

SELECTBOARD BUDGET MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2024, 5:00 P.M.

Those attending in person: Mike Hogan, Skip Bothfeld, Karen Larsen, RD Eno, Fred Ducharme, Amy Monahan, Jeanne Johnson, Frank Kampf, Betty Ritter, via zoom: no one.

1. Call Meeting to Order – the meeting was called to order by Mike at 5:00 p.m.
2. Approve Agenda - A motion was made by Fred with a second by RD Eno.
3. Public Comment – no public comment
4. Review Entire Budget – Mike went over the upcoming budget. Through FY 23 we had a fund balance. Fiscal 24 we don't know the fund balance because of the flood. A suggestion from the auditors was to not touch this because of the unknowns for the flood. Looking at the budget it would be about \$86,000 increase or roughly 4.5% increase. The increases are \$30,000 sinking fund for FD, WB increase, service appropriations, and health insurance. If we went back to level fund it would drop significantly.

Rural Solutions signed a 3-year contract. We are paying \$950 for computer support and paying \$200 a month for wastewater and \$75 highway support for a total of \$1,473/month or \$18,000 year. Office expenses were very high – we budgeted \$7,000 (which includes a new phone system, update on QuickBooks for a one-time expense). It was suggested that the ambulance go back to \$40,000. FD may not be a hard number. We put in a sinking fund of \$30,000 but this may change as we are looking for grants that could purchase the equipment needed. Rec remains at \$10,000. We also need to show training for the highway of \$10,000. We would drop the removal of Ash tree from \$10,000 to \$7,000. There are a lot of trees that need to be taken down, that is not part of the \$7,000. Willey Building increase is due to the need of a new roof over the foyer. Shirley's salary will be split between the office and custodial work.

General Fund – added \$30,000 sinking fund (RD wanted to somehow sequester this fund. Highway funds are being carried over. We need to look at the actual budget. There will be a delay with the auditors as they are running behind because of the flood. We will be getting a better picture soon. Are we supposed to spend all the money allocated, and if we don't does this carry over for next year RD wanted to know. Mike stated that we do not need to spend everything and if we don't it can be carried over forward next year as requested from each committee. All the appropriations have been updated. The Cemetery could use some of their investment money for tree removal and cut it back to \$20,000. Things are looking at a positive note. The main point is what is the tax burden for Cabot residents.

On Dana's appropriation for Cheese and Culture, perhaps we can look at this in another way. RD will do some checking with CCA on this to see if they could take over the funding for this.

Dues and subscriptions could be broken out.

Highway is reasonable. Working with part time help and they are doing a great job. Aldo will be having surgery on the 12th and will be out for the winter.

Public Safety Building - What is FEMA willing to give us for the temporary building.

Town does own the building and FEMA has about \$200,000 into the building.

We do not know the amount FEMA will pay for the new FD.

If we take over the temporary public safety building, we will be required to put in a sprinkler system.

At our next meeting we will have firmer numbers.

We could do level funding. arbitrary.

5. Calendar Review – Jeanne reminded that Town Meeting Advisory Group is to make Australian Ballot voting as

meaningful as possible. Involving voters in difficult decisions. SB suggests a meeting on the budget, the committee has a counter proposal not to have the proposed December 16 public budget meeting. We are proposing to have a forum on Town Meeting Articles and the Budget. They felt that people wanted to know what is really changed, is there a different direction, new initiatives, different focus. We will be putting it out on FPF and Chronicle, as well as the article in the Town Report. An emphasis can be placed on flood resiliency, the reason there is a difference in budget. The flood side is the important piece. Other questions they had:

- Some things missing – public information, why there isn't a warning about FD need to be educated what their role might or might not be. It would come back to the Town for vote.
- Education on the new PSB – still discussing (no shovel in the ground). Where are we in the process.
- Why can't we expand the temporary building.
- Ambulance service – is there going to be place in the building.

Suggested time would be January 23.

6. Other Business – Delinquent taxes – are approximately \$186,702
7. Motion to Adjourn – A motion was made by RD with a second by Fred, motion carried, and we adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

A note after the meeting: we will cancel the meeting on the 9th and have our budget meeting on Thursday, December 19.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Ritter, Town Clerk