

**TOWN OF ATKINSON  
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING  
Tuesday, October 22, 2019**

**Members Present**

Bill Smith, Chair

Wendy Barker, Vice Chair

Ray Fournier

Peter Torosian

Bob Malo

Bob Worden

**Others Present**

Mike Murphy, Fire Chief

Ted Houlihan, Elder Services Director

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

**Agenda:** Presentations of Fire Department, Elder Services; Minutes

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## **Fire Department – Mike Murphy**

Chief Murphy stated that there were no changes with the exception of the following:

- Fire Department is level funded with the exception of the 2% that was granted by the Selectmen in all the payroll lines and all associated with it.
- The only addition to the budget would be the \$4000 increase to the truck maintenance line.
- Chief Murphy is anticipating some small increases as he bids for fuel, electricity, etc.
- He is waiting on some numbers on contracts for EMS equipment calibration; possibly \$1000.
- Under Professional Services, the EMS Captain informed Chief Murphy that the contracts have increased on the calibrations on defibrillators, EKGs. He is already anticipating it to go up \$1000.
- The heating bid has not gone out yet.

### **Vice Chair Barker asked about warrants.**

Chief Murphy said he is going with the warrant article for capital reserve for \$120,000. At this time, it is the only warrant he is proposing.

### **Chair Smith asked if the Selectmen considered Chief Murphy's proposed numbers.**

Chief Murphy said yes they accepted all except the \$1000 which was not shown on the paperwork.

### **Chair Smith he would copy Chief Murphy's proposed numbers to the Selectmen's column.**

Chief Murphy said he received an email stating that they would not be granted funding this year.

### **Vice Chair Barker asked about insight as to what is going on with the Fire building budget.**

Chief Murphy said they are all set and shouldn't see any big numbers for the Fire building this year.

### **Vice Chair Barker asked about the flooring and the drain grate.**

Chief Murphy said flooring is good and the drain grate is serviceable but may need to be addressed eventually.

Chief Murphy asked for support for the generator for the Town Hall. The Fire Department is tied into the town server in regards to the computer system.

### **Member Malo asked if it might be better to look into the computer needs because a generator will cost \$35,000+.**

### **Member Worden asked if the waste water issue has been resolved.**

Chief Murphy said it is resolved to the point that it will be seen in the Building Maintenance budget.

### **Member Malo stated that the Technology Department is implementing a Time and Attendance program. They will be emailing a video to each department asking them to review the video and return an email back stating whether they are in favor or it or not.**

Chief Murphy said he is familiar with the system but hopefully will be retired by the time it's implemented.

## **Elder Services – Ted Houlihan**

Director Houlihan is in support of the generator for the Town Hall because of recent complications.

### **Chair Smith asked for the Elder Services proposed numbers.**

Director Houlihan stated that the numbers are the same as last year with the exception of the COLA factor.

### **Chair Smith asked if the Selectmen have approved the proposed budget.**

Director Houlihan said yes..

### **Chair Smith stated that he would update his copy and copy it into the Selectmen's column.**

### **Member Torosian said that the Budget Committee has not made a decision on the COLA.**

### **Member Torosian asked if there is a change growth-wise.**

Director Houlihan said that he still has a good number of rides which he is combining as often as possible. He has also been able to purchase a replacement vehicle.

### **Member Torosian asked if the condition of the vehicles is adequate.**

Director Houlihan said condition of the vehicles is good and the replacement is a hybrid and has free maintenance for two years.

### **Member Torosian asked about Director Houlihan's status as acting director.**

Director Houlihan said he is hoping another director comes along. Crunching numbers is not his strong suit. He handles the people and drivers; he does a number of home visits; he delivers medical equipment to people; he writes the town report; he works on the fundraising letter that goes to the town residents.

### **Member Torosian said that it sounds like he needs an intern.**

### **Member Worden asked if there is an applicant for the job.**

Director Houlihan said there has been some conversation but he thinks the position may get absorbed by another person in town.

