

**OSSIPEE BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
November 2, 2023**

Minutes have been recorded for the convenience of summarization by Laura Nash, Boards & Commissions Secretary and are deleted once the minutes are board approved; any amendments to the minutes are noted in ***bold & italic*** type.

Call to Order: Joe Goss called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance – was recited by all attendees.

Attendance by Roll Call: – Joe Goss, Lynne Parker, Dallas Emery, Susan McGuire – Doyle, Jennifer Brown, Krystal Eldridge, Michael Hunter, Robert Roakes, and Brian Keyes

Absent: Jonathan Smith (Selectmen’s Rep.), Matt Sawyer, Jr. (Town Administrator), TJ Eldridge, (PW Director) and Andrea Picard (Finance Director)

Meeting Minutes: N/A

2024 Proposed Budgets: Chairman Goss changed the order of presentation in accordance to the sign in sheet.

- CHILDREN UNLIMITED, INC. FAMILY RESOURCE: Requested 2024 budget of \$3,000

Cathy Livingston, Director of the Family Connections Resource Center presents requesting level funding at \$3,000.00. Community involvement with the Ossipee Round Table for about 3 years and services provided to families centers around Ossipee Concern Citizens and First Congregational Church. They are able to offer kinship support group, play groups for caregivers with children under 5 year of age, positive solutions parenting classes for families. Services are free and confidential to families in Carroll County. Ms. Livingston provided some brochures for their daycare and play groups services.

L. Parker noted they took care of 62 families this past year with a projection of 68 for 2024.

D. Emery referred to the data which indicate they took care of 13 Ossipee children at a 7% of the clientele. This drew some confusion from the committee and after reviewing it was determined that Emery was looking at the wrong application.

Chairman Goss stated the Budget Committee will take the proposed budget Under Advisement.

- KINGSWOOD YOUTH CTR.: Requested 2024 budget of \$5,000

Zachary Porter, Executive Director presents requesting level funding at \$5,000.00. They offer a free out of school program for the Governor Wentworth Regional School District for grades 7 – 12, which includes 7 towns with Ossipee being the most represented town.

KYC offers an after school program which is their long-standing program which is a balance where teens can spend supervised free time to make their own choices to expend excess energy until KYC begins their planned programs. The programs focus on learning, fitness and recreation, team building, arts and creativity, career exploration, applying to career training and secondary schools, positive peer engagement, substance misuse prevention, community service and more. They work with and collaborate with Eric Moran of White Horse Recovery every Wednesday for the substance misuse prevention program. Eric Moran facilitates a new program called Perspectives, which focuses on prevention by having community quest speakers, who come in and provide their perspective on substance use and disorders and how they effect the community. They

work with Dave Poland of Northern Human Services along with the school coordinator on a mental health program. They offer leadership programs through Peers not Fears, and work at the Laconia Humane Society.

Each program includes a free hot meal. Beyond The After School (BTAS) programs are in the evening beyond the out of school program, on every school vacation, and throughout the summer. The program is focus on more in-depth challenges to promote leadership skills and community involvement. They continue to offer 1-2-1 Mentoring program for middle and high school students. Mentoring is provided by adults and peer to peer mentoring, and dependent on individual needs. The summer program expanded this year by offering as many hours as they do during the school year and will continue moving forward with this schedule.

They continue to operate the KYC Cupboard is the food pantry program to provide care packages to families in the amount of 15,000 - 20,000 pounds of food provided to families last year. The KYC Cupboard food pantry program supplies pantry items, household essentials, fresh produce, dairy, eggs, and frozen meats.

They have the KYC Closet program is the free thrift store which provides free lightly used and new clothing for teens and their families.

The number of hours of participation before the pandemic was 550 hours. Now they consistently provide 800 hours of services.

L. Parker inquired about transportation. Zachary Porter reported they continue to transport the students from the school via KYC's bus to the youth center and transported back to school for the late bus. L. Parker also likes to see the positive news articles put out by KYC.

J. Brown thinks what they're doing is great.

J. Goss believes over the years they're doing a very good job.

Chairman Goss stated the Budget Committee will take the proposed budget Under Advisement.

