

**OSSIPEE BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
November 9, 2022**

Minutes summarized by Laura Nash, Budget Committee Recording Secretary, amendments are noted by ***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, Donna Gridley, Roland Millette, Donna Sargent, Dallas Emery, Lynn Parker, Jennifer Brown, Matt Sawyer Jr (Town Administrator), and Andrea Picard (Finance Director) and TJ Eldridge, (PW Director)

Absent: Cameron Quigley, Brian Keyes, and Jonathan Smith (Selectmen's Rep.),

Regular Meeting

Meeting Minutes: Committee reviewed to approve the meeting minutes of November 2, 2022.

A **Motion** by Emery to approve the meeting minutes of November 2, 2022, as submitted. Gridley seconded. No discussion. All voted in favor. **Motion passed.**

2023 Proposed Budgets:

- **Library:** proposed 2023 budget of \$244,070.00

Linda Hatfield, Library Trustee (Alternate) presents requesting funding of \$244,070.00. Ms. Hatfield read each line item of the 2023 proposed budget for the Library, which included a cost-of-living expense, internet increase.

Goss questioned the cost-of-living increase being more than the standard 2%. Matt Sawyer, Jr. explained the Library is governed by the Trustees and they felt by giving more than 2% increase they would keep their existing employees. The Selectmen with because the wages are still the lowest in town, but the increase will make it more livable. Goss inquired and M. Sawyer confirmed this increase is a cost of living and market adjustment and could include a merit base increase.

Goss thanked them and conveyed the committee will take the request under advisement.

- **Interest Expense:** proposed 2023 budget of \$10,000.00

Matt Sawyer, Jr. presents requesting funding of \$10,000.00, which includes not using the T.A.N. in the last two-years and being fiscally conservative. Requesting to level fund to build a cushion to cover any potential increases.

Goss thanked them and conveyed the committee will take the request under advisement.

- **Insurance:** proposed 2023 budget of \$154,200.00

Matt Sawyer, Jr. presents requesting funding of \$154,200.00, which up about 8%. Primex is the carrier for municipalities and the budget shows the new rates with an overall increase of 7.83% due to global increase.

Emery asked for clarification and M. Sawyer explained the town has no control over the increase because it's based on policy coverage.

Goss thanked them and conveyed the committee will take the request under advisement.

- **Fire Warden:** proposed 2023 budget of \$21,995.00

Matt Sawyer, Jr. presents level funding of \$21,995.00 based on Chief Adam Riley's input.

The committee had no questions. Although Emery asked if the numbers could be rounded off.

Goss thanked them and conveyed the committee will take the request under advisement.

- **Emergency Management:** proposed 2023 budget of \$6,700.00

Matt Sawyer, Jr. presents requesting level funding of \$6,700.00 which includes an EMD Stipend of \$2,175.00 to the Emergency Management Director was never compensated for a large amount of work that was done. Other line items were able to be reduced in order to keep the bottom-line level funded but allow a stipend increase of \$2,000.00 to match what the Fire Warden is receiving.

Emery asked who the Emergency Management person is and M. Sawyer confirmed it's Dana Cullen, which this position is completely separate from his Fire Chief role.

Goss thanked them and conveyed the committee will take the request under advisement.

- **Ambulance:** proposed 2023 budget of \$449,000.00

Matt Sawyer, Jr. presents requesting funding of \$449,000.00 which is a 12% increase. This is a six-town contract agreement based on the number of calls. Ossipee's calls are up from 40% to 43%. During contract negotiations, M. Sawyer provided feedback from residents that the fee rates are too expensive. But at this time in the negotiation process the other 5 towns are satisfied with Action Ambulance. M. Sawyer did note that some rates can be negotiated. Their current five-year contract has two and half more service years until April 2025.

Goss thanked them and conveyed the committee will take the request under advisement.

- **Water:** proposed 2023 budget of \$223,180.00

Matt Sawyer, Jr. presents requesting funding of \$223,180.00 noting they tried to level fund whatever could be level funded. Wages are increased by the annual 2% cost of living raise. Heating fuel is up due to the rising cost of fuel thus bringing the overall budget up 3% over last year.

Parker inquired about the State Revolving Loan. M. Sawyer and T. Eldridge explained that this loan pre-dates them but it's to test the water and map the water lines. M. Sawyer noted the Water Bond payoff will be in 2023. Parker asked how much was the loan and how much is left for payoff on the State Revolving Loan. T. Eldridge stated he will need to look into it.

Millette inquired about the types of contaminants are detected. T. Eldridge explained that every manhole cover runs into the sewer system which increases water flow and increases the potential for contaminants from ground water. When the water & sewer guys are testing the water, they will add a dye for detection. They have an app on their phones where they can monitor the in and out flow. They can monitor how often the pumps are running for detecting leaks of which they have found four large leaks.

D. Sargent commented this was probably something that Mr. Sargent had done, and the mapping is not

correct. M. Sawyer stated they will look into it and report back to the committee. Multiple discussions ensued over the water line mapping and whether their accurate.

Goss thanked them and conveyed the committee will take the request under advisement.

- **Sewer:** proposed 2023 budget of \$232,150.00

Matt Sawyer, Jr. presents requesting funding of \$232,150.00 which is the same as the Water department with the exception of Part-time wages to bring the employee up to market adjustment. Otherwise, everything else is level funded as much as possible.

