



TOWN OF DEERING
762 Deering Center Road Deering, NH 03244

Board of Selectmen Meeting
February 1st, 2022
Meeting Minutes

Budget Hearing Preparation 2/1/2022

Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm

Motion to approve consent agenda by Bill Whisman, seconded by Rebecca Mitchell. All in favor.

Administrative Budget

- BOS Wages – will keep this line at \$5000.
- BOS Certification – will keep this line in case a new board member is elected
- ADMIN part-time wages – This line will be changed to say Finance Administrator. The Administrative Assistant title does not accurately reflect what this position does.
- Insurance went up across the board by about 10%
- ADMIN mobile phone – Line in 2021 was over-expended which is why the increase is requested. This line will now be \$750.
- Office supplies - \$200 increase is to be expected
- Assessing and legal – no change.
- Legal - Professional Services – The Board would like to see the \$5000 devoted to researching the Hillsboro-Deering School agreement added to this line. It was allocated last year, but never spent. This line will be increased to \$23,000 for the 2022 budget and will go back to \$18,00 the following year.
- Planning & Zoning P/T wages – Selectman Whisman feels these committees do not need paid minute takers as other committee take their own minutes.
- Wage lines will be eliminated from both Planning and Zoning.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector Budget

- Ballot clerk asked for an increase of wages from \$7.25/hr. to \$9.00/hr. They have never had an increase.
- Elections – MISC charges is office supplies, envelopes, mailings, training purposes, barcode pen
- Treasurer has chosen not to take payment for the next couple of years, so the wages were eliminated. Next year something will have to be added just in case someone else is elected
- Tax collector wage line was combined with Town Clerk. The Board agrees that some things can be combined but would overall like to keep these two budgets separate in case the position is ever separated.

Police Budget

- Office supplies – asking to increase by \$1,000. In 2021, the “Other supplies” line and the \$1,000 in it was eliminated. Adding this \$1,000 back for this year. The Board would rather have “Other Supplies” changed to “Hardware Supplies” and have the money put there as it more accurately reflects its purpose.
- New equipment line was cut down last year and there wasn’t enough money in 2021 to get replace an outdated radio. A new one is \$3,500 with programming being an additional \$85. The age of the current radio is preventing normal job operation.

Ambulance/Fire Budget

- Vehicle maintenance – The ambulance has had a lot of mechanical issues this year and it is not anticipated that these repairs will decrease in 2022. There are problems with the heat and AC as well as the air ride system that are due to the age of the ambulance.
- Paramedic intercept – This line is for if there are advance life treatments that need to be done and there isn't a paramedic on duty in Deering. The ambulance would intercept with a paramedic in another town. This typically costs about \$750 each time
- Ambulance Telephone line – This is for tablets in the ambulance that can be used to transfer heart rhythms to the hospital. Charting and patient care reports can also be done while on the way to the hospital. This has to be maintained as a separate line for HIPPA purposes for the transmittal of patient information. It would be more accurate to rename this line as telemetry. The Board agrees to increase this line by \$300.
- Ambulance mobile phone - \$700, historically it has not gone over \$595
- Fire New Equipment – this went up to \$9000. Specifically, this is for the replacement of a gas meter which should be replaced every three years, some of ours are 10 years old. We were on a track to replace these on a rolling schedule but with cuts, got behind. Hose testing is also conducted on a regular basis and if a hose fails it has to be replaced. In 2021 we lost 800-900 feet of hose that we couldn't afford to replace. Selectman Whisman requested to see a report of what needs to be replaced and on what schedule
- Fire Vehicle Maintenance and repairs – We do have a new fire trucker, but the rest of our trucks are old, and we need to maintain safety. The Forestry Unit will also need new tires.
- Fire Building Maintenance – There are several items that need to be fixed. There are foundation cracks, rotted doors, electrical problems, and plumbing issues. The Fire Chief was able to write a grant for high-efficiency lights, but we still had to pay for the installation costs. Selectman Whisman would like to have a discussion in the next couple of months regarding having one central station.
 - Fire Youth Program is being added back in. This is seen as a good way for recruitment and retention. Typically, 20-25% will stay on with the department after they finish the program
- Emergency Management – This line is being kept open in case position is ever separated out from fire chief

Highway Budget

- Highway wages – The mechanic position that was cut is being added back in. This person would perform the regular maintenance on fire/highway/police vehicles. They would also help plow and fill in with the rest of the highway duties as needed. This position would be full-time and would also conduct inspections for town vehicles. Selectman Watson notes this is just gaining back capabilities we had in the past
- The "Sand" line will be renamed to "Sand Processing Equipment"
- Building Maintenance – The four overhead garage doors need to be replaced. Only the walk-in entrance door has been replaced. Each door would cost about \$10,000 to \$11,000. When the overhead doors are replaced, one of the old 12ft ones would go to the newly sided former salt shed
- Other professional services – This was added three years ago and is intended to cover the cost of having someone come in and suck out sand and gravel from catch basins
- Street lighting – Eversource does not allow LEDs or solar on their street lights. They will only do halogens

Cemetery Trustees

- The Board would like to ensure that the work being contracted for cemetery maintenance is being completed as anticipated. Can the Trustees conduct spot checks?

