

TOWN OF EPSOM
BUDGET COMMITTEE
JANUARY 11, 2022

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

Not in Attendance: Michael Muise, School Board Representative (arriving late); Joy Sheehan

Other Attendees: Keith Cota; Gary Matteson; Cheryl Gilpatrick

Marylou opened the meeting at 7:07 PM.

TOWN OFFICE PRESENTATION

Gary Matteson and Keith Cota did a presentation on the renovations of the Town Hall so it could be used as Town Offices.

Gary Matteson discussed the various methods they discussed to use to determine the costs. They determined to use the Construction Management method. Gary discussed how the costs were determined.

It was noted there would not be a large meeting room at the Town Hall. Spaces that could be used for large meetings include the Library, Fire Station and School. The upper level of the Meetinghouse would also be available once it is completed.

Marylou confirmed that the meeting on Thursday will begin at 6:00 PM to meet with the School and SAU. The public hearing will begin at 6:30 PM.

Len asked about the 20/21 actual budget spent for that school year. The amount was \$11,763,809.54. It was noted that \$80,000 of the funds not used went to the two Trust Funds as voted in the Warrant Articles.

It was discussed the contractual amounts could not be removed from the budget. Len discussed that the Committee is always worrying about what Town Employees are paid and the Committee cannot make revisions to the salary amounts in the School Budget. Joni noted it would be nice if the School Budget could be separated from the SAU Budget. She noted that for 17 employees the SAU budget is over two million dollars.

Gary discussed that the SAU Budget could be voted on as a Warrant Article. Virginia discussed the increases in staff at the SAU and the salaries that are being paid.

Issues with the SAU Budget were discussed. Gary Kitson reiterated that the SAU cannot change the budget after it is voted on.

Gary Kitson noted that the Strafford School District left the SAU and are on their own. Meadow discussed what the SAU does for the school.

It was noted that discussions would have to occur as to what the SAU provides for the school. Len thought that tax payers need to get involved regarding the options. Joni discussed that the SAU budget should be presented separate from the school budget.

Virginia discussed that the Selectmen voted to almost deplete the future Town Office Trust Fund. She noted they would retain the Historical Buildings Trust Fund. Virginia noted that DRA approved all the Warrant Articles except Article 2. DRA is reviewing the ARPA funds to the Town and what amount can be used for Article 2.

Len asked about funds the Library received outside of the Town funds. The Committee does not have the figure.

Marylou asked if everyone was happy with the Town Budget. No one had further revisions to the Town Budget.

Changes on the Warrant Articles were discussed. They include Article 2 as noted above and Article 12. Article 12 is for the overhead doors at the Fire Station and will use \$15,000.00 from the Lillian Morrison Fund and \$15,000.00 from the taxes. There are 6 doors to be replaced.

Marylou verified the need for the 2022 Revenue Amount.

It was discussed if Article 2 is not complete by Thursday, then the Public Hearing will have to be continued until January 18.

Len asked about funds coming from the development of the Mr. Gas property and if the amount been determined and is the Conservation Commission going to obtain the funds. No one had an answer.

Penny asked who is up for reelection. It is Linda, Meadow and Joni. Meadow is running for Selectmen and not rerunning for the Budget Committee.

Mike arrived at 8:55 PM directly from the School Board Meeting.

Minutes

The minutes of January 6, 2022 were reviewed and amended.

Meadow motioned to approve the minutes of January 6, 2022 as amended; Len seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Mike noted that all the items from the school will be available tomorrow. Virginia asked if there were any additional Warrant Articles, Mike said no. The Warrant Article for the Epsom Support Staff Association contract was revised and will be voted on by all parties tonight. Mike noted there was an \$80,000.00 item removed from the default budget.

Joni asked if the Board voted to follow the new regulations regarding mask mandates and quarantine times. Mike said the Board voted to follow the new regulations.

Meadow motioned to adjourn the meeting; Mike seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Marylou adjourned the meeting at 9:19 P.M.

Respectfully,

Betsy Bosiak
Recording Secretary