

**TOWN OF ATKINSON  
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING  
Tuesday, November 12, 2019**

**Members Present**

Bill Smith, Chair

Wendy Barker, Vice Chair

Ray Fournier

Peter Torosian

Bob Malo

Bob Worden

**Others Present**

Dave Cressman, Town Administrator

Russell Wolf, IT Coordinator

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

**Agenda:** Town Administration; IT; Minutes

## **Town Administration – Dave Cressman**

### **General Government Executive**

Administrator Cressman stated that after adjusting the Selectmen's Recording Clerk salary, specifically FICA, there was a slight savings. He also adjusted the Town Administrator's salary and the Assistant Town Administrator's starting salary for a raise in April per the Selectmen's request. He is not 100% certain that the new Assistant Town Administrator will be taking the health insurance.

### **Member Worden asked if there was a candidate who went through to the Selectmen.**

Administrator Cressman said they have a candidate that was approved by the Selectmen and the candidate has accepted the job. The candidate, Andrea Hansen, was one of 18 applicants. Upon her interview, she indicated a preference of \$60,000 to \$70,000 for her salary.

### **Vice Chair Barker asked if the salary offer is the same amount that a seasoned employee receives.**

Administrator Cressman said that in terms of her years of service, it's equal. In terms of figuring out her salary, he based it on approximately \$25/hour.

### **Vice Chair Barker asked if the Town Administrator's salary is contractual.**

Administrator Cressman said it is. He added that it's also contractual that he does not take retirement or health insurance.

### **Member Torosian asked if the health insurance line was in anticipation of whether the new Assistant Town Administrator opts to take health insurance.**

Administrator Cressman said the new Assistant Town Administrator may or may not opt to take the health insurance.

### **Member Torosian asked if he knew when he would know her decision.**

Administrator Cressman said he would know when she walked through the door on January 2, 2020.

### **Vice Chair Barker said an adjustment could be made in the Deliberative Session if necessary.**

Member Torosian asked what the term of the Town Administrator's contract is.

### **Administrator Cressman said 5 years.**

Member Torosian asked, for planning purposes, what is anticipated under the contract.

Administrator Cressman said the contract leaves it up to the Selectmen; it's open ended.

Member Torosian asked if Administrator Cressman is under Massachusetts retirement, currently.

Administrator Cressman said yes.

## **Town Administration – Dave Cressman**

### **Buildings**

Administrator Cressman said, after speaking with Dave Weymouth, they agreed that there were certain items that they could change, decrease, keep the same, etc.

- Maintenance Supervisor – a raise was factored in and adjustments for FICA and Medicare
- Telephone is an area that could be decreased
- Cleaning Services will be bidding for
- Mileage was increased by \$1100
- Fire Station should make an adjustment to Other Professional Services due to the fact that the town has a holding tank. Some concerns have been raised as to the disposal of fluids from the tank. Also because the tank was never registered in 2001, they are in the process of doing that. The tank will now be taken to a septic disposal facility which will be an added cost.

### **Member Torosian asked what is being put in the tank currently**

Administrator Cressman said what's washed off in the apparatus room is what is put in the tank.

### **Member Torosian asked how large the tank was.**

Administrator Cressman said it holds 1000 gallons.

### **Member Torosian asked what happens after washing in the apparatus room and then the holding tank.**

Administrator Cressman said in the past it would be pumped into the storm drain system.

### **Member Torosian asked what are they washing off and what kind of residue may or may not be there.**

Administrator Cressman said the biggest concern is what DES has found an attraction to called PFAS.

### **Vice Chair Barker asked for an explanation of PFAS.**

Administrator Cressman said it's a forever chemical. It's been a major contributor to contaminated drinking water around Pease Air Base. Within the last 11 months, New Hampshire has adopted the most stringent PFAS limits in the country at about 15 parts per trillion.

