

Approved as amended _____

TOWN OF EPSOM

BUDGET COMMITTEE

DECEMBER 9, 2010

Present: Marylou LaFleur-Keane, Chairman; Joyce Heck, Vice-Chairman; Brad Keyes; Kevin Reeves; Penny Graham; Bob Sawyer; Keith Cota, Selectmen's Representative; Virginia Drew; Mike Wiggett; Mona McGraw

Not In Attendance: Carol McGuire; David Fiorentino

Other Attendees: Nancy Wheeler; Don Harty; Carole Brown; Mary Frambach; Stewart Yeaton; Gordon Ellis

Marylou opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Review Minutes of December 2, 2010

The minutes of December 2nd were reviewed and amended.

Kevin motioned to accept the minutes of December 2, 2010 as amended, Bob seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Fire Department

Stewart Yeaton, Chief, reviewed the increases in the Fire Department budget.

01-4220.1-110 – Full time Positions – The salary increases include a 1.5% COLA plus a 1% merit increase. Chief Yeaton noted the new hourly wages for the full time employees. The employees work a 50 hour week. The overtime line has been increased; it will be overspent for 2010. The employees work rotating shifts of two 18 hour shifts and one 12 hour shift per week. Sundays are covered by part-time employees. Chief Yeaton noted in a few years the Town would have to go to 24 hour coverage. He also noted the Explorers are doing well.

01-4220.1-150 Training Pay – The training pay line has been increased. It includes part-time employees, the volunteer stipends and the Chief's stipend. Chief Yeaton is proposing increasing the part-time hourly rate from \$10.00/hour to \$12.00/hour.

01-4220.1- 210 – Health Insurance - The health insurance line will be adjusted as one employee will be taking the buyout vs. the health insurance. Chief Yeaton had discussed obtaining health insurance for himself, but this did not occur; health insurance is only offered to full-time employees.

01-4220.1-230 – Retirement Contributions – The retirement line is increasing due to State requirements. New employees in the system now have to work 30 years to receive full retirement benefits. The current employees are in the old program and only have to work 20 years to receive full retirement benefits.

01-4220.1-682 – Equipment Purchase – The equipment purchase line has been cut to \$7,500.00. Large equipment purchases will be proposed to come out of the apparatus fund.

01-4220.1-740 – Morrison – Machinery & Equipment – Chief Yeaton recently purchased pagers from this line. He will be purchasing more pagers next year from this line.

01-4220.1-800 – Paramedic Intercept – Chief Yeaton is aware Concord, the only Town within our compact with a paramedic, will be increasing their fees in July. This was accounted for in the increase in the line. Captain Moulton saves the town money by being a paramedic.

01-4220.5-343 – Dispatch – This line has increased \$727.00. The fee is based on tax valuation.

Capital improvement Plan

In 2011 the Fire Department will be submitting a Warrant Article to replace Engine 2. The cost will be approximately \$598,000.00. All items in the plan are proposed to be paid from the apparatus fund.

Adjustments are made to billing for Medicaid and Medicare. The Department accepts the government payments. Other adjustments are also made.

Keith noted the Board of Selectmen could not find many items to reduce in this budget. He indicated Chief Yeaton runs a tight ship.

The Chief's stipend (\$13,725.00 proposed) includes the 2.5% raises. Kevin asked the number of hours the Chief puts in. Chief Yeaton felt it averages 20 hours; it is difficult to track the time.

Highway Department

Marylou noted the liaison was not present. Gordon Ellis, Road Agent, noted there were not many changes from last year.

01-4311.2-110 – Full Time Position – Gordon noted he has an employee who is over qualified for the position. Gordon requested the Board of Selectmen change the position to an operator's salary. He is being paid approximately \$14.00/hour; Gordon had requested an increase to \$16.00/hour. The Selectmen reduced this to \$15.00/hour. Gordon will be attempting to have the figure increased in the future. He requested the Committee consider the additional funds. Gordon noted he could find the additional money in his budget.

