

TOWN OF EPSOM
BUDGET COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 16, 2021

Attendees: Marylou LaFleur Keane, Chairman; Joni Kitson, Vice Chairman; Gary Kitson, Water District Representative; Virginia Drew, Selectmen's Representative; Meadow Wysocki, Joy Sheehan, Mary Frambach; Joyce Heck; Len Gilman; Linda Hodgdon

Not in Attendance: Penny Graham; , Michael Muise, School Board Representative

Other Attendees: Cheryl Gilpatrick; David Fiorentino

Marylou opened the meeting at 6:45 PM and had everyone introduce themselves.

Minutes of June 17, 2021

The minutes of June 17, 2021, were reviewed and amended.

Meadow motioned to approve the minutes of June 17, 2021, as amended, Mary seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Marylou noted that she had given the Committee members a copy of the Trustee of Trust Funds report as of August 31, 2021.

Marylou discussed that the school had not completed the end of the year report. She will try to schedule them in October before the budget season begins.

Town Budget

Virginia noted the Town is within its budget for the amount of time that has passed.

She noted things that were over were rentals and leases, printing and publishing, postage, and NH Municipal Association Dues, Virginia noted that some of the postage for various committees and departments were also over.

Secretarial Administrative budget usage is at 63% which is where it should be.

The Town Report has been paid for and the Town received a better cost than in the past.

The Zoning Compliance Officer lines are under budget and the new officer is working out well.

The Concord Monitor notices are coming in higher than budgeted for the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

The Police Department building has high electric bills and Virginia does not know why. They may have someone come in to complete an energy audit.

Len noted that the Fire Department building is not used as much as the Police Department building. The issues of usage were discussed.

The Fire Department wages are under budget as they are understaffed.

The Fire Department Equipment Repairs line is being watched; it is smaller items that are requiring repairs.

They are trying to complete training for Emergency Management. It was asked if there were issues with the Emergency Management Director not living in Epsom. Virginia noted that it was not; and he is highly qualified.

The Highway Department Rental and Leases line is higher due to the rental of the backhoe. Len noted if the Town had purchased the equipment the warranty was only for certain items and the repair costs could be excessive. Virginia noted the Road Agent discussed with the Selectmen rentals vs. leases.

Diesel Fuel and Gas Fuel lines are high due to increased costs.

Linda discussed vehicle maintenance is at 21.19% asking if expenses are anticipated. Virginia noted that they are not.

Virginia noted the Road Agent, and his assistant are doing an awesome job.

Gary noted that the cost of hydrant rentals will be increasing in 2022 as they have 5 new hydrants with the water line expansion.

Welfare Administration is under budget, People have gotten assistance through the State and Federal government.

The Health and Dental Insurance for the Library was reviewed. The new Librarian is not taking the insurance and will receive the buyout.

The Patriotic Services came in overbudget, but Virginia was not sure why.

The maps for the Conservation Commission at the Town Forest were discussed. Joy noted that they were in the process of updating the maps.

Virginia noted the Town is underbudget at this time.

Len commented that there has been a 15% to 20% increase in fuel and repair parts. He noted that the costs will increase another 15% to 20% by the end of the year. He asked if there was a way to encumber funds from this year's budget for these items next year. Encumbering funds was discussed. Virginia noted the Town cannot guess what parts will be needed in the future.

Len asked if unspent funds from 2020 could be retained for 2021 without having the money go into the undesignated fund. Linda indicated that unless the funds were encumbered this could not be done.

Virginia noted the Selectmen told the Department Heads they would let them know after tonight's meeting when to have the budgets prepared, etc.

Marylou asked to have the schedule for the Department Heads presenting to the Selectmen so she can let the liaisons know.

Town budget presentation to the Committee was discussed with it being determined to have it presented on November 9.

Marylou asked about the meeting locations for future meetings. It was discussed to have the meetings at the Town Office Meeting Room except for the public hearing that will be scheduled for the Fire Department.

Virginia asked if the Committee wanted the meetings to be visual with Google Meets. It was discussed.

Virginia noted that the Selectmen would be discussing salaries, mostly fire and police. It was discussed that other towns are having the same issues. Joni noted that we have to look at the tax base.

Joni asked if the office staff is putting in overtime. Virginia noted that the staff has made changes that make their positions easier to complete the work.

Liaison positions were discussed. Marylou reviewed the positions for the members.

Meeting with the school was discussed with Marylou noting she is waiting to hear back from them.

Meeting at 7:00 PM rather than 6:30 PM was discussed with everyone in agreement.

Joy motioned to adjourn; Linda seconded the motion.

Marylou adjourned the meeting at 8:29PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Betsy Bosiak
Recording Secretary