Library Trustees

- The Board agrees that all requested increases are necessary.

The Board recessed for a five-minute break and will reconvene at 7:50 pm for the Public Hearing

Public Hearing Budget Hearing – February 1, 2022

Ground rules established. The Board request that all comments be directed to them and not individual department or committee heads.

Selectman Whisman motioned to open the floor to public comment at 7:55pm. All in favor.

Administration Budget

Public comment about why the executive function lines have not decreased as requested at the last town meeting. The Town Administrator addressed what each line included and noted that the Assessing Clerk role will not be filled until the part-time bookkeeper departs.

There was further public comment about the Administration retirement line. Some community members felt this line was too high given the newness of the Town Administrator and the Administrative Assistant. The Town Administrator explained that the town matching for retirement is currently set at 6% and that many town employees negotiate for rates closer to the NH Retirement rate of 13%. Since the Town Administrator and Administrative Assistant are probationary employees for the first six months of employment, the agreement was made to decrease the retirement line to \$10,100.

Town Clerk Budget

No comments made.

Financial Administration Budget

The Board noted that there are no Treasurer wages listed for this year, but next year they will need to be added back in as the current Treasurer's term is ending and if a new one is elected, they may want to receive the pay.

No other comments were made.

Property Assessment Budget

The question was asked if enough was being put into professional services. The Town Administrator responded that yes, there was enough. The invoice amount is \$14,988 and that there may have been a technology subscription fee that was incorrectly added to this line last year.

Professional Services – Legal

The Board noted that the \$5,000 set aside for conducting research on the HDSD contract was never used and that it would be added in for this year and as a result the total legal fee amount would be \$23,000

Planning and Zoning Budget

Selectman Whisman outlined the Board's changes that would remove the part-time wages from the planning and zoning sections for the paid secretary position. Community members noted that these positions may be necessary for these two boards to run smoothly but are fine to see how the year goes without these positions. \$1 will be kept in each budget line to keep the account open and the Board will revisit again next year.

General Government Buildings Budget

A community member asked if removal of dying trees would go under this line, the Town Administrator responded that it would go under this line.

Discussion about the maintenance and supplies line being over expended and if it needed to be increased. The Board noted that there were two unexpected repairs in 2021 that caused this: the elevator got stuck and there were birds in the elevator shaft. There was further discussion about mold remediation that was needed in the basement and the agreement was made to increase this line to \$10,000.

Cemeteries

Discussion around the fact that the groundskeeping line has been overspent in the last two years and that it may need to be increased. Several community members noted that there are poor contracts in place and that the contracted work may not be being completed as requested. There was further discussion about how the bid process works. The Town Administrator recommends that this budget line be left as is for now until we have a better idea of what work should be completed and what should be applied here. The Town Administrator will also look into adding a separate maintenance account line to this budget to better be able to separate out the charges.

Insurance

A community member questioned why this line was being increased to \$41,000. The Town Administrator responded that this is the quote given by Primex and that there was an increase this year. The request was made by a member of the public to obtain new quotes for next year to see if this rate is too high.

Advertising

No comments made.

Police

New equipment was needed last year that the department could not afford. The department needed a new radio because one I so outdated that they don't make parts for it anymore. A new radio is \$3,500 with an additional \$85 to program it. The Police Chief noted that he is just asking for this line to be increased back to what it was before it was cut last year.

Police Chief also requested that the fuel line also be increased back to what it was before last year's cut and noted that he would have to ask officers to sit on the side of the road with their vehicles off this year to conserve fuel.

The Board noted that "Other Supplies" was being changed to "Hardware Supplies" to better reflect what this was. Office Supplies will now be the original amount of \$1,250 and Hardware Supplies will be \$1,000.

Ambulance

Changes made by the Board were discussed. A typo was found in the Life/Disability line. This line should be \$980.

