

**Town of Auburn
Board of Selectmen
Town Hall
Stritch Meeting Room
November 27, 2023
Approved Minutes
7:00 PM**

Selectmen Present: Keith Leclair, Michael Rolfe and Tom Carroll

Others Present: Road Agent Michael Dross, Brenda Beer, Amy Lachance, Parks & Recreation Coordinator, Zachery Eaton, Parks & Recreation Chair, Patrick Kelly, Commissioner, Mary Royer, Commissioner, Town Administrator Chris Sterndale, Recording Secretary Nancy Hoijer and persons unknown to the minute taker

I. Call to Order

Mr. Leclair called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Public Comments

Mr. Leclair asked if there were any comments from the public, outside of agenda items, at 7:00 PM.

Brenda Beer requested that the Board of Selectmen meet with the library again at their earlier convenience. Town Administrator will put them on the next agenda.

III. Appointments with the Board

IV. Manifests

11/29 HWY - \$8,445

Mr. Carroll motioned to approve the Highway Manifest dated November 29, 2023 in the amount of \$8,445. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken. Mr. Rolfe abstained, Mr. Leclair voted aye, and Mr. Carroll voted aye. The motion passed 2-