- END 68 HOURS OF HUNGER: Requested 2024 budget of \$7,000

Jan Brooks, 1 of 3 Program Coordinators for End 68 Hours of Hunger present requesting level funding at \$7,000.00. Their mission is a nonprofit organization that continues to work to confront the approximately 68 hours of hunger that some children experience between the lunch they receive at school on Friday and the breakfast they receive at school Monday morning. Their vision is to provide weekend food for an average of 130 -135 students preschool-grade 6 each week who are at risk of limited security. Due to the state of the economy and hidden cost. Families of pre-school thru grade 6 children living within the Governor Wentworth School District, who are at risk of food insecurity look forward to the child's bag of food received each weekend.

They are 1 of 48 chapters within the United States, who provide weekend food for children ages pre-school to grade 6 children from the towns of Wolfeboro, Brookfield, Tuftonboro, Ossipee, Effingham, Ossipee HeadStart, Ossipee Crossings, Middleton and Wolfeboro Children's Center in Wolfeboro. Each child receives a bag of food every Friday afternoon that consists of 3 - dinners, 3 – breakfasts, 2 – lunches and snacks. No child is discriminated based on where they live.

The organization is run by 40 - 50 volunteers which consist of retirees, school staff and students from the GWSD and Brewster Academy. The volunteers purchase, pick up, bag, deliver food, fundraise, keep communities informed and document financial donations and expenditures each month. The All Saint's Episcopal Church in Wolfeboro has provided a classroom for their storage and place to fill and pack the bags. GWRSD supports by providing the buses and drivers to pick up the bags at All Saint's Episcopal Church and delivers to the elementary schools each Friday. GWRSD has provided a Counselor, Deb Bunting in Ossipee to be the liaison between End 68 Hours and the school district. She contacts all school counselors in each school district serviced to find out what the need is. The counselors talk to administrators, teachers and nurses and provides Deb Bunting with the number of students to give End 68 Hours each week.

The cost of a weekend bag of food in 2021 and 2022 was \$14.00 per child. The current cost increased to \$16.00 per child. Student count last year was 130 students each week for 38 weeks and 30 students during the summer the program. The goal is to offer the 130 students during the school year and the summer.

Financial support is provided through the local community either through financial or public support. They hold an appeal drives, a major fundraisers, and are sponsored by local businesses. Hobb's is a large supporter either financially or through sponsorship. The financial obligations is solely for bags, food, supplies and bins, and 5% of the monthly proceeds goes to the executive director of the National Program.

Enclosing, Jan Brooks, Coordinators for End 68 Hours of Hunger is requesting level funding at \$7,000.00.

L. Parker and R. Roakes both thanked everyone and volunteers associated with End 68 Hours of Hunger for all they do.

D. Emery questioned the difference between the amount received verses the amount of expenditures is about half the amount. Jan Brooks explained that expenditures month to month varies, so they maintain about a year's amount in case they receive many more students.

Chairman Goss stated the Budget Committee will take the proposed budget Under Advisement.

- FREEDOM FOOD PANTRY: Requested 2024 budget of \$6,000

Doris Sirois is Co-Director and provided updated statistics through the end of October for the committee. The Food Pantry is located at the First Christian Church in Freedom Village and is open on Saturday mornings 9:00 am to 12:00 pm and by appointment. At last years meeting she was cautioned that she was not charging enough money, and noted the Committee member were correct. This year's request is \$6,000.00, which \$1,000.00 more than last year. At the end of 2022, prior participation for Ossipee was at 38.2% and through the end of October 2023 participation is at 48.6% for Ossipee families. Freedom Food Pantry at the end of October has already surpassed 2022 totals and there are two months remaining along with Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

The Federal Government has decided that COVID is over and has cut back all extra COVID funding around the country. As a result, the Farm Aide Bill was cut from the Federal Food Stamp Program known as SNAP. In February of 2023, the SNAP funding was reverted back to pre-COVID funding (3 year's ago funding) for all client's receiving SNAP benefits. In March, was Medicaid requalification and some people lost there benefits. The government free food banks have been cut back from weekly deliveries to bi-monthly deliveries, some foods are in limited quantities, while others are no longer stocked. Doris Sirois thanked the committee for their consideration.

L. Parker is amazed by the number of Ossipee resident' taking advantage of the Freedom Food Pantry services. Doris Sirois noted they receive large families coming in for food and proceeded to explain possible reasons why they receive so many seeking assistants.

