

**OSSIPEE BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**October 8, 2020**

Minutes summarized by Laura Nash, Budget Committee Recording Secretary, amendments are noted by ***bold/italic*** type.

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

Pledge of Allegiance – was recited

Attendance by Roll Call: – Joe Goss, Donna Gridley, Roland Millette, Rachel Ciarmella, Cameron Quigley, Louise Sutherland, Lynne Parker, Donna Sargent, Martha Eldridge (Selectmen's Rep.) and Matt Sawyer, Jr, Town Administrator

Meeting Minutes: Review minutes of September 16, 2020 at the next meeting.

Selectmen's Report:

Martha Eldridge reported per Kellie Skehan, property taxes are coming in slowly. The total amount of Unpaid Taxes is \$1,126,476.00. The Treasurer reports there is \$2,000,000.00 in the bank. But there is a school payment of \$1,000,000.00 due shortly leaving \$1,000,000.00. Matt Sawyer, Jr. spoke with the bank because currently there was a \$1,000,000.00 minimum balance which is non-interest bearing. So, Matt Sawyer, Jr. renegotiated the minimum balance terms down to \$500,000.00.

The tax rate has not been determined due to the computer crash in the Tax Collectors office. Matt Sawyer, Jr. explained the issue and is hoping to have the tax rate soon.

Matt Sawyer, Jr. explain the Highway department renting another grader for more than \$6,000.00 a month.

2020 Revenue Report: No report

2020 YTD Budget Report:

Matt Sawyer, Jr., reports the overall budget is looking pretty good. They're hoping to have 1% to 2 % remaining by year-end. Most departments are showing approximately 26% to 30% remaining for this year. Tax collection is down by about half.

Discussions:

Sutherland suggested addressing the Fund Balance versus Cash Balance description at Town Meeting to educate the Town residents. Matt Sawyer, Jr. agreed. Discussion ensued over what policies or mechanisms are in place for collecting back taxes. Matt Sawyer, Jr. provided, and the Committee review the Collections Summary Year to Date Report. M. Eldridge noted she believes 95% are primary homes and the Board of Selectmen choose not to displace any resident from their primary homes. There are liens on all back-tax properties. Sutherland questioned how many businesses owe back taxes. Sawyer and Eldridge did not have a definitive answer but would check with Kellie Skehan, Tax Collector.

2020-2021 Budget Schedule:

Copies of the revised schedule were distributed and reviewed.

**2021 Town Budget Proposal by Department:** Chairman Goss stated all budgets will be taken under advisement at this time.

- Conservation Agent: proposed 2021 budget is Level Funded at \$4,306.00.
- Board of Selectmen: proposed 2021 budget is Level Funded at \$19,920.00
- Dam Authority: proposed 2021 budget is Level Funded at \$8,300.00

Goss noted John Picard, who was here at the last meeting and provided an update on the dams. The proposed 2021 budget is Level Funded \$8,300.00.

- Legal: proposed 2021 budget is Increased by \$5,000.00.

Matt Sawyer, Jr. explained the Planning Board needed to retain an additional attorney because the Town attorney had a conflict of interest. Peter Malia of Hastings & Malia charges an \$25.00 an hour and came highly recommended.

- Patriotic Purposes: proposed 2021 budget is Level Funded at \$2,000.00
- Cemeteries: proposed 2021 budget is Level Funded at \$39,310.00

Committee members are Roy Barron, Krystal Eldridge, and Karen Barron. Matt Sawyer, Jr. explained there was a shortage on plot at the Chickville Cemetery, so to open more space for lots, some trees were removed, and the area has been cleaned up in an effort to be proactive. Discussion ensued over the various cost for lots, possibly setting up a trust fund line item for perpetual care trust fund. Krystal Eldridge and Karen Barron will be creating a data base on the computer to help simplify the process and reporting.

- Treasurer: proposed 2021 budget is decreased to \$8,930.00

Matt Sawyer, Jr. explained the budget of \$11,030.00 is decreased by \$2,100.00 due to some changes made to the Treasurer's Salary. They have been working with Municipal Resources, Inc. MRI and the new Finance Administrator, who have noted some redundancy. In an effort to streamline the process and with discussions with the Treasurer an agreement was reached, and the salary was reduced.

- Welfare: proposed 2021 budget is decreased to \$40,000.00

Matt Sawyer, Jr. explained the budget of \$50,000.00 is decreased by \$10,000.00 after discussion with the Welfare Agent and after consideration that people are not coming into the office because there are plenty of Outside Agencies offering help as well. Concerns were raised that not enough people are being helped, communication is not getting out to the ones that need the help and accusations of being harassed when they do come for help. Discussion ensued noting that people that need the help have to call or come in to receive the help. If they don't come in for the help, there is not much the Welfare Agent, or the Town can do. People need to take the initiative to seek help in order to receive it. But it is not the Budget Committee's responsibility to manage personnel matters. That is the responsibility of the Selectmen and it needs to be addressed to the Selectmen in a formal written complaint.

The income-based housing shortage was addressed and is acknowledged throughout the State. A question was raised as to what services does Welfare services provide. Welfare services assist with providing resources for shelter, food, heat/gas/oil, utilities and rent.

A **Motion** by Parker to take the Proposed 2021 Budget for Conservation Agent, Board of Selectmen, Dam Authority, Legal, Patriotic Purposes, Cemeteries, Treasurer, and Welfare under advisement. Gridley seconded. No discussion. A unanimous vote was taken. **Motion passed.**

Next Meeting: Scheduled for **October 15, 2020**, 6:30 PM at the Freight House and the following departments will present their proposed budgets:

- Town Clerk / Tax Collector
- Election

- Registration
- Recreation Department:

Questions were raised if the Rec. department will begin activities again, but this is dependent on the School's. Justin Chaffee is the new Recreation Director. Currently he is part-time but he is hoping by May of 2021, he will go to full-time status. But this is dependent on the State, Schools and COVID Restrictions.

- Economic Development
- Government Buildings
- Highway Department
- Transfer Station

**Any Other Business Which May Come Before This Meeting:** None presented.

**Adjournment:**

A **Motion** by Gridley to adjourn the meeting. Sutherland seconded. No further discussion. A unanimous vote was taken. **Motion passed.** The meeting adjourned at 8:38 PM.

Minutes approved by majority vote of the Board on –

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joe Goss, Chairman  
Budget Committee

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