



**BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
MAY 14, 2020**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting in the form of a Zoom Webinar was called to order by Chair Bill Sawyer at 10:05 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Members Rick Dolliver, Fred Lynk, Mark MacLeod, Tom Sellers, Bill Sawyer, and Alternates Elaine Cooper and Peter Kahn.

(Mark MacLeod announced that he would have to leave the meeting early. His actual departure was at 11:32 a.m.)

3. OLD BUSINESS

Reviewed the minutes from the May 8, 2020 BRC meeting. On a motion by MacLeod 1st and Sellers 2nd a roll call vote was taken, and all members approved the minutes as presented. Vote 5-0.

4. NEW BUSINESS

The revised FY 20-21 budget that was provided by the Town Manager was reviewed. There was no revenue guidance provided at this time. Similarly, the Town Manager said that there is no CIP budget at this time and that her recommendation is to pursue CIP funding in the November timeframe.

Further, the Town Manager again pointed out that the heaviest spending occurs at the end of the current fiscal year and at the beginning of the next fiscal year and that the Town needs to continue to watch spending while still providing “essential services.”

The Town Manager identified approximately \$700,000 in cuts from the budget sheet she had proposed to the Budget Review Committee earlier this year.

Cooper asked a question as to where we are with tax collections for the current fiscal year. The Town Treasurer reported that the Town is about 78% collected on the year, and she described that as “pretty good.” Payments are where she would expect them to be at this point in the fiscal year.

Cooper also asked what happens if the voters turn down this year's budget, and the Town Manager said that by default the budget reverts to last year's approved budget.

MacLeod pointed out that the budget we are now reviewing has a 1.5% increase for department heads as opposed to 3% that was contemplated earlier. He observed that if revenue turns out better than what is anticipated currently, that perhaps in November this issue can be revisited, and the additional 1.5% can be restored.

Sellers inquired about the amount in the "rainy day fund," and the Town Treasurer reported that there is \$3.3 million in the "undesignated fund" as of 12-31-19.

John Daley observed that a collective bargaining agreement can be re-opened at any time should the union desire it. The Town, however, cannot unilaterally open it.

Chair Sawyer summarized the latest operating budget as calling for an increase of approximately \$256,000 or 2.82% over last year's budget.

The Chair then sought comments from the Committee as he walked through the budget department-by-department.

The following items for additional cuts were offered by various members, without attribution:

1. Parks and Recreation - \$15,200
2. Land Use - \$5,000 which represents double counting because it is in both Land Use and Planning Board budgets.
3. Land Use – Incorrect withholding for taxes for the Code Enforcement Officer. Dollar savings not specified.
4. Land Use – Use compensated time off as opposed to overtime for the Land Use assistant when she attends planning board meetings. Savings \$1,000.
5. Visitor Services – Keep the budget amount the same as last year. Savings \$17,965.
6. Visitor Services – Remove amount for "paving and striping." Savings \$6,700.
7. Police – Cut new Reserve Officer - \$37,026.
8. Police – Cut reserve officers/CSO line by 20% - \$21,799 in savings.
9. All budgets – Is there an opportunity to reduce gasoline costs given the drop in prices? Savings unknown.
10. Lifeguard Service – Keep the budget the same as 2020. Savings of \$10,000
11. Public Works – Defer the purchase of radios. \$15,000 in savings.
12. Public Works – Eliminate the Special Project Manager position. Savings of \$99,000.

Although there was discussion, there was no action taken on any of these recommendations.

Kahn asked a question about the status of the WOCSD budget. The Town Manager promised to get the latest information to the BRC.

The Town Manager didn't have a sheet to hand out, but she believes the parking lot revenue will be \$900,000, and other revenue will be \$1,100,000 for the upcoming fiscal year.

The next step is for the Select Board to meet and determine what they would like to see in terms of a tax increase or decrease, and how much of the undesignated fund should be used. In order to do that a forecast of revenue is needed, and the Select Board must develop its own set of budget priorities.

Dolliver mentioned some of his findings having reached out to area municipal officials. It was suggested that he summarize the information regarding his contacts, and what he learned regarding budget cuts they are planning in the form of a spreadsheet.

5. FUTURE MEETINGS

No future meetings were scheduled as the BRC is awaiting further direction from Select Board. Chair Sawyer affirmed that the BRC stands ready to meet in order to finalize a budget for presentation to the voters at the July 14 Town Meeting.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 12:23 p.m.: Sellers 1st; Dolliver 2nd. Roll call taken. Vote 5-0 with Kahn being moved up to a voting member.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Fred Lynk, Secretary