

OSSIPEE BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
November 05, 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, and Matt Sawyer, Jr, Town Administrator

Absent: Martha Eldridge (Selectmen's Rep.)

2020-2021 Budget Schedule

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

- **School's Out!** - The 2020 proposed budget request is \$45,000.00. Jen Berkowitz presented the proposed budget which is level funded from last year. The School's Out Program "provides a safe, caring and enriching after school environment, which fosters the development of academic and social skills for the students of Ossipee, NH through family, school and community partnerships." Beginning in March of 2020, the staff implemented a Google Classroom for students and their families to participate in healthy activities and stay connected with peers and afterschool staff members. They organized a school talent show remotely and sent a video to all the students so the parents could see them in the talent show. They had no summer programs. Their new programs will coincide with the school's hybrid system. This puts student participation per day at 24 – 30 students, which is half of prior COVID participation. They also required a second bus due to safety concerns with COVID.

They still have the July funds distributed which is used for fall start up programs. They did not have any less expenses from March until June because tuition was not charged for the remote programs. They are applying for supplemental funding from the 21st Century program, who is offering funding for in-person activities. But will be using supplemental funding for rest of the year to continue to not charge for remote classes.

Committee discussion: Parker commented they received more than double from the past budget year with the understanding that they would serve more Ossipee kids but according to the numbers, Ossipee participation decreased from 259 kids down to 150 kids. Berkowitz explained part of the issue is staffing so the budget was reduced because of the decrease in staffing. But because of COVID a second bus and driver were required. Program supplies increased because each child needed their own supplies because under COVID, they are not allowed to share supplies and cleaning products increased due to have to wipe everything down after use. They will offer two 10-week sessions and one 9-week session. The School Board meeting on Monday will determine if they're going to open schools up to afterschool programs or they continue to offer remote programs. Either way no child is turned away.

Sargent inquired if programs are open to other towns. Berkowitz explained they rarely have a children from other towns unless it's a special needs child. Discussion ensued over charging other towns for use of the programs that Ossipee residents are paying for.

Gridley noted from the application that no COVID funding was applied for. Berkowitz stated the supplemental funding from the 21st Century program is very similar. Gridley noted there is money on the table

she could be missing out on. Berkowitz commented potentially but not that she is aware of but will look into it.

Goss commented there is federal funding available for education was increased due to COVID. Suggested further research into funding programs is needed. Goss noted cutting back on staff and programs does not justify the level of funding of \$45,000.00 being requested and she should make more of an effort to seek federal funding that is available. Goss stated the budget will be taken under advisement at this time and any changes; she will be notified.

- **Green Mountain Conservation Group** - The 2020 proposed budget request is \$2,400.00. Matt Howe and Dana Simpson presented that GMCG is asking for level funding of \$2,400.00. They promote research, education, advocacy, land conservation, land trust and water quality testing for over two decades. They consist of seven-towns which oversee the protection of the Ossipee aquifer. The volunteer education program went remote when COVID hit in March. The VBAP program was restarted this fall. Water quality testing of the lakes was decreased to 2- testing samples instead of once a month testing over the four months in summer due to backlog at NHDES. The Rivers Program continued without interruption. A new program started during the summer was the Stream Crossing Assessment Program in collaboration with NHDES, NH Fish & Games, and others to assess the integrity of culvert 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). They are working with snow plow operators through their Salt Program for utilizing less salt or salt alternatives for treating roads due to the increases levels of salinity in the wells in and around the roadways.

Committee discussion: Parker commending GMCG on their efforts but suggested increasing public awareness and education through handout's on pollution and increase of body waste in the in and around the lakes. Sargent suggested if various groups and organizations could sponsor putting porta potties around the lake. Millette questioned what constitutes a client if they have 3,300 client's. Howe commented they believe they are serving and protecting the 3,300 client's that live in and around Ossipee Lake. They have 600 individual contributors on the mailing list. Millette questioned what happens after GMCG collects the data on the obstructions in the lakes and rivers. Howe reported this programs is for culverts and bridges. Other natural obstructions, such as fallen trees blocking passages for kayakers, bacterial blooms or someone dumping their waste tank into the water would need to report it to the town officials and NHDES.