Fire

There was discussion at great length by the community about the desperate need of repairs for the fire station and if the maintenance line was sufficient. The Fire Chief noted that an evaluation was done and that it is estimated that to make the stations last for the next 3-5 years it would take over \$300,000. A longer-term solution is needed and will be researched this year. Further discussion around using money from the Undesignated Fund Balance for building a new station and how this process would work. No increase was made to the maintenance line.

Building Inspection

No comments made.

Emergency Management

No comments made.

Other Public Safety

No comments made

Highway

The Board noted changes made in the previous meeting and noted that the Sand line will be changed to Sand Processing Equipment to better reflect the purpose of this money.

The Road Agent commented that the budget is the same as last year with the exception of salaries. The increase reflects the addition of a full-time mechanic position. This position had been filled previously but was cut a couple of years ago. There was public comment that it may be difficult to find a qualified mechanic at the proposed rate. The Road Agent noted that this rate is consistent with what other municipalities are offering for this position. The mechanic would also help plow snow.

There was further discussion about the budget for salt. The Road Agent noted that last year was exceptional and that the Highway Department had to put down much more salt than what was normal.

Street Lighting

The Board explained that Eversource would not allow the installation of LED/solar lights on their poles. No other comments were made.

Solid Waste Disposal

A community member asked why this price keeps going up. The Town Administrator noted that this is a contracted price and includes tipping fees which can fluctuate.

Welfare

No comments made.

Parks and Recreation

This is being added back in. No comments were made.

Library

A question was asked about why the electricity line was only \$200 last year and was \$500 this year. The Chair of the Library Trustees noted that there was a lot of deferred maintenance that wasn't done during COVID. It was requested that there be a Building Maintenance line. The Chair also asked that there be an account line added for books.

Conservation

The Chair of the Conservation Commission noted that the research line is really just for lake water quality testing.

A community member asked where the parking lot funds went and thought they were supposed to go to the Conservation Commission. The Town Administrator commented that this money can't be designated to trust funds or the conservation fund. The Town Clerk/Tax Collector noted that the money mostly got used for the maintenance of the outhouses.

Other Comments

The Town Administrator noted that the principal and interest lines for the fire truck should be combined. They are not broken out when this is invoiced.

A community member asked where the funds for the Town Administrator hiring process were applied? The Town Administrator clarified that it was applied to the Admin – other professional services line. The amount, explained by the board and amended at the February 15th meeting, was roughly \$4,000.

The motion was made to close the public hearing session. All in favor.

The Road Agent and Town Administrator presented the three grader quotes that they received for the DPW's Grader. After discussing the specifications of the Graders from Milton Cat, Case and John Deere, the board reviewed the costs and their options. The Town Administrator explained that they have the option to either enter a lease agreement with one of these three companies through a warrant article or to purchase the Milton Cat Grader outright through the usage of the Capital Reserve Funds. Bill Whisman motioned to purchase the Milton Cat Grader through the usage of Capital Reserves funds dependent on the allocation of funds into the Highway Vehicle Capital Reserve. Seconded by Roy Watson. The motion passes.

Because the purchase of the grader is being authorized by the Board, it will not need to be on the warrant.

The Budget Hearing closes at 10:30PM. Bill Whisman motioned to approve the changes to the budget and to present this in the annual warrant. Seconded by Roy Watson. The motion passes.

Other Business

Comment was made that further discussion will be needed about the undesignated funds balance.

A wedding event application from Greenwald- Arce was unanimously approved by the board with a motion to approve by Bill Whisman and seconded by Roy Watson.

Jill Smith requested that \$50,000 be added to the Trust Funds for the Fire Department building. Selectman Whisman made the motion to add \$50,000 to the warrant for this purpose. All were in favor.

Selectman Whisman made the motion to adjourn at 11:10 pm. All in favor.

Meeting adjourned.



BOS Meeting Sign in Sheet

NAME

Reason for Attending

Jacqueline Sawyer

budget info

Gate Lalmond

Doug Lalmond

Stephen Fegelson

Kay Hartnett

interested citizen!

Carol Baker

Jeff LeBlanc

Barbara Lalmond

interested Cit

Kevin Lalmond

interested Cit

Ben Houghton

Gay Sumner

Steph Gaudy

Betsy Holmes Budget mtg

Brian K. Doherty

Tim Finn

Lidice Watson Budget.

Dennis Poire

ELIZABETH KIRBY

Mark Philbert

Katie Lavoie

Doug Connor

Jill Smith

Mike Thomas

Edward Cobble

Calvin

Beth Harrington

budget mtg.

Mike + Lisa Mullen

Donn Mann III

Eric Stauffer.

Beth Kelly