

**SELECTBOARD BUDGET MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2024, 5:00 P.M.**

Those in person: Mike Hogan, Fred Ducharme, Skip Bothfeld, Fred Ducharme, R. D. Eno, Karen Larsen, Betty Ritter, Jeanne Johnson, Amy Monahan; via zoom:

1. Call Meeting to Order – the meeting was called to order by Mike Hogan at 5:00 p.m.
2. Approve Agenda - A motion was made by Fred with a second by RD Eno. Motion carried.
3. Public Comment – There was not public comment.
4. Meetings with different committees

Highway:

Mike wanted to know some information about Aldo's new truck. Sid found out that all trucks will be stick shift which lowers the price by 10K, we can get a single frame, and it will be done Spring (late April).

Updates: They poured walls on Jug Brook.

In reviewing for next year in the various areas:

Cold Pack should be increased to \$12,500;

Garage supplies to \$10,000;

Lease for new truck (need to check on price);

Salt shed (which could possibly be done by a grant);

Fuel is okay at \$55,000.

Paving now \$40,000, spots for flood Whittier - \$50,000. We will be doing 3 this year, and we should be able to hold it at \$40,000 and can do some new in this fiscal year.

We are going to apply for grants for Old Route 2 (Sid thought that we should pave instead of grinding.)

Who is responsible for Thistle Hill at the bottom of Route 2: State is responsible for this area.

Gravel is doing good. Working on building a stockpile right now.

Class IV roads – we had \$10,000 for this last year and possibly might be enough. Sid stated that he put some gravel on Dubray Road. Could we have a short list of Class IV and the status. Sid stated that If we change the status of these roads, we will be adding time to highway maintenance which we would need to budget for. It was suggested to see what it would cost. Perhaps we would work with the Class IV roads and do a little more grading and gravel instead of upgrading to Class III. It is important to alert people prior to buying property on a IV road of the upkeep that is involved.

Signs and Guardrails – same.

Tires – good along with Salt and Sand.

Menard and Mack Mountain bridges – we will discuss this later.

Ditch stone should have its own line item and take it out of gravel expense and budget \$10,000.

Equipment repair the same.

Equipment needs – grader is just shy of 6,000 hours (\$10,000 would do if we buy the filters, John Deere could do the maintenance for \$4,000). We should do this maintenance round 10,000 hours; we add about 1,000 hours a year. It is better to do something at 10,000 hours than wait until something needs repair. The loader is in good shape. Fenders for the grader would cost around \$7,000.

If we get a larger excavator (and most dealers would let us try a bigger one as a trial before we purchase one).

We will have to get a wider trailer if we get a larger excavator. The one we have is worth around \$50,000. Our size is up to 18,000 lb. and the next jump is up to 30,000 lbs. Komastu and Volvo dealers are in this area, and we could shop around.

Northeast Equipment Repair is our mechanic.

Tree Warden: Roland Payne said there are around 73 ash trees that should be removed for safety consideration. He wanted to know if there is a work plan for this coming year to start with. There is the possibility of special training with the Game and Logging program. Sid said that he talked with Guthrie Perry, East Montpelier road foreman and they hire it out. They do not cut and recommend outsourcing. The company they used was all

done and all cleaned up and did an amazing job. Will try to get an estimate. It was suggested that we move trees from general to highway fund, with a budget of \$13,150.

Highway Personnel – Aldo’s MRI this Friday. Sid has a couple of people in reserve.

Chipper – could use a new one - \$65,000, paint sprayer – possibly renting it from another town. Chipper could be also rented from another place. We could possibly work with other towns to do an “exchange” program. We have items that another town might want and other towns have items they might want.

There is poor service with cell service. We should check to see if Starlink might be something to look into.

Looking at Fund Balances and applying to see what we can reduce or increase.

Willey Building – increase to \$60,000 due to some roof repairs that need to be done.

Salaries – Amy stated that COLA was 2.5%, but with the longevity of personnel, suggested that we add another 1% to make a salary increase of 3.5%. She also mentioned that it has been several years since the stipend has been raised and suggested raising it by \$100.

5. Other Business - there was no further business.
6. Motion to Adjourn – Fred moved that we adjourn with a second by Karen, motion carried, and we adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Ritter, Town Clerk