

OSSIPEE BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
August 7, 2019

Minutes recorded by and 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 – recited

Attendance by Roll Call: – Joe Goss, Jonathan Smith, Donna Gridley, Lynne Parker, Louise Sutherland, Roland Millette, Shawn Marcotte, Rachel Ciarmella, Martha Eldridge and Ellen White, Town Administrator

Guest: Sue Simpson - Selectmen's Rep

Meeting Minutes: The Meeting Minutes from June 5, 2019 were reviewed by the committee.

A **Motion** by Gridley to approve the minutes of June 5, 2019 Budget Committee meeting as presented. Sutherland seconded. No discussion. All others voted in favor. Abstained was Jonathan Smith.

SELECTMEN'S BUDGET REPORT

Eldridge read Ellen White's emailed letter into record in response to the Budget Committee questions from the June 5, 2019 meeting. The Budget Committee appreciated the budget breakdown. Eldridge read the results of 2018 audit of the unassigned fund surplus balance is \$1,344,340.00. The NH Municipal Fund line item in the Selectmen's Office is not over budget. The amount expended was \$4,568.00 of the \$4,600.00 raised. An invoice payable to CIA Technologies for tax maps, which was coded incorrectly, and provided a letter of services provided by the NH Municipal Association, including free legal advice. General consensus was the budget at this point is looking pretty good.

1. Highway Maintenance – cause of being over budget was a result of the municipal vehicle needing all 4 - brakes systems and others repairs to vehicles. Purchase of the Ford F- 550 was awarded along with the equipment for the F-550. The plow truck has not been awarded but Brad Harriman is finalizing the quote for review by the Board of Selectmen.
2. OCC Warrant Article for the heating system bids was provided from Steve McConarty to the Board of Selectmen was awarded. Warrant Articles are still needed for the vinyl siding and air conditioning system. Millette reported the heating system is about complete and the a/c proposal should be presented to the Selectmen soon.
3. Cable franchise is still in negotiations. The original contract adopted in 1997, with renewal every two years would allow for expansion of service with the Cable Provider and a distribution matrix utilized to determine density area of coverage.
4. Sumner Brook Fish Hatchery Sale – sale is finalized and approximately \$65,000.00 was taken in after all fees and back taxes were paid and the property is back on the tax roll. The Conservation land remains the same.
5. Covered Bridge Restoration – per Brad Harriman's report the Board of Selectmen was the NHDES wetland permits are permissible from April through September. So, it's too late to put out to bid this year so, it's looking to be sometime in 2020.

6. Zoning Officer's vehicle – is a 2011 -2012 former police chief's cruiser so it is time for a newer vehicle. This budget year is a two-cruiser year, so the pickup truck and another cruiser will be due for placing and the pickup truck will most likely become the newer vehicle for the zoning officer.

BUDGET REVIEW

New Business:

- **2019 Budget Review -**

Parker spoke with the Recreational Department. The big item for this coming year is the soccer field at Constitution Park. Craig Brady is pursuing grant money to help cover at least half the cost, which is approximately \$120,000.00. The other half \$60,000.00 of the cost would need to come from the Town. Parker commented the park is being utilized more with the dog park and children's playground. But there was a complaint for shading at the playground because the plastic gets very hot on hot days. Discussion ensued over water supply and irrigation system to water the fields, adding trees for shade or even a pavilion structure for picnic and shade area.

Millette questioned on of the budget report page 12, under Government Buildings there's was an adjustment made. White explained when Steve McConarty first took over government buildings he was expensing to this account. After review by White and Anthony, it was noted the warrant articles were not being expensed for the purchases and McConarty was exhausting the government buildings budget. This entry reflects the money raised by warrant articles and putting back into this account to cover expenses made under the wrong account.

Rachel Ciarmella had no questions at this time.

Gridley has not spoken with the Fire Chief but did speak with the Library. The Library is looking for new carpeting this budget year. The Library has a quote from Library movers of \$12,000.00 and is estimating \$40,000.00 with carpeting. But she does not have quotes for carpeting as yet. The Librarian is anticipating a warrant article for the total amount.

Roland Millette had no further questions at this time.

Louise Sutherland suggested starting to schedule dates for public hearings.

Jonathan Smith asked if the revenues are on track for this year. White explained there is only 1-2 properties taken for this year. So, it's not worth having an auction this year and will look in the spring to hold an auction. There are 43 properties that the owners have worked out an agreement with the tax collector.

Goss inquired when the Board of Selectmen will start their budget process and hearings. White explained that the budget sheets just went out to the department heads. The Selectmen will meet them in September and Budget Committee will have them emailed to them in order to meet with the departments a week and a half. Goss suggested spreading out the larger departments over several weeks. If departments are level funded, the Budget Committee still wants to meet with them.

- **Review 2019 Warrant Articles to date**

Gridley asked when warrant articles are due. White explained the Selectmen's reviewed warrant articles are put on the warrant article by the 1-2 week of January. But the petition articles are not due until the second Tuesday in February.

Ambulance Contract is due August 26, 2019.

Eldridge announced the new playground equipment is August 22, 2019, and they're looking for a lot of volunteers to help setup and install. Gridley questioned if the Board of Selectmen investigate if grant money is indeed applied for before asking the Town's people to help match funds for a project. White explained that Craig Brady is pursuing a grant for the soccer fields and they will know whether or not they will get it before it

goes on for a warrant article. Parker stated he is seeking the grant through the NH Land and Water Conservation Fund, which the same grant in 1997 for the original fields.

Goss questioned if they're going to see the School's Out Program, again. Last year she was able to obtain a grant for half of what she was asking for but ultimately had to cut some programs out.

- **Start 2020 Town Budget Proposal**

White noted usually the week after Columbus Day. The Selectmen will have to meet the week before since Columbus Day is later this year. Goss asked for a letter to go out to the Fire Precincts asking them to have their completed budget proposals and warrant articles no later than November 13th, 2019.

WATER & SEWER

Jonathan Smith has questioned for two years if there is any capital reserve account set aside for major infrastructure or repairs for the water and sewer system

1. The rate is 30% – 40% less than comparable rates.
2. Are the Board of Selectmen getting to the point of setting a rate for line usage to cover the cost of expenses.

White reported there has been an engineer hired in the spring to evaluate the usage and to determine a rate. But the figures were astronomical, and he has been sent back to the drawing board to re-calculate. It has been determined that the current rates are not sustainable.

Smith noted under the RSA's the Town cannot use town money to make repairs on this system. Discussion ensued over possibly having to hire outside companies to repair, or possibly sell the system off to a larger Water system. Jonathan Smith spoke with Tom Mason from Lakes Region Water Company, Inc, and discussed the system, rates, possibly selling. Smith reported Mason would be very interested in buying the system. Smith asked Eldridge if she would sell. Eldridge commented she would sell it in a heartbeat. Smith provide the contact information for Tom Mason. Discussion ensued over the number of users, quality of water, use of bottle water, extending users and a contract that extends to 2024.

OTHER BUSINESS

A brief discussion on the condominiums being constructed behind Top Cat Carwash.

Any Other Business Which May Come Before This Meeting: None came before the Committee.

Upcoming Meetings: Wednesday, September 4, 2019 - Budget Committee Public Hearing – 6:30 pm

Adjournment:

A **Motion** by Gridley to adjourn the meeting. Millette seconded. No further discussion. A unanimous vote was taken. **Motion passed.** The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Next Meeting: **September 4, 2019 @ 6:30 pm**

Minutes approved by majority vote of the Board on –

Date

Joe Goss, Chairman
Budget Committee

Jonathan Smith, Vice-Chair
(In the absence of the Chairman)