D. Emery inquire if they received more funding last year at the Town meeting. Doris Sirois explained they asked for \$4,000 and at Town Meeting someone made a motion to increase funding to \$5,000 and the motion past. D. Emery inquired if they take food donations or is it only monetary. Doris Sirois stated they take both money and food by donation but food donations are challenging because the date of expiration needs to be checked.

J. Goss noted according to the spreadsheet provided they have served over 300 people who participate in the program. Doris Sirois clarified that they have served over 322 families in Ossipee. The first week of January each year, Doris Sirois provides the Town Administrator with the actual numbers of people served in Ossipee and the number meals they provide food for that these families can prepare. Goss inquired if they are all set on financial donations. Doris Sirois stated that financial donations should start coming in to provide support until the end of the year.

The committee members thanked Doris Sirois and all the volunteers for all they do for the residents of Ossipee.

Chairman Goss stated the Budget Committee will take the proposed budget Under Advisement.

- NEW - WOLFEBORO CHILDRENS CENTER: Requested 2024 budget of \$5,000

Teri Ann Cox, Executive Director for the Children's Center also known as the Wolfeboro Children's Center. The Children's Center has been around for 50 years next year. But Teri Ann Cox presents for the first time for consideration of some funding for the families of Ossipee that Wolfeboro Children's Center serves. We are a childcare and early education location in Wolfeboro. Our mission is to enhance the well-being of families in the community by meeting their needs through comprehensive, affordable high quality childcare, early education, and to cooperate with other agencies serving the needs of children.

Teri Ann Cox mentioned the Children's Center is also part of the End 68 Hours of Hunger program. Wolfeboro Children's Center cares for babies starting at six weeks through preschool. We are the preschool program for Wolfeboro. These children come to the Children's Center for the preschool program but they also provide an after school program. Wolfeboro Children's Center is open from 6:30 in the morning until 5:30 at night. Wolfeboro Children's Center have children coming in before school and after school to accommodate parents work schedules.

Wolfeboro Children's Center believes a demographic shift post pandemic is due to people moving out of Ossipee because there is no affordable housing in Ossipee and they're moving more and more to town surrounding town's. Wolfeboro Children's Center serves families across 9 to 11 towns on any given month and as far away as Barnstead. Wolfeboro Children's Center is one of the better early childhood locations due to our programming, providing daycare and a lot of extra services free of cost to parents.

Teri Ann Cox explained the affordability factor because the Children's Center subsidizes every single child to about \$4000 a year. In addition to that families can apply to state scholarship and some of our children are on state scholarship through DHS. Wolfeboro Children's Center offers a sliding fee scale and we work with every family individually within their household income to actually give them tuition assistance to make sure that they can work and they can also have the childcare they need. So ultimately, Teri Ann Cox is here because more and more children of Ossipee are coming to the Wolfeboro Children's Center and we are helping to subsidize further by providing tuition assistance. Wolfeboro Children's Center have increased the amount and this past year at 19% of the dollars that we provide out to families are coming or supporting the families of Ossipee, and that's why I'm respectfully coming here today. We do receive municipal support from Wolfeboro and funding from Tuftonboro, and that information was included in the packet as well. Teri Ann Cox would like to proceed with any questions the committee members may have tonight.

L. Parker was shocked to see that Wolfeboro Children's Center has 2.5 million dollar budget and inquired to how many total children do they care for. Teri Ann Cox stated at any given time they are caring for up to 180 children. The Children's Center is quite large with 13 classrooms, serving up to 188 children, with 10 families from Ossipee needing tuition assistance.

Susan McGuire- Doyle inquired if the tuition assistance includes meals. Teri Ann Cox explained the Children's Center provides breakfast, AM snack, lunch, and a healthy afternoon snack. Wolfeboro Children's Center also works with other food organizations to provide holiday meal packages for those that qualify. They also provide formula for infants and/or breast milk provided by the mother and a breast feeding room for mother's to feed their baby during breaks.