Goss noted to Matt Sawyer, Jr., who confirmed that the Board of Selectmen reduced funding to \$2,000. Goss questioned what is being done about stagnant waters, property owners are not allowed to properly drain their properties of stagnant water pools. Matt Howe will bring it back to the conservation groups and NHDES to gather more information. Discussion ensued.

- **Central New Hampshire VNA & Hospice** - The 2020 proposed budget request is \$14,000.00. David Emberley presented the increased funding for this year. They provide home based – nursing and rehab, pediatric care – direct healthcare, education, child and family support services Belknap and So. Carroll Counties. They have provided service to 207 patients for 3,763 visits to Ossipee residents over the past year. Central New Hampshire VNA & Hospice participates in the Carroll County Emergency Preparedness, continued to serve during the outbreak of COVID in March, with decreased numbers during April and May because people were putting off elective surgeries. They were able to purchase sufficient protective gear in order to continue in home care visits.

Committee discussion: Parker thanked them for the services they provide to Ossipee residents. Sargent inquired about Flu Shot Clinics and Blood Pressure Clinics aside from local public pharmacies and to not overlook the elderly. Emberley will take the suggestion back to the office for consideration. Goss agreed with Sargent's suggestion.

- **White Horse Addiction Ctr** - The 2020 proposed budget request is \$5,000.00.

Eric Moran presented for level funding for this year. Eric reported they were the only RCL facility that did not close and provided remote services during COVID, along with 8 in-patient clients.

They provide services through 8 licensed counselors to assist clients with support of medical, food, clothing, education, housing and transportation. This year their program is a 24/7/365 emergency response peer recovery support service throughout Carroll County. They also had the addition of mental health services and treatment of children age 6 and up because the average age of first use in NH is 11 years of age. They serviced 244 individuals of which 72 were Ossipee residents. They treat anyone whether they have insurance or not. The new thrift retail store was built, and all labor was paid for through the pandemic protection program. They are fully setup for remote services if another outbreak occurs.

Committee discussion: Parker thanked them for the services they provide to Ossipee residents and inquired about the potential new facility at Ossipee Corner. They do not have a date set but the next step is to go before the Planning Board. Funding will be through the state grants because of the need for services. Millette commented he has seen them in action and appreciate what they do. Goss asked Sawyer for a recommendation from the Board of Selectmen, who voted to recommend funding in the amount of \$5,000.00. Goss questioned the preparedness in the event of another government shutdown or an increase of clients due to the shutdowns. Eric Moran believed they are and noted he is teaching another Emergency Room Department a Recovery Coach Class which will provide 7 new coaches, who move towards becoming certified.

- **Northern Human Services** - The 2020 proposed budget request is \$4,425.00.

Valeda Cerasale Director Behavioral Health, LICSW presented on behalf of NHS a non-profit mental health center. They serve Northern NH with offices in Wolfeboro and North Conway. They provide a range of outpatient mental health services and offer 24/7 Emergency Services, psychiatric, therapy, case management, pain management on sliding fee scale to uninsured town residents. They provided remote services during COVID but had skeleton crews in the offices. They saw 178 uninsured or underinsured Ossipee individuals for 780.33 hours. All funding from 2020 is used to offset the cost. They are prepared to go remote if needed. They did receive some COVID Relief funding which went to improving their technology and IT in providing remote services.

Committee discussion: Matt Sawyer Jr. confirm the Board of Selectmen level funded in the amount of \$4,425.00. Goss questioned if they are prepared for an increased demand for services along with drug and alcohol abuse, an increase in mental health issues if another lockdown occurs. When the pandemic hit they were down in staff but made it through and have hired a new staff members, so they are prepared going forward.

- **Children Unlimited, Inc.** - The 2020 proposed budget request is \$3,000.00.

Barbara Ross, Director of the Family Connection Resources Center was here to present. They were extremely busy during COVID because people were so in need and stressed. They did receive some COVID Relief funding which went towards helping people with rent, fix their cars, gas cards, grocery cards, etc... They increased staff to help with the increase of demand. They have assisted 50 Ossipee families and 45 students. They provide assistance with finding resources, a lot of transportation services for medical appointments, to Division of Youth & Families, and provide crisis intervention, parenting classes, anything to kids safe from drugs, abuse and domestic violence.

Committee discussion: Goss questioned if they are prepared for any increased demand for services if another lockdown occurs. Ms. Ross stated they ready, but people are already coming in stressed.

