

SELECT BOARD BUDGET MINUTES
December 13, 2022, 4:00 p.m.

1. Call meeting to order - the meeting was called to order by Mike at 4:04 p.m.
2. Agenda – A motion was made Fred and a second by Skip. Motion carried.
3. Public Comment – There was no public comment.
4. Work on 2023-24 budget and possibly finalize the 2023-2024 budget:
 - a. Ambulance asked for help with purchasing a monitor for the one that is failing. They are asking for \$11,000 for the first year, and then they will have to discuss going forward from there. (The total price is \$33,000 over a 3- year period.) A suggestion of \$5,000 from ARPA be given for this monitor, and they could possibly use their savings for the balance.
 - b. School – came last week and asked for \$100,000. Would like to give them some money. RD proposed \$20,000, Skip suggested \$10,000, Ian suggested \$5,000. RD stated he could be happy with \$10,000. Mike stated that we go no further. We need to look at the demolition of 2466 Main Street which will be approximately \$40,000. Some of it could come out of the current budget that we are in. Dean is looking at his budget to see what he can cut to help on this.
 - c. Mike feels that we should put some type of stipend for the fire fighters in the general fund and he suggested the amount of \$2,000. RD suggested \$5,000.
 - d. Kathleen from the Library – she listened to the last couple of meetings to explain the situation. She thanked the SB for the work they have put in. We do not want to have bad feelings about the budget. The Trustees agree to their submitted library budget of \$103,000 with contains the 8.7 percent COLA increase for the Library Director. The library has been using the COLA number for 14 years. This is not, in fact, a raise and if not given, it is a cut. In all fairness feel that the Trustees suggested that all employees receive this same amount. Director’s salaries – found it is outdated from VLCT and 24 out of 200 libraries reported. This report on average in \$10 more that what she gets. Library Directors have a starting salary of \$26. Annual increase should include the federal cost of living and steps by trustees. She wants to state that she is not overpaid but underpaid. RD said that he does not have any problem with her salary but with the children’s program. The school has come to us, and they are doing a “Go Fund Me”. Perhaps the Friends of the Library could do something more. Kathleen stated that they bring in between \$750 and \$1,250 and this the one thing they do. The Trustees did a library presentation regarding the Children’s Librarian position. Mike said that the money from ARPA would be the seed money and going forward the library is to provide the way. The Trustees looked at the budget and it is 6.3% and last year it was 6.5%. Fred stated that if we gave everyone the 8.7% raise this would raise our taxes significantly. If there is a difference between level funding and present proposed budget, they would have a separate article. Ian wanted to say that he is supporter of the libraries. He feels that everyone in the town is underpaid and just because other towns have something doesn’t mean that we can or have to follow them.
 - e. Mike wanted to know if there are any other things we may have missed. Mike wanted to know if Ian had other things. He talked about Old Route 2 - \$27,000 to grind it and relay it. Hopefully we can fund this with the money for it with the sale of the old truck. We could put the \$30,000 for the sale in the sinking fund and take it from there. \$925,863 is the budget for the highway with health insurance it will be \$927, 363.
 - f. General Fund – Library – level fund and they should put an article on the warning for the difference of \$16,092 which is the (youth librarian). Let’s level fund. Last year it was \$87,252 (which included a stipend of \$1,600 month for the librarian’s insurance. This year the stipend will be \$500 which will reduce it to \$78,344. We should let the town vote for the difference in a separate article.
 - g. A motion was made by Mike with a second by RD for this \$5,000 stipend for the Fire Department. Motion carried.
 - h. A motion was made that we allocate \$5,000 from ARPA for the Ambulance to purchase monitor. A motion was made by RD with a second by Fred, motion carried.
 - i. A motion was made that we allocate \$5,000 from ARPA for the school playground with a second by Fred. Motion carried.
 - j. How to pay for the demolition of the building on Main Street. It would cost roughly \$40,000. Dean is looking how he could work his budget to fund this project. He does have a few fund raisers scheduled for this summer. RD wanted to know when this work will take place. Every contractor wishes to do it this winter and by spring all be removed, seeded, and leveled. This will come out of this year. We could give them the rest of the ARPA fund to start this. The highway budget is higher because of inflation. If we need some major repairs for the WW Plant, we do not know how much that is going to be. We are assuming that we have a surplus this year. Ian wanted to know why we don’t wait on the demolition for 6 months. Fred stated that it the bids would be outdated. Ian wanted to know why we put the bids out when we didn’t know how to pay for the demolition. The FD has not used all their ARPA money. We allocated \$46,000 and have not spent it, but they have ordered the hose and it will be coming in.

What about the Rec Committee, they have not used all their money. Ian asked what if we have dirty soil and it will cost more money. Ian said that we have given these entities money and we should not take it back from them. If we put \$10,000 from ARPA and we have \$10,000 in the SB meeting. If we put this towards the amount, we are at \$29,000. Can FD come up with the remainder. A motion was made by RD with a second by Fred that we allocate \$19,000 from ARPA, \$10,000 from SB. And FD will need to come up with the rest. Motion carried. Final budget is 1,627,491.16 with a tax rate of .7070, if the library article the tax rate will be .7208. It was emphasized that the SB is not an adversary of the library, we are just trying to keep the tax rate down for Cabot residents. A motion was made by Fred with a second by RD to finalize the general budget at \$701,629. A motion was made by RD with a second by Skip to finalize the highway budget at \$925,863. Both motions were carried.

5. Other Business – there was no other business.

6. Adjourn – A motion was made by Mike with a second by Fred, motion carried. We adjourned at 5:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Ritter