K. Eldridge inquired if the Wolfeboro Children's Center is connected to Magic Moments. Teri Ann Cox explained Magic Moments is preschool program that is a school lab class offered at Kingswood High School in connection with the careers and education curriculum through Lakes Region Technical Center for young

people interested in early childcare or education. These students work with their teacher and class assistant and work at Wolfeboro Children's Center to learn about operating a childcare and/or pre-school facility. Wolfeboro Children's Center is heavily focused on this program to promote and support individuals coming into this field and hopefully getting them to stay in the area.

Wolfeboro Children's Center utilize donation funding to offer a \$5,000.00 education benefit to staff seeking their degrees in early childhood education or teaching degrees.

R. Roakes inquire about the calculating formula for determining the amount requested. Teri Ann Cox explained it's a percentage based on need. Wolfeboro pays \$10,000 or 39%. Tuftonboro pays \$3,000 which almost covers their need. In the past year, \$6,215 went to the accounts of Ossipee families, so the request for \$5,000 will help support Ossipee children. Roakes does not agree with the tuition split with Ossipee paying half of Wolfeboro's \$10,000 tuition.

D. Emery inquired about the \$96,000 Wolfeboro Children's Center receives from Governor Wentworth Regional School District and \$357,000 from the State of NH DHHS. Teri Ann Cox explained the \$357,000 goes towards scholarship coverage for families needing full tuition assistance. The \$96,000 received from Governor Wentworth Regional School District is specifically for preschoolers with special needs. Wolfeboro Children's Center provides preschool screening for all preschoolers aged 3-5 years old, except Ossipee children who are screened through the Ossipee preschool program.

B. Keyes inquired if there is a waiting list for Ossipee children. Wolfeboro Children's Center currently has 24 infant's on the wait list, and 8 preschooler's, but Teri Ann Cox could not specifically state how many from each town. Discussion ensued over staffing shortages, rates of pay compared to other jobs, and how to increase and maintain qualified staffing.

Chairman Goss stated the Budget Committee will take the proposed budget Under Advisement.

- GREEN MOUNTAIN CONSERVATION: Requested 2024 budget of \$2,400

Robert Pustell, Board Member of GMCG presents requesting \$2,400 to support our many research and education services, all of which are delivered free of charge and benefit students at Ossipee Central School as well as Ossipee residents and businesses.

Annual municipal contributions from the towns we serve, including Effingham, Madison, Freedom, Tamworth and Sandwich, comprise an important part of our annual budget. Thank you for considering the ways in which Green Mountain Conservation Group programs benefit the citizens of Ossipee and protect the long-term health and quality of the Ossipee Lake System and the Ossipee Aquifer. Robert Pustell spoke on promoting and maintaining the health of the Ossipee Aquifer. GMCG has recently changed their mission from promoting Ossipee Lake and the Ossipee Watershed to promoting Ossipee Lake and the Ossipee Aquifer. By maintaining a healthy aquifer, the surrounding towns can maintain a healthy water supply for drinking, bathing, food prep, swimming, etc....

Several programs operate around the lake and aquifer from Water Quality Monitoring, Volunteer Biological Assessment Program (VBAP), which through classroom learning and field trips to local rivers and streams, fifth graders at Ossipee Central School, renovating the trail system at Constitution Park, and placing informational signs at the Boat Launch to educate boaters about milfoil and other invasive species.

The Best Management Practices (BMP) program collaborates with environmental engineers and NH DES to design innovative and effective models of erosion control and pollution containment. Our long-term goal is to inspire lakeside and riverside landowners in every Ossipee watershed community to learn about and adopt these often simple and affordable measures to improve and protect water quality.

Stream Crossing Assessment Program: In 2020, in collaboration with NH Dept of Environmental Services, NH Fish & Game and others, GMCG launched a two-year program to assess the integrity of all culverts and bridges in the Ossipee Watershed. The purpose is to identify culverts and bridges that are causing erosion, flooding, damage to wildlife habitats, and blocking fish passage (with particular concern for the native brook trout fishery). From June 2020 through October 2022, GMCG staff and volunteers (trained and certified by DES to conduct these assessments) surveyed 96 stream crossings in the Town of Ossipee. In 2023, GMCG is working with NH Fish & Game, the Saco Headwaters Alliance, the North Country Council and NH Association of Conservation Commissions to fund and develop a regional strategy that will secure financing for dozens of towns including Ossipee to repair and replace aging and undersized culverts.