Gordon noted the highway department will have a surplus this year due to the lack of snow this fall. Vehicle maintenance is a line that is overspent. Next year the costs should not be as expensive as a used truck was purchased that required considerable repairs. Gordon hopes to rent an excavator to complete ditching next year.

Gordon discussed he has the use of county inmates incarcerated for minor violations. He and Bob Blodgett have made arrangements to allow the Town to transport the inmates without a guard. Chichester also has the same arrangement and often shares in transportation. There is no cost for the use of the inmates. Gordon tries to work them 7½ to 8 hours a day. The inmates used have to fit a certain profile to be in the work program.

01-4311.4-310 – Engineering Services – Brad asked why money is put in the line as for two years in a row no money was spent from this line. Gordon explained this year the selectmen are requesting engineering for Echo valley road, Center Hill Road and Sanborn Hill Road. Some of the projects are requiring engineering due to the type of funding received.

Gordon reviewed the projects completed in 2010. He noted 60 to 70% of their time was spent on New Orchard Road. A portion of Mountain Road was paved due to maintenance issues in an area. A box culvert was installed with associated paving on Drolet road. Catch basins were repaired on Goboro Road, Lord's Mill Road and Prospect Avenue.

In 2011 work is proposed on Center Hill Road, Chestnut Pond Road, Sanborn Hill road, Swamp Road, Mount delight Road, Echo Valley Road and both ends of Mountain Road.

Mona questioned the equipment purchase costs. Gordon noted the work being done with the equipment. The highway Department shared the purchase of a leaf blower with the Parks Department; the use is also shared.

Capital Improvement Plan

Gordon is proposing to replace the F-550 in 2012, it is used every day. The proposal is to replace the F-350 in 2013. Both purchases will be a lease to own. The backhoe will be 7 to 8 years old in 2015. Gordon will propose to keep the current backhoe as a yard machine. Gordon hopes to have a facility to store the equipment in by 2016. The purchase of property for a Highway Department facility may be proposed in the next CIP.

Conservation Commission

Alison Parodi, Chairman, reviewed what the Commission has accomplished. The main duty is to oversee the property owned by the Town. This year they were able to use student forces to work at the Town Forest. The student forces will be used again next year for additional work. Most of the work done by the Conservation Commission is completed by volunteers. Money not expended is able to be put into the Conservation Fund for future land or easement purchases. This year three major easements were acquired at a cost of \$25,500.00. The easements were on the Harkness, Hickey and Carlson properties. Some lines were overspent in 2010 due to paying the Town Forester to construct bridges and complete other work on town properties. Kevin asked the number of acres in the three easements, he was told 258 acres. The easements keep the properties from being developed in the future.

01-4611.2-690 – Land Management – Alison requested the Committee increase this line to the Commission's proposed \$1,000.00. Keith noted the Selectmen had reduced it to \$500.00, but later increased it to \$700.00 after Alison met with them. Alison noted more bridges would have to be reconstructed next year.

Water District

Kevin Reeves, District Commissioner, noted the budget is reduced from 2010. The District has no employees but uses a contractor. The district had many repairs and maintenance costs in 2009; they have not spent as much money in 2010.

The District had applied for a grant to move equipment at well #2 (Water Street) and hired an engineering firm for assistance. The grant was denied as they were not abandoning the well. Keith expressed that Kevin and he needed to talk about this as it was due to river issues.

The next big project is the tank with an approximate cost of \$60,000.00.

The district has met with John Lyford of Mason & Rich regarding auditing (Professional Fees). The cost for a modified audit will be approximately \$4,000.00.

Penny asked the number of families served by the District, Kevin noted 300. Penny asked who shoveled the hydrants, Bob noted the Firefighters. Keith indicated Gordon will assist with the backhoe if necessary.

Kevin discussed the District has talked to businesses west of the Suncook River about expansion, however the businesses have not been willing to assist financially. The District's families cannot financially accept the costs.

Old Business/New Business

Marylou noted next week is the school presentation.

Brad motioned to adjourn, Kevin seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Marylou adjourned the meeting at 9:09 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Bosiak
Recording Secretary