

**TOWN OF TUFTONBORO
BUDGET COMMITTEE**

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BUDGET COMMITTEE MINUTES
Tuesday, December 13, 2022

Present: Chairman Gordon Hunt. *Members:* Selectmen's Representative Chip Albee, David Dauphinais, Jeff Reisner, Rob Roriston, Chris Sawyer. *Staff:* Jane Lemire. Selectman Guy Pike, Selectman Bob Murray.

Absent: Member: Gary Chehames.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Hunt called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

II. Quorum declared followed by Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Public Input – None.

IV. Review/Approval of December 6, 2022 Minutes

A motion to accept the Minutes of December 6, 2022 with added clarification [*D. 4153 Legal, second sentence*] was made by Ms. Sawyer and seconded by Mr. Roriston. Motion passed unanimous.

V. Chairman's Comments – None.

VI. CIP Presentation

Ms. Jill Cromwell, Chair introduced herself as well as members of the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) committee in attendance: David Carle, Carol Bush, and Barbara Maidhof. In addition, David Dauphinais, Gordon Hunt, and Chip Albee also are on the committee. Tom Young who is on vacation, is also a member. Ms. Cromwell stated that there are ten suggested projects at a cost of \$1,430,000.00; \$412,000.00 over the projected historical capital. The report explains the historical trend line of what is actually spent and projected going forward. The CIP committee deems all ten projects are worthwhile and necessary. Ms. Cromwell reviewed each of the projects scheduled for 2023 (page 22 of the report, attached). A few cost savings mentioned is to set up a capital reserve fund for future fire truck replacements. If this can be done, it would save \$50,000.00 in interest by not having to do a lease purchase. Also mentioned as a cost savings is solar power to the town buildings which would save through grants and utility costs. Chairman Hunt stated except for the fire station, which is in the operating budget, the other nine improvement projects would be warrant articles. Ms. Cromwell also stated she would like the Parks & Recreation Department to submit a wish-list of projects they would like to hold over the next ten years. Chairman Hunt thanks Ms. Cromwell and the CIP committee for their work and the presentation.

VII. Budget Reviews

A. 4220 – Fire; Tabled from 11/15/22

Chief Adam Thompson attended to review and answers questions from the group. In response to the budget committee's request of 11/15/22, he provided two reports (see attached) that listed hours worked by each employee from 2020 through present; incidents responded to with a percentage of what day and what time the calls come in; average number of firefighters who respond and hours worked by each employee from 2020 through present. Chief Thompson provided this information in support of his request for a new full-time employee (Captain or firefighter). The group discussed these topics in length. Presently, the fire department has 35 employees with a core group of 18. Chief Thompson also pointed out that the department hasn't had a new full-time hire since 2006. Selectman Albee pointed out that the fire department has underspent their budget every year.

Mr. Roriston stated that how the holiday pay policy reads in the town employee policy manual is not reflected as to what is in the fire department's budget. Selectman Albee reported that the BOS voted to restructure the holiday pay. In addition, they will be reviewing the entire policy manual as some discrepancies have been found.

The 2023 bottom line was amended from \$625,811.00 to \$586,697.00. Two deductions comprised this amended bottom line: 1.) Holiday compensation reduced by (\$4,306.00); and 2.) New full-time hire adjusted salary to a half-year assuming start date is 7/1/23 reduced by (\$34,808.00).

A motion was made by Ms. Sawyer to accept the amended 2023 Budget for account 4220 Fire in the amount of \$586,697.00; seconded by Mr. Roriston. Motion passed 5 - 1.

B. 4215 – Ambulance

Chief Adam Thompson discussed budget with the group. The 2023 contract is up 4% over last year. He stated that the fire department is guaranteed an ambulance with two personnel; there is a \$1,000.00 penalty if it is not provided.

A motion was made by Ms. Sawyer to accept the 2023 Budget for account 4215 Ambulance as suggested by the BOS in the amount of \$213,819.19; seconded by Mr. Roriston. All in favor, motion passed unanimously.

C. 4612 – Conservation

Stephen Scapicchio attended to review the budget and answer questions from the group. Chairman Hunt questioned two new lines items (*Timber Stand Improvements* and *Great Meadow Invasive Species*) each at \$2,000.00. Mr.

Scapicchio explained that timber stand is a three-year program whereby a forester determines potential valuable lumber trees and removes unvaluable trees so that the lumber trees can flourish. The 2023 budget of \$2,000.00 is for the recommendation. If worthwhile, years 2 and 3 would become warrant articles requesting \$16,000.00 to do the work. Mr. Scapicchio also explained that the invasive species budget of \$2,000.00 is to rid one-acre portion of the Great Meadow of Japanese Knotweed, Glossy Buckthorn and Oriental Bittersweet, all invasive plants, and replace them with native species.

A motion was made by Mr. Roriston to accept the 2023 Budget for account 4612 Conservation as suggested by the BOS in the amount of \$22,900.00; seconded by Jeff Reisner. All in favor, motion passed unanimously.

D. 4619 – Other Conservation

Selectman Albee reviewed budget with the group. Mr. Roriston asked if testing of Nineteen Mile Bay is done. Selectman Albee answered yes, the Conservation Commission budgets and oversees this for Lake Winnepesaukee and Mirror Lake.

A motion was made by Mr. Dauphinais to accept the 2023 Budget for account 4619 Other Conservation as suggested by the BOS in the amount of \$6,175.00; seconded by Ms. Sawyer. All in favor, motion passed unanimously.

E. 4155 – Personnel Administration

Selectman Albee reviewed budget with the group. He explained the 15.4% increase is mostly due to the potential two new employees (fire department and transfer station) for all benefits. When estimating benefits, the BOS choose the more expensive family plan when not knowing what the employee may choose. As in the fire department's budget, the group decided to deduct six-months of costs for 2023 health benefits assuming these new employees will not start until 7/1/23; a total deduction of (\$28,731.00).

A motion was made by Mr. Roriston to accept the amended 2023 Budget for account 4155 Personnel Administration in the amount of \$705,089.00; seconded by Mr. Reisner. All in favor, motion passed unanimously.

F. OTHER

4210 – Police

Selectman Albee reported that the BOS voted to amend the Police Department budget by decreasing it (\$5,242.00) by adjusting holiday pay. The bottom-line amount of \$496,408.00 has been *amended* to \$491,166.00.

A motion was made by Ms. Sawyer to accept the amended 2023 Budget for account 4210 Police in the amount of \$491,166.00; seconded by Mr. Reisner. All in favor, motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Correspondence – None.

IX. New Business

A. BOS Update

Selectman Albee reported that the BOS had a zoom meeting with the grant people to discuss reducing the square footage of the new police station. If the new design is approved it should reduce the cost of build.

X. Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Roriston and seconded by Ms. Sawyer to adjourn the December 13, 2022 meeting. Motion passed unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by Jane Lemire, Administrative Secretary
December 14, 2022*