### **Member Malo asked what the source of PFAS is.**

Administrator Cressman said the source of PFAS is primarily foam. In addition, other types of residue would be salt, oil, grease and whatever is washed off a fire vehicle

**Member Worden clarified that the proposal is that someone would come in twice a year to drain the holding tank.** He asked if this was a warning that the holding tank may not be adequate and we may need to purchase a new one in the future.

Administrator Cressman said no, this is just a warning that DES has arrived and they will be testing to learn if there have been other areas around the fire station that have been impacted by PFAS.

### **Member Torosian asked who paying for the testing.**

Administrator Cressman said he presumes the State's doing it.

### **Member Worden asked how they became aware of it.**

Administrator Cressman said the fire chief was inquiring about their due diligence in getting the stuff removed. The response was they didn't know we had a tank. The tank was supposed to be registered.

Administrator Cressman said that Dave Weymouth indicated that there were a number of items that needed work within the Fire Station.

- \*Drainage \$20,000
- \*\*Transfer Switch \$ 4,600
- Regular Maintenance \$ 5,000

\*The building needs committee feel that it's a priority. Cement is falling around the drain. The drain is raised above the floor level posing a tripping hazard. The drain, itself, is rusted. The drain grates are no longer attached to the drain. There may be better estimates depending on if they go with galvanized or stainless steel replacement.

**Vice Chair Barker said that the Fire Chief told this committee that it was not an issue. He said it would last a few years.**

Administrator Cressman said he is just passing on what the building supervisors and the building needs committee have confirmed. If you choose not to include it and there's an employee injury as a result of it, then you have to deal with a workman's comp claim.

**Member Worden said he went to the fire station and looked at the grate. He agrees that the drain was wobbly, it is not secured, and it does have a potential trip and fall safety hazard to it.**

Administrator Cressman said that Dave Weymouth had another project that was significant in cost: painting the bay of the apparatus room. The building needs feels that it can wait for another budget.

**Member Malo said instead of galvanized or stainless steel, he likes the idea of plastics. They don't corrode, they don't rust and they tend to last a long time.**

Administrator Cressman said the Dave Weymouth got an estimate of \$17,725 for the drain but he did not indicate whether it was galvanized or stainless steel.

**Member Torosian asked what the Building Needs Committee's criteria were for coming up with their decision. Did they consult with the Chief when they were looking at it?**

Administrator Cressman said he didn't know if they consulted with the Chief. They were looking at it from their perspective: maintenance of the building and dealing with issues that should be addressed because they've gone past their useful life.

**Member Torosian asked if they had some kind of testing method or did some of the members have experience in that kind of construction. What were their qualifications or criteria to come to that conclusion?**

Administrator Cressman said you have a former Town Administrator, a building inspector, Mr. Youngblood with a Master's Plumber's License.

**Member Torosian asked if the Selectmen brought this up.**

Administrator Cressman said they wanted the Building Needs Committee to look at it. When they did, they came back and said we need to do the drain but we do not need to do the ceiling at this time.

**Member Torosian asked if the Selectmen voted on that.**

Administrator Cressman said he would bring it to them on Tuesday.

**Member Malo said it sounds like something that will have to be addressed whether it's now or later.**

We might be able to look at this year's budget and decide this might be a good time to take care of it.

**Member Torosian is troubled with the fact that the Fire Chief's opinion felt it was okay.**

Member Malo said he may say its okay now but next year he'll say it's gotten worse.

**\*\*Member Worden asked about the Transfer Switch.**

Administrator Cressman said Dave Weymouth felt it is getting old.

**Member Worden asked what the Transfer Switch is.**

Administrator Cressman said it's for the generator.

**Member Torosian asked if there was a way to inspect that to determine whether it's functional.**

Administrator Cressman said he will go back to see if they can take another look at it.

**Chair Smith asked why a switch would ever go bad if it is not exposed to the elements.**

Administrator Cressman said he would come back with some answers.

Administrator Cressman said there is no change with the Library which brings us to the Kimball House.

**Member Torosian said that earlier in the season a question was brought up about siding for the Library. Is that a concern or is the Library okay for 2020?**

Administrator Cressman said that is still not determined. It is still an issue that's out there.