### **Member Worden asked about the health status of the people Director Houlihan sees and how many people that are alone and don't get checked on or need more intervention from the town's eyes.**

Director Houlihan said the Lion's Club and John Flino at CVS and he are going to nine shut-ins to deliver high-dose flu shots. There are another 12 people who did not need Elder Services to come to them.

### **Member Worden asked if Elder Services is in contact with the Police Department regarding wellness checks.**

Director Houlihan said yes, quite frequently. When Elder Services has an appointment when the person does not answer their door, the protocol is to contact the Atkinson Police to check on the client.

### **Member Malo stated that the Technology Department is implementing a Time and Attendance program. They will be emailing a video to each department asking them to review the video and return an email back stating whether they are in favor or it or not.**

Director Houlihan said he would appreciate the fact that it would eliminate one thing for him to do.

## **Minutes**

**Member Torosian made a motion to approve the minutes of 10/22/19; Chair Smith seconded the motion. All members were in favor. Vote: 6/0/0**

**Member Worden stated that the Selectmen postponed the approval of the recording clerk's salary increase due to lack of time.**

Chair Smith said it was recommended to continue payments and upon the Selectmen's approval, the increase will be retroactively paid.

**Member Worden noted that the Selectmen mentioned the Budget Committee throughout the Board meeting regarding certain issues. He feels this is a positive step and glad that the Selectmen consider the Budget Committee part of the management team.**

Member Worden also stated that the Selectmen liaison will be attending next week's Budget Committee meeting to discuss \$25,000 to be put towards Buildings needs.

**Chair Smith asked if that is money coming back from the State this year or next year.**

Member Worden said it would be taken out of unspent line items. There were three or four departments that were underspent this year. The new building needs committee had no money for a budget and the Selectmen suggested putting the \$25,000 unspent money into the building needs committee budget.

Members discussed their preference to hearing more details, considering an independent inspector as opposed to the Town's building inspector, and assuring less wasteful expenditures.

Member Torosian mentioned that Atkinson would be receiving a one-time municipal infrastructure grant that is split and distributed two times. There is also an ongoing educational funding that will happen over four payments.

Regarding the previous meeting's discussion about the \$30,087, Member Torosian suggests that the Budget Committee request to the Selectmen that the money offset the tax rate.

Discussion was to send a resolution to the Selectmen as soon as possible. Member Torosian offered the following statement to be submitted to the Selectmen:

Whereas the State of New Hampshire has sent the Town of Atkinson \$30,087 on October 15, 2019, for a one-time municipal infrastructure grant and whereas this money went directly into the Town treasury in the 2019 budget year and because the 2019 budget was already set and the 2019 money already allocated for expenses in the 2019 fiscal year, therefore be it resolved that we request that the Board of Selectmen use these funds to offset the tax rate going forward for 2020.

**Member Torosian made a motion to send the above resolution to the Selectmen; Member Worden seconded the motion. All members were in favor. Vote: 6/0/0**

**Member Malo suggested that since the Selectmen are not meeting next week, the Budget Committee could fine tune the resolution at the next meeting and have it ready to send to the Selectmen when they meet in two weeks.**

## **Library Update**

**Member Malo wanted to give a brief update regarding a meeting at the Library. An engineering consulting firm presented the parking lot design. Basically, they are going to double the parking area. There was an original suggestion of \$200,000 but the engineer feels it would be more like \$180,000 for the 2020 budget year.**

**Member Torosian asked if there was some discussion as to whether the Trustees or Friends of the Library would offset the cost so that the full amount doesn't have to go to warrant.**

**Member Malo said it's possible. They seemed to really want this but no final decision was made.**

**Member Torosian mentioned that the drainage was a huge concern. And while he's all about saving money, he would prefer it was taken care of properly so that it wouldn't cost more money down the line.**

**Member Malo said they seemed to have a plan for the drainage where they would insert holding tubes so that the water would collect and drain off gradually.**

**Member Torosian noted that the vast majority of the expenses would go towards fill and asphalt and the tubes.**

**Member Malo said in addition there would be a couple more lights.**

**Chair Smith 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 8:40 p.m.