



**Town of Southwest Harbor
Warrant Committee Meeting Minutes**

Thursday February 20, 2025

6:00-8:00 p.m.

SWH Fire Department and via Zoom

Chair Anne Trotter called the meeting to order at 6:00.

Attending: Mark Amstutz; Lydia Goetze; Don Lodge; Ellen Pope; Alan Rosenquist (via Zoom); Anne Trotter; Carl Wrubel; Town Manager, Karen Reddersen; and Finance Manager, Becky Gatcomb. Not attending: Priscilla Ksionsyk

Agenda: Lydia Goetze moved that the agenda be adopted, seconded by Carl Wrubel, and approved unanimously.

Minutes: Ellen Pope moved that the minutes for the meeting of February 18, 2025 be approved as amended, seconded by Don Lodge; following discussion the minutes were approved unanimously.

Budget Review

Reserves

Harbor

There is a reduction in health insurance expense because current personnel do not require family coverage.

A few variances were noted, including adding a computer and printer.

There was discussion about deferred maintenance for floats that needs to be addressed and a consensus to support this budget item

Karen Reddersen noted that damage to the Manset pier/hoist was high in 2024 because of the January storm. Plans to repair the Manset Pier are in development, and Karen is seeking bids, but the expense is not included in this budget. FEMA funding is pending.

(2.)

Questions arose regarding what work is actually needed, such as pilings and consideration of materials.

The committee discussed the advisability of developing budget contingencies and recommends they be developed for line items that depend on federal grant funds previously awarded but possibly frozen. Along those lines, Karen said that the town's match for a federal grant earmarked for the town's public works facility will come to the town for a vote in November.

Capital Investment Projects

Harbor

\$60k is an expense offset related to prospective parking revenue.

Surveillance cameras are being refurbished.

An estimate for the cost of parking kiosks is included (kiosks may be located elsewhere, a plan is in development), along with an offsetting amount of revenue.

Pavement for UTD was discussed.

Floats replacements are about half of the expenses.

Budget relief may be forthcoming for floats in the form of a state grant in the amount of \$100k (pending) toward a total of \$300k+ (not all included in this budget).

A second hoist for Manset Dock is included, \$22k; this will facilitate offloading of fish and other products. Additional info regarding the need and plan was requested; Karen will be in touch with the harbor master.

Fire Department

Karen said that the SB felt that some vehicles should be expected to be bonded.

Chief Chisholm supports this CIP budget

Some expense increases are due to supply chain costs.

Radios are a priority; badly in need upgrades.

Police

Majority of the budget increase is for a new cruiser

A tower and radio upgrade is being paid off

A question was raised regarding procurement for equipment from federal sites (may not always meet specs)

Highway

(3.)

Institutional knowledge is important.
No major purchases projected.

Administration

Painting for the Town Office/Police represents part of the budget increase.
Estimates are not firm and may be low in some cases.

Reserves

Revenue sharing helps offset taxes.
Several accounts have deficits, pending updates
Becky Gatcomb clarified that a “reserve balance” is what is expected to be used in the fiscal year’s budget.
Excesses or shortfalls represent what may be needed in the development of the FY27 budget
Could reserves be spent over a longer time to spread costs?
Water and sewer expense is considerable, and the line is in deficit; it was suggested to consider reducing the appropriation to “zero out” —\$177,268 instead of \$197, 268.
Goal balances were set by a previous Select Board, a historical approach to budgeting.
Karen noted that Chris’ Pond camera is included.
A difference between total goal balance and estimated balance; Becky will check calculation.
Close septic tank and other unused grant, if not encumbered (\$131 balance).
A Community Resilience grant includes a charging station at the library and other solar projects; a second grant is pending
There is a trail grant that hasn’t been used; more potential exists.

Next Meeting Agenda 2/27/25

Brief revisit of Reserves for potential savings and info re. potential calc error
Ambulance; Andy Cline and Kristen Hutchins attending
Other expenditures
Benefits and health
Revisit reserves
Begin discussion of report to agenda
Check in on Seawall Road

Motion to adjourn at 8 p.m., proposed Ellen seconded by Lydia and approved unanimously.
Respectfully submitted,
Ellen Pope