

Selectmen Budget Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 6, 2015 @ 5:30 PM

Southwest Harbor Town Office

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was opened by Chairman Norwood at 5:30PM. In attendance with Chairman included George Jellison, Thomas Benson, David Minctons, Lydia Goetze, finance director Tabbetha Newenham and Town Manager Don Lagrange. Members of the audience included members of the warrant committee, the conservation committee, representatives from the ambulance service.

II. Budget discussions included the following:

a. Margaret Vose and Elliot Spiker represented the SWH/Tremont Nursing Services, (ambulance) in the request for continued community support in the amount of \$58,000. This is no increase from the previous year and they indicated a reduction in their revenues necessitated this request. They also indicated an order for a new ambulance is scheduled due to the 4-6 year replacement program. The service provided 253 runs in Southwest Harbor.

b. Major issues in the highway budget included an increase in vehicle and equipment maintenance due to aging. Breakdowns from heavy use of the equipment, especially during storm events, is unpredictable which requires a significant amount in the repair budget according to highway foreman Scott Alley. Melissa Frost of the Conservation Committee was available to discuss the Rhodes Park as part of the parks and cemeteries budget. Selectmen asked Manager Lagrange and Ms. Frost to provide some guidance for all Town parks regarding Town participation in their maintenance. Total request for highway budget is up 11% (\$32,929) from last budget. In the CIP budget, the Selectmen reduced from \$10,000 to \$6,000 for the Freightliner replacement, kept the \$18,000 request for replacement of the 2004 International due to the need for replacement in the next 4-6 years and eliminated \$15,000 from the backhoe/loader in anticipation of a lease program in the next 1-2 years. The road project request was reduced by \$50,000 to \$100,000. Primary road project discussions include Freeman Ridge, Wood Street and East Ridge. Forrest Avenue requires a major reconstruction with water, sewer, and storm water and road base. An application for a community development block grant is being anticipated for up to \$400,000 for the water, sewer and storm water infrastructure on Forest Avenue with 25% town participation. Also, a safe route to school grant will be requested for a sidewalk on Forest Avenue from Maine DOT. The water/sewer infrastructure CIP was reduced from \$150,000 to \$75,000.

c. Harbormaster Adam Thurston discussed the Harbor budget and provided specific information on revenue items including moorings, float and dock usage. He stated a total of 628 moorings are occupied for a revenue of \$55,130. The Selectmen increased the revenue line item in the budget from \$50,000 to \$55,000. Also, hoist fees projected by Adam resulted in the Selectmen increasing this line item in revenues by \$2,000. In the Harbor CIP schedule, replacement costs of the Upper Town dock catwalk was increased to \$30,000. The proposed \$8,800 in this line was reduced to \$7,000 and with another \$7,000 in the next fiscal year, added to the current balance of \$16,290, will provide sufficient funds in (2) years to pay for this replacement. The bulk of the Harbor operating budget is paid by fees (\$87,300) with the balance from taxation (\$16,531).

d. Acting Chief Miller presented the police and dispatch budget. The Selectmen questioned the possibility of eliminating one shift by provide a revolving schedule. Miller would review this and the Selectmen will place on future agenda for further discussion. The Police CIP had an increase of \$601 from previous budget. A new line item was added for protective equipment. The Selectmen questioned if the proposal for office and equipment supplies was sufficient given the history of expenditures. Manager Lagrange stated the department will work to maintain the budget and recommended not to increase those two line items. The Dispatch CIP proposal had a slight decrease of \$93. Based on the information supplied by Chief Miller showing Tremont used dispatch 11.93% of total activity representing \$30,845 in a budget of \$258,442. George Jellison moved to increase the fee to Town of Tremont for dispatch services from \$16,000 to \$20,000. It was seconded by David Minctons and voted in favor 5/0/0.

e. The Code Enforcement/Plumbing Inspection/Planning budget was decreased by moving the assessing expense out to the contract budget. Added to this budget is a proposed part time CEO/LPI at a cost of \$9,000. The wage budget for current CEO Lagrange was reduced by (5) hours which were moved for budgeting purposes to highway department and administration.

A motion to adjourn at 8:20 PM was made by George Jellison. Seconded by Dave Minctons and voted in favor 5/0/0.