Administrator Cressman said the Kimball House is an area where the Selectmen wanted the Building Needs Committee to take a look at it which they did. Their recommendation was to include money for the foundation for \$2650 to prevent water, insect, and rodent infiltration. The front deck is in there for \$1200. They said it was a priority. The deck boards are deteriorating; they are in bad shape. Deck boards are no longer attached to the deck due to rusted and missing nails. The porch structure may be compromised.

**Member Torosian stated that he remembered repairs were done for the 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration.**

Vice Chair Barker agreed that the front stairs were done because they expected heavy traffic.

**Administrator Cressman said they may have done the front stairs, but not the porch. And the final thing recommended was painting two sides of the Kimball House for \$4000.**

Member Torosian asked why paint two sides rather than one.

**Administrator Cressman said if we don't stay ahead of it, there will be costly issues down the road. In terms of ADA compliance with a ramp, they feel it's not a priority and shouldn't be done in stages.**

Member Malo asked if it was necessary to have the septic system at the Kimball House pumped every year, along with all the buildings that are not used every day.

**Vice Chair Barker asked why is the heat at the Kimball House going up by \$500.**

Administrator Cressman said it's because that's the heat that has been used.

In various discussions, it was thought that the temperature was set at 55 degrees. But it is felt that it may not be set at that every time the house is left vacant which may be 75% of the time.

**Member Torosian stated that he knew the Selectmen were planning to use the \$29,000 to do a Buildings Needs study. He would like to know more about what tests to be done and who will be doing them. He'd like to know what the need for that is and what the purpose is.**

## **Solid Waste, Recycling – Dave Cressman**

### **Solid Waste**

Administrator Cressman said the budget starts, for this contract, every year on August 1. He uses seven months in 2020 for the basis of his budget. That being the case, it comes out to \$589,000 for 2020. That is based on a base price of \$298,275 which will increase, next year, by another 2.5%. It's based on a tonnage rate of \$76.88 which is figured at 2700 tons of trash and that increases by 2.5% every year.

### **Recycling**

The recycling fee is fixed in terms of the tonnage at \$55 per ton. That's at \$37,290 and that's calculating that into 678 tons. Total cost comes in at \$543,125 which we add on the carts lease payments of \$45,928. This gives you a total of \$589,053. In addition, the town has decided to add for bulk pickup which we have done three times this year and that factors in about \$8000. He put \$6000 in for 100 carts which are, basically, for new residents, need for an extra cart, replacing damage carts, etc.

**Vice Chair Barker asked if we have to pay extra for trash littering roads. Due to the charge for bulk items to be picked up, it seems that people find it easier to dump them on the side of the road rather than pay \$25 for each item.**

Administrator Cressman said this procedure was adopted because of Workmen's Comp. There are less complaints of injury from trash collectors using the automated recycling program rather than manually lifting buckets.

**Member Torosian asked to clarify the charges for bulk pickup.**

Administrator Cressman said it is \$15 an item, except for mattresses that don't compact well is \$35. The resident comes to the Town Hall to get a sticker for \$15 or \$35 per item. The sticker is placed on the item and left on the road for pickup. Bulk pickup is on three Saturdays per year.

**Member Torosian asked, when the Town bought the carts, was it a three-year payment and then we own them?**

Administrator Cressman said it was a five-year payment. There is another \$15,000 for bulks, carts and miscellaneous.

Member Malo asked if we, in fact, have a 10-year contract with Casella.

Administrator Cressman said yes.

IT – Russell Wolf

**Coordinator Wolf said the increase of \$16,000 was for two servers, the backup and the install for the Town Hall.**

Vice Chair Barker asked if there is a \$3000 increase.

**Administrator Cressman said the software maintenance goes from \$46,500 to \$49,069.**

Vice Chair Barker asked if it is now \$50,537.