- **Kingswood Youth Center** - The 2020 proposed budget request is \$5,000.00.

Zachary Porter, Executive Director noted they celebrated their 20th anniversary in May and wanted to thank the Town of Ossipee for their funding but for also the volunteers, Board Members and the most wonderful

students over the past 20 years. They provide a safe, positive environment in which to grow, learn, and develop life skills. They offer out of school programs to youths within the 7-towns of the Governor Wentworth Regional School District for grades 7-12. All services are free. Last school year, 28% of the participants were from Ossipee with 89 individuals. They offer 4-programs which include After-School Program, Beyond the After-School Program, Wednesday Evenings, School Vacations, Summer Program, and the Club 1-21 One to One Mentor Program, its adult mentors mentoring middle school, mentees in the middle school. They teach life skills, team building, leadership skills by working with other younger groups, and once a week they work with White Horse Addiction Center where the kids are educated on the hazard of drug addiction. During the closure of school's due to COVID each week they provided videoconferencing with families, calling hours with parents, guardians and students, weekly online contest for prizes, a variety of different programs to keep them occupied while at home. They provided food and care package distribution during the school closure. They provided 16,500 lbs. of food and essentials to 53- KYC families impacted by the pandemic, of which 24 families are from Ossipee. KYC raised \$7,000.00 which was paid directly to 11 - families in need, of which 6 - families were from Ossipee. July 2nd, they were able to open back up to regular summer programs. This school year they opened a KYC Food Pantry in the center, the KYC Cupboard for clothing needs, and continue to serve smaller groups during the pandemic. They are funded by three other towns of Tuftonboro, Wolfeboro, and New Durham and have requested level funding from each town.

Committee discussion: Parker thank them for their serves. Sargent inquired if they track the graduation rate with the families they serve. Zachary Porter said that it would be a goal but right now it's more important to stay in contact with the students and families. They use Google Meets each week to stay in touch with students. They receive updates from students on life achievements. They serve grades 7 – 12 with more student participation in the 7-9th grade levels. Ciarmella thanked them for their time and serves. Millette is a board member of the Ossipee Community Center and wanted to thank KYC for helping them with the 501C-3 process by dovetailing their application after KYC's.

- **Ambulance** - The 2020 proposed budget request is \$384,792.00

Goss noted they are requesting an increase of \$35,808.93 and the Board of Selectmen have approved to recommend. The increase is due to contract

A **Motion** by Gridley to take the Ambulance - 2020 proposed budget of \$384,792.00 under advisement.

Discussion: Sawyer noted the company is Action Ambulance out of Wilmington, MA. Goss commented he has heard positive feedback about this company. Sawyer had one complaint of being charged excessive rate and insurance would not cover the rate. He was able to negotiate to where the insurance company would pay for the service. Cameron commented when they use a Massachusetts company; you're going to pay Massachusetts rates. But they provide excellent supplies for the trucks, and service. They contract with several towns and have good management.

Sutherland seconded. No further discussion. A unanimous vote was taken. **Motion passed.**

A **Motion** by Millette to take the Proposed 2021 Budget for Starting Point, Freedom Food Pantry, Life Ministries Food Pantry, Ossipee Historical Society, Ossipee Concerned Citizens, White Mountain Community Health, Ossipee Children's Fund, Tri County CAP, Inc, End 68 Hours of Hunger, Caregivers of Southern Carroll County under advisement. Parker seconded. No discussion. A unanimous vote was taken. **Motion passed.**

A **Motion** by Gridley to take the Proposed 2021 Budget for School's Out!, Green Mountain Conservation Group, Central New Hampshire VNA & Hospice, White Horse Addiction Ctr, Northern Human Services Children Unlimited, Inc., and Kingswood Youth Center, under advisement. Ciarmella seconded. No discussion. A unanimous vote was taken. **Motion passed.**

Next Meeting: Scheduled for **November 18, 2020** - 6:30 PM at the Freight House and the following departments will present their proposed budgets:

- Long-Term Debt
- Insurance
- Library
- Fire Warden
- Ambulance
- Emergency Management
- Water & Sewer Department

Pre-Review:

- Fire Precinct - Center Ossipee
- Fire Precinct - Ossipee Corner
- Fire Precinct - West Ossipee

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 7:59 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)