Parker inquired if a warrant article is being submitted to build up the Infrastructure Replacement Fund in case of catastrophic failure. M. Sawyer explained they had more than they thought in the reserve fund from equity that was built up over the years. On the sewer side they had almost \$500,000.00 but they needed a new truck. M. Sawyer noted that this year is not a good year to overly fund. Parker stated the system is aging and needs to be prepared for the future.

Discussion ensued over not making money off the water system because it's too expensive. T. Eldridge explained that water is the expensive item and sewer is where money can be made. T. Eldridge stated the Selectmen just voted to bring sewer in from other towns because NHDES required that commercial solid waste can no longer be accepted. T. Eldridge stated that's where they were making some money but because of the **PFAS** chemicals. T. Eldridge stated with the Selectmen's approval they started taking in sewerage from two other towns and the income is already increasing. M. Sawyer reported there will be a small profit this year with the restructuring in the rates from T. Eldridge, along with some retained earnings. The administration does not want to put it on the tax payers along with a warrant article. T. Eldridge stated if the economy keeps going the way it is, he'll have no choice but increase the rates next year.

Millette inquired of the mechanics involved in taking sewerage from other towns. The haulers would come and pump out the septic tanks at a resident's in other towns and bring it to Camp David to pump it out of the hauler. T. Eldridge stated the last administration had taken the sewerage out, mixed it with sand and spread it all around, which is illegal with NHDES. They have monitoring wells for detecting P-fast from plastics. T. Eldridge noted because NHDES came for a visit, T. Eldridge had to mix lyme with the solids and wash grit sand and get the acidic level above a certain amount for a certain amount of time. It as to sit for certain amount of time, land apply it, tilled in and seeded. A lot of the funding went to cleaning the lagoons.

Sargent inquire if there is an expansion plan to provide water and sewer to other residents. T. Eldridge stated he has checked every drawer and file and has not found any plan. Sargent explained how the original plan was to move forward. M. Sawyer commented that this administration is not interested in it at this time. There's no viable plan at this time. Sargent disagreed with not having a viable plan with adding all the houses and more septic pumping and now bring septic in from other towns. She thinks their way of base. Discussion ensued.

Emery questioned if there's any plans for putting meters on for sewer. T. Eldridge stated it's too problematic and expensive.

Brown asked about the name origin and where is Camp David located. T. Eldridge told her where it was.

Goss thanked them and conveyed the committee will take the request under advisement.

Goss acknowledged the receipt of information from Ossipee Concern Citizen for the committee's review.

- **Fire Precinct – West Ossipee** - presents requesting funding of \$537,990.00

Chief Carl Huddleston presents requesting funding of \$537,990.00 which includes the operating budget in the amount of \$387,990.00 and warrant articles in the amount of \$150,000.00. Chief Huddleston reported that the initial budget decreased by \$20,000.00 by paying off the truck. The principal and interest for the truck was \$59,369.00. Cost for utilities is up especially for, heating fuel, electricity, and overall budget is at \$407,076.00 which is down a little but will probably be close to last years budget.

Chief Huddleston reported cost saving measures which include installing forced hot water heating into the offices using propane. They have replaced the boiler.

Parker inquired to the number of calls. Chief Huddleston reports that the calls are up approximately 10%. Chief Huddleston noted they have been putting \$20,000.00 into a Capital Reserve Fund over the past few years and have determined it is no where's near enough. They plan to look into it over the next couple of years. They are trying to prolong the life out of their equipment.

Emery inquired if they have an existing Capital Reserve Fund. Chief Huddleston acknowledge they do and are slowly building it back up.

Goss inquired about their man power. Chief Huddleston reports they have a roster 19, with fulltime day staffing during the week. They were able to absorb the cost by cutting back on in other areas.

Goss thanked Chief Huddleston and conveyed the committee will take the request under advisement.

Pre-Review: 2023 Proposed Budget received.

- **Fire Precinct - Center Ossipee** - presents requesting funding of \$745,950.00
- **Fire Precinct – Ossipee Corner Light & Power** - presents requesting funding of \$537,990.00

Next meeting:

Wednesday, November 16, 2022 at 6:30 PM – Freight House

- Revenues & Warrant Articles
- Fire Precinct - Center Ossipee
- Fire Precinct - Ossipee Corner
- Fire Precinct - West Ossipee

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

Adjournment:

A **Motion** by Millette to adjourn the meeting. Emery seconded. No discussion. A unanimous vote was taken. **Motion passed.** The meeting adjourned at 7:12 PM.

Discussion continued:

M. Sawyer reported they will have the Warrant Articles, Selectmen's Report, Expense Report, and Revenue Report for the next meeting.

Goss inquired about the deadline for Petition Warrant Articles. M. Sawyer reported February 7th, 2023 for the deadline. Discussion ensued over how the dates are counted. M. Sawyer will verify the date with NH Municipal.

Parker asked the date for the Public Hearing. Goss noted that it's 14 clear days not counting the day of posting or the day of the meeting. Goss noted if a second meeting is needed it will be posted at the same time as the first posting but can always be canceled if it's not needed.

Goss commented that the Petition Warrant Articles have to come before the Budget Committee if their asking for money. M. Sawyer disagreed they do not. The Budget Committee can vote to not recommend but they cannot force them to present their request before the committee. Discussion ensued of not being able to force them to come and present. All they have to do is submit their request and the Selectmen and Budget Committee can only vote to recommend or not recommend.

Chairman Goss stated they had already adjourned. Second adjournment was at 7:20 PM.

Minutes approved by majority vote of the Board on –

Date

Joe Goss, Chairman

Donna Gridley, Vice-Chair
(In the absence of the Chairman)