Total cost for the Water Quality Monitoring Program was approximately \$15,000 for the Town of Ossipee and GMCG is requesting level funding in the amount of \$2,400.

M. Hunter inquired where he could get a copy of the Water Quality Monitoring report. Robert Pustell did not know for sure but K. Eldridge informed him he could get a copy from the Conservation Commission office.

R. Roakes inquired about the type of programs they do with the school. Robert Pustell explained that the program is called Trout in the Classroom. The kids will raise some fingerling trout's and will then release them all while learning about ecology, water quality.

GMCG also offers Volunteer Biological Assessment Program (VBAP), where the children gain an understanding of diverse life forms in our waterways, how the food chain works, and the importance of water quality to sustaining a healthy river ecosystem. They also present their data and what they've learned to the community each year. This year GMCG had 33 Ossipee Central School 5th grade students in the program and GMCG run similar programs in all the schools.

D. Emery noted that they have a total income of \$337,000.00. Robert Pustell noted that these are budget number and not the actual operating numbers. D. Emery noted that the total personnel expense is \$239,820.00. D. Emery inquired if the Lake Host Program is a part of this budget. The secretary informed the committee that the Lake Host Program is through NH Lakes, which is a different organization.

B. Keyes had no questions but acknowledged all his kids went through the VBAP program through the school system.

Chairman Goss stated the Budget Committee will take the proposed budget Under Advisement.

- OSSIPEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY: Requested 2024 budget of \$4,000

Kellie Skehan, Treasurer presents to request level funding of \$4,000.00 to help with the up keep of Ossipee Historical Buildings and Artifacts. Kellie Skehan noted the budget and expenses for the last year have decreased because they have officially returned the Court House back to the County, which was financially and taxing the Historical Society along with the small board they have and the small number of volunteers they have in members. Everything that came out of the Court House is now stored at the Grant Hall Museum and between two rooms at the old nursing home that the County graciously gave the Historical Society.

The Historical Society is looking to having a storage container at Grant Hall but the cost to provided heat and electricity is beyond the means of the Historical Society. In the spring they are hoping to add an addition to the backside of the building.

The Historical Society this past summer had their 4 programs held at the Masonic Lodge at no cost to the Historical Society. Some programs were better attended than others but anyone wants to be a member of the Historical Society can contact Kellie Skehan at the Ossipee Town Clerk's Office.

L. Parker discussed with Kellie Skehan the need for climate controlled storage. Kellie Skehan noted that the Library has been very generous with helping store the paintings.

D. Emery inquired if the Town has the Historical Society involved with the Covered Bridge. Kellie Skehan noted that the Historical Society has no involvement with the Covered Bridge. D. Emery suggested that since the bridge is only a walking bridge and having all the security cameras, he thought some historical artifacts could be displayed there to help generate revenue for the Historical Society. Kellie Skehan noted she will check with the Select Board.

Chairman Goss stated the Budget Committee will take the proposed budget Under Advisement.

Chairman Goss noted the following agencies either could not make it or were a no show. Goss suggested the committee read through the packets and if they have any questions they can discuss it on another night.

- CAREGIVERS OF SOUTHERN C.C.: Requested 2024 budget of \$2,500 - Had an excused absence.
- WHITE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER: Requested 2024 budget of \$4,780 – was a no notification and a no show.
- TRI-COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM (CAP): Requested 2024 budget of \$9,837 – was to present on November 1, but was a no show.

Next Meeting: Chairman Goss announced the next meeting will be: Wednesday, [November 8, 2023 – 6:30 pm at the Freight House](#)

- Selectmen's Office
- Police Department
- Police - Special Duty
- Dog Officer
- Insurance
- Ambulance
- **Documents Due:**
 - Fire Precinct - Center Ossipee
 - Fire Precinct - Ossipee Corner
 - Fire Precinct - West Ossipee

Goss called for any public input – None heard.

Any Other Business Which May Come Before This Meeting: None heard

Adjournment:

A **Motion** by Emery to adjourn the meeting. K. Eldridge seconded. No discussion. A unanimous vote was taken. **Motion passed.** The meeting adjourned at 7:37 PM.

Minutes approved by majority vote of the Board on – _____
Date

Joe Goss, Chairman

Lynn Parker, Vice-Chair

(In the absence of the Chairman)