



SELECT BOARD MEETING
Town of Southwest Harbor
Town Office & Via Zoom*
5:30 p.m. ~ Thursday, January 18, 2024

BUDGET Minutes

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Ball called the meeting to order at 5:30p.m.
2. **ROLL CALL:** Carolyn Ball Chair, Natasha Johnson Vice Chair, James Vallette, Luke Damon, Chapin McFarland, Town Manager Marilyn Lowell, Finance Director Becky Gatcomb, and Town Clerk Jennifer LaHaye.

A. Excused Absences *(if any) None*

3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA:** Request of the Town Manager for a motion to adopt the agenda as presented.

Johnson motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Seconded by Damon. Vote: 5-0-0.

4. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A. Union Negotiations: *(To be considered in executive session, as permitted by 1 MRSA 405 (6) (D).*

Johnson motioned to enter into executive session as permitted by 1 MRSA 405 (6) (D).
Seconded by Damon. Vote: 5-0-0.

Johnson motioned to exit the executive session. Seconded by Damon. Vote: 5-0-0.

5. BUDGET REVIEW:

5:30 pm ~ Recap of Budget

Revenues

Manager Lowell discussed the CDs and interest.

Harbor – Manager Lowell noted this fiscal year is projected to be low. This could account for not having a fulltime harbormaster monitoring. Manager Lowell noted that Harbormaster Kushla has been able to focus on collecting more fees, and we should see an increase in the spring. She noted this was working off a fiscal year and many fees owed are often paid at the end of the fiscal year (springtime.)

Mooring Registrations – we will see an increase with the new change in the definition of resident.

Administration

Increased slightly due to the adjustment and manager overlap, this will show changes to the benefits. We are looking at a 5.1% increase.

Code Enforcement

No changes.

Boards & Committee's

The only change is taking out the Warrant Committee.

Contract Services

Added the \$3,00 back into the ADD line. Manager Lowell advised that she added Harbor House, Library, and Ambulance Services to that line and removed them from community services. There will be a note on the warrant explaining this shift.

Downeast Transportation –noted there was a credit two years ago; they were given money when they didn't run. This should be noted in the budget summary.

Debt Service

No changes.

Insurances

No changes.

Municipal Buildings

Increase the salary of custodian and increase porta-potties.

Community Service Organization

No changes.

Highway

Increase of \$500 to the Tree Maintenance.

Police Department

Police Supplies lowered it to \$5,500.

Parking Officer

Further discussion took place. Vallette suggested raising the parking officer to \$20.00 per hour to stay in line with the earlier decision to increase the janitor's pay.

~McFarland noted the 10% of Police Chief increase; Manager Lowell stated that was an amount that was suggested to her. Vallette noted that 8% seems more comfortable. Members agreed with this.

~Members expressed concern that if the Chief were to have an extra patrol officer to help/allow him to do his administration duties, it would be hard to justify hiring another person in dispatch as an admin assistant.

Dispatch – increase dispatch services. Vallette supports not funding the administrative assistant.

Fire Department

Damon believes the Chief doesn't need someone at the station every day of the week. Members agreed the Chief should be paid more than the full-time firefighter. He has been making sacrifices for the crew.

Fulltime Firefighter EMT -

Several members discussed the possibility of converting to a full-time Fire Chief. Members agreed it wouldn't be decided this budget cycle, but it is something to consider. He does feel they are leaning quickly to increase.

~Chief Chisholm provided answers for Damon. Johnson advises she is hearing what Chief Chisholm is saying and she understands the importance of a work life balance.

~Ball considers a fulltime Fire Chief,

~Damon supports providing the call pay but not adding another 10 hours of station coverage.

Vallette motioned to increase the pay rate to \$28.84 seconded by Johnson. Vote: 4-0-1. McFarland abstained.

Discussion:

Damon -Should we explore increasing to \$30.00 for Chief Chisholm salary. Ball doesn't suggest going past \$28.84. Johnson believes it's a nice bump up and shows Chief Chisholm the board appreciates his hard work and shows a compromise of the board. Damon noted he is a supervisor.

Vallette motioned to approve the per diem position as presented at \$28.00 an hour. Seconded by Johnson. Vote: 2-2-1. McFarland abstained.

Board members reviewed the CIP

Administration Department- Moved \$2,810 to computer equipment.

Reduced the sand salt shed by \$5,000. With note to investigate another wall.

~1 Ton F550 half of the money was originally there and push out a couple more years.

~Bobcat Snowblower and sweeper will be push out another year.

Members discussed pushing out the bobcat snowblower for another three years and changed the cost to replace it to \$4,000. Members agreed to increase the appropriation amount to \$750 for this budget.

~Backhoe loader -changed the year of replacement by two years and will look to be replaced it in 2029.

~Sander – no appropriations.

~Manager Lowell: noted that under the equipment portion \$500 was taken out for the riding lawn mower.

~Pistols changed the requested amount to \$0; we had enough to pay for the new pistols.

~Rifle rated vests increased.

~Fire Dept. Removed appropriation to 112, 113,103 because they will be bonded. 112 will be refurbished in 2027, and E103 zeroed out.

~Fire Department Message Board – changed to \$944.

~Harbor – members recapped that they added two more years to the life and replacement of the harbormaster boat and motor and will add two years to the Harbormaster Truck replacement.

~FMLA Reserve – these funds will need to be put into the budget. Manager Lowell will have the numbers at a later meeting.

Suggestions for next meeting:

Ball would like to see a job description for the Town Manager and discuss the advertisement.

- 6. **NEXT MEETING DATE:** *Adoption of a motion to confirm the date of the next regular meeting for Tuesday, January 23rd at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Office Meeting room.*

Johnson motioned to confirm the next meeting for Tuesday, January 23rd at 6:00p.m. at the Town Office meeting room. Seconded by McFarland vote: 5-0-0.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

Johnson motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by McFarland Vote: 5-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jennifer E. LaHaye
Town Clerk

APPROVED

Carolyn Ball, Chair

Natasha Johnson, Vice Chair

James Vallette

Luke Damon

Chapin McFarland