

TOWN OF EPSOM
BUDGET COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 15, 2020

Present: Marylou LaFleur-Keane, Chairman; Joni Kitson, Vice Chairman; Gary Kitson, Water District Representative; Meadow Wysocki; Joy Sheehan; Penny Graham; Mary Frambach; Joyce Heck; Len Gilman

Virtual: Brian O’Sullivan, School Board Representative; Virginia Drew, Selectmen’s Representative; Linda Hodgdon

Not in Attendance:

Other Attendees: Deb Sullivan; Laura Scarbo; Mike Hoisington

Marylou opened the meeting at 6:35 PM.

Town Clerk

Laura Scarbo noted there was not much change in this budget except less printing costs as there is only one election next year. Laura added some funds for training and conferences as she was not able to attend trainings this year.

Tax Collector

Laura noted that it was a similar budget to last year. She did add funds for training as she was not able to attend trainings this year. She added to the printing line as she may have to purchase new printers. She does not know the age of the printers and she has to print the tax bills.

REVENUES

Marylou noted that Deb gave them the five-year budget and actual.

Deb discussed the current revenues. She noted they have collected about 85% of the revenue expected for the year. Some lines are difficult to determine depending upon what owners do.

Lines 3190 (Interest & Penalties on Taxes) and 3194 (Interest & Penalties on Liens)

– These lines are difficult to project. The Town is projected to be under budget for this year.

Line 3220 (MV Fees) – Currently the Town has collected 98% of the projected fees.

Line 3230 (Building Permits) – Less building permit fees have been collected.

Line 3297 (Boat Fees) – The boat fees collected are slightly over the projections.

Line 3352 (Rooms & Meals) – The Town has not received the Rooms & Meals Tax from the State.

Line 3354 (Municipal Aid) – The State has revised and reduced the amount the Town will be receiving for Municipal Aid.

Line 3355 (Unanticipated Revenue) These funds (\$121,578.67) were collected for items purchased due to COVID.

Line 3601 (Sale of Assets) – The Town just sold some vehicles and will have an additional \$6,000.00 in revenue.

Lines 3210 (Business Licenses & Permits) and 3290 (Other License Permits & Fees – Other) – Len asked the difference as to what was allocated to each line. Deb noted she mirrored the report as to how DRA wants it.

Lines 3210 (Business Licenses & Permits) – Len asked if the Junk Yard Permits were in this line. Deb will check on the details of what was included in the line. She thinks Junk Yard permits are in building permits.

Line 3290 (Other Licenses, Permits & Fees) – Deb noted this line included Dog licenses, Marriage Licenses and other licenses issued by the Town Clerk.

Marylou discussed that she might cancel Thursday evening's meeting due to the impending storm. There was a consensus to cancel the meeting.

Len and Penny noted BCEP will be holding the public hearing to vote on their budget either Thursday or Friday depending on the storm.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Chief Yeaton reviewed the Fire Department budget.

Meadow asked if the payroll lines were what the Selectmen determined, Chief Yeaton noted that it was.

Len asked about the Dispatch Line. Chief Yeaton noted that it was a 3% increase plus a billing error from this year by the City of Concord that had to be paid.

Gary asked about Oxygen/Medical Supplies – Chief Yeaton noted it was increased due to COVID. He noted they have a new mask that costs \$75.00 each. The permanent medical staff use them and put another mask over it.

Deb noted that the Town has received the total amount allowed by the CARE'S Act.

Linda asked the number of confirmed COVID calls; Chief Yeaton noted about 20. He discussed how they are classified by dispatch.

Meadow asked about the Equipment Line – Chief Yeaton noted it would be for replacement equipment if items are broken or beyond repair, i.e., turn out gear.

Chief Yeaton noted they put the Forest Fire Line back in. He noted they are paid 50% of the costs by the State if there is a forest fire.

Len asked the ages of the Ambulance and Fire Vehicles.

Chief Yeaton noted the Tanker is a 1998+/- . Currently it is having a new pump installed. Engine 1 and 2 are 8 to 10 years old. Ambulance 2 is a 2013. The newer ambulance is only 2 to 3 years old.

The jeep and Unimog have sold. They would like to purchase a newer lighter vehicle for Forest Fire Use.

Chief Yeaton noted the Tanker will be replaced in 2028 and the Ambulance in 2024.

Chief Yeaton noted he expected an e-mail to schedule COVID immunizations. He expects about 50% of the members to get it.

PLANNING BOARD

Mike Hoisington discussed the Planning Board budget. He noted they are doing a lot of Zoom meetings. They have approved a number of projects. They are rewriting the Subdivision Regulations. Mike noted projects that have been approved, the Liquor Store, Sports Arena on Gauthier Drive and a Coffee Shop.

The budget is remaining about the same as last year. Mike noted the CIP was approved a short time ago. Marylou asked if the Subdivision Regulations would be easier or stricter. Mike indicated easier.

Len asked if just the Board approved the Subdivision Regulations. It was noted the voters have to approve the Zoning Amendments. Both require a public hearing for the public to make comments.

Marylou did not go over the minutes of December 10 until we receive Mr. Connors adjustments.

Len asked Virginia about her comments last meeting regarding high school tuition. Len noted after he looked at the overall budget, he thinks the money needs to be there for the

tuition as more children may go to Pembroke Academy as families may not be able to send the child to private high school.

Len would like to ask the school to reduce their budget to only a 2% to 3% increase as the Town has done. Meadow suggested an increase of only 3 additional students for tuition.

Len would like to see the increase similar to other departments. Marylou noted Bishop Brady gave tuition breaks and there may be something for Charter Schools being passed by the State.

Virginia noted she has watched this line item since she was on the school board. She noted that last year there were 32 students less than budgeted for. When she reviewed the budget, she did not see areas which could be reduced as many of the lines are contractual. She noted the State just accepted funds for Charter Schools. She believed if they took 2 of the additional students out, they would not have to reduce other areas. Virginia noted that Don Harty and she met with Ms. Wheeler before school started regarding the school budget.

Virginia noted the School Board has budgeted for every possible high school student.

Marylou thought that we should e-mail Mr. Connors with the request. Brian noted he could take it back to the School Board. He noted they will try. It was discussed there was a consensus to ask them for only a 3% increase.

Penny noted that Virginia said that there were 30 students less than budgeted for attending Pembroke Academy at the end of June. She asked what the number of attendees was currently.

Len discussed some of the budget issues for BCEP. Len noted that BCEP would be giving an incentive to the part time help using money earned from recycling.

Len discussed that money is being put into a fund with no engineering completed for the closure of the old dump. Len asked if it would be worth it to have a Warrant Article for Epsom to have a Capital Reserve for funds to rehab for the old dump. Joni noted that when BCEP knows what the Town is doing they will increase Epsom's share of the expense.

Joni asked what amount Len would ask to put in the Capital Reserve. Len thought Virginia and Cheryl should be asking more questions of BCEP. Virginia asked if the \$399,178.00 in the reserve account was for this problem. Penny noted they combined all the reserve accounts into one. Meadow also indicated there should be a commitment the money would not be used for anything except this problem.

Len further discussed that the dump was never closed. Linda will e-mail her questions to Marylou. Penny noted that BCEP members are interviewing for an Administrator.

Marylou discussed rescheduling the meeting Thursday until next Tuesday due to the impending storm. No one had issues with doing that.

Joni motion to adjourn, Mary seconded. Marylou adjourned the meeting at 8:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Bosiak
Recording Secretary