**Coordinator Wolf said yes. A lot of it is for the software maintenance for software security; for Interware because they increased their budget by 2%; some of the VPN licenses; \$600 Avitar online payment which is \$50 a month; we increased the cable to \$900 for the Vimeo Live for the live streaming of these meetings; and Fortigate 16D renewal licenses for the Town Hall (\$419) and Fortigate 30D for the Fire Department (\$258) and access points which is the WiFi connectivity which is \$35 and \$75 annually.**

There were various discussions regarding the Microsoft 365 Desktop/Premium/Essentials software. It was learned that there are approximately 32 desktops in the Town Hall and 10 desktops at the Police Station. There are 75 E-mail addresses that use the Essentials software and there are 52 Desktops.

**Vice Chair Barker asked if we are using all the e-mail licenses.**

Coordinator Wolf said we have 68.

**Vice Chair Barker asked if we retire them as people leave.**

Coordinator Wolf said yes but we get more people in. As one goes out, one comes in.

**Vice Chair Barker said then we're not increasing.**

Member Malo said he talked with Block5 and they can actually monitor usage and they said they are all being used.

**Member Malo stated that the Technology Department is putting \$25,000 in looking at a Time and Attendance system based on Tyler Systems and what the bookkeeper thinks would be the right system to have. It's considered the Cadillac of systems. It has so many features that, so far the feedback he's getting is the system's fine but we wouldn't use half the features. So we're still looking for other suppliers for that.**

Member Torosian asked if we can look at the Chevy version of the Cadillac.

**Member Malo said we are but we probably won't zero in on the right system, so we want to make sure we have enough money to do the right thing.**

Member Worden asked what the impetus was for moving to the automated system.

**Member Malo said it's a cost avoidance. Each department has to document all the data and then it goes to the bookkeeper to input that same data. If there was a system that all data input goes to one place, it will pay for itself. He has spoken with the bookkeeper who thought, in terms of saving money, we probably so have a bi-monthly payroll. He will be looking at systems in the next couple of days to see what would be a good fit and which one would come in at an attractive price.**

**Another item that Dave is having a problem handling is at a point where there's not more storage places. There's so much stored that it's difficult to find what is needed. So we're paying people to search for things and not being able to find it and losing a half hour because it took that long to find it. We'd like to look at a system that would be able to handle everyone's needs. We'd put another \$25,000 as a place holder. Several people have already started doing their own investigation.**

Member Torosian said it sounds good but he's not holding his breath that he'll see a savings.

**IT – Russell Wolf**

**Member Malo said he's trying to put a reasonable amount of money aside so that the decision is to go ahead and that's what these things cost. It's possible we can do document handling for \$8000 and it's possible we might do Time and Attendance for \$5000.**

Vice Chair Barker said they need to consider State regulations regarding how long to keep certain documents and the care and storage of historical documents.

**Administrator Cressman said that New Hampshire passed a law in 2016 that, if every document of under the ten-year or seven-year schedule and under is in PDF format, a paper copy is not needed to store.**

Vice Chair Barker stated that there's a request for \$50,000 for two projects. She feels it would be helpful to see some kind of a tangible project plan. Something other than a dollar amount on a piece of paper. She said she would be hard pressed to vote yes without seeing something tangible.

**Member Malo said the problem is that the Technology Committee is just getting going.**

Vice Chair Barker said maybe this project should be put off until next year.

**Member Malo said the Technology Committee may have a plan by Spring but you'll be asking us to wait another year.**

Member Torosian does not see the harm in waiting another year.

**Administrator Cressman said he would give backup estimates on the document management.**

Chair Smith asked when could Administrator Cressman have the information for the Budget Committee.

**Administrator Cressman said in the next two weeks.**

Member Worden agreed that document handling is a priority but he is not willing to approve the large amount until he sees more definitive stuff. He is not willing to hold \$25,000 as a place holder but he will look at a more intense proposal.

**Various members requested more documentation on servers.**

Coordinator Wolf said he has it and will provide it to the committee.

**Vice Chair Barker asked if we could streamline the payroll process with what we have.**

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

The Atkinson Budget Committee adjourned at 9:29 p.m.