Travers

Interim Director Houlihan stated the following:

- The budget is the same as last year with the exception of the Director's salary. There will be a subtraction of \$38,090 which will bring it down to \$96,381.
- The other adjustment is to create a line for Assistant Director for \$2,000. This amount would come out of the driver's bottom line which was \$76,051 and will now be \$74,051. Therefore there is no dollar change in the budget.

Member Torosian asked if there is any anticipation to not fully expend the entire budget amount due to COVID-19.

Director Houlihan said yes, the rides are beginning to increase. It's critically important to keep the service open since several people have needed services addressed that are not COVID-related. There have been changes made to the vehicles that are an extra cost, such as spraying, cleaning and disinfecting before and after a ride, only able to take one person as opposed to previously doubling up, the purchase of Plexiglas panes for a separation between rider and driver, no rider is allowed to sit in the front seat, riders are masked and temperature is taken.

Member Torosian asked if there would be a problem in the future for transporting more passengers with the current fleet.

Director Houlihan said they can negotiate with clients for a different appointment time and exceptions are made for a married couple as long as they pass the temperature check.

Member Malo asked if they could provide the cost per trip, comparing last year with this year. This would give them a feel for how much more money is being spent to bring each person as opposed to transporting several people in one ride.

Selectman Worden suggested that if Member Malo would provide Director Yoshida-Travers with a list of what the committee is looking for, the Selectmen would appreciate having that information also.

Member Malo will check the information provided to the Town Administrator before requesting more information from Director Yoshida-Travers.

Member Torosian asked if it is safe to assume that the entire budget will not be expended.

Director Houlihan said he has projected that approximately \$35,000 would be left.

Chair Smith suggests looking over and discussing some budgets next week and possibly considering screen sharing.

Chair Smith made a motion to skip the meeting of Tuesday, November 3, since it is Election Day.

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

Member Torosian reminded the committee that the plan is to level-fund the budget for 2021.

Chair Smith reminded everyone that the committee has not met with the Police Department which is the biggest budget and will most likely have some increases.

Minutes for 10/13/2020

Chair Smith made a motion to approve the minutes as written; **Member Fournier** seconded the motion.

All members were in favor. **Vote: 4/0/2**

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

The Atkinson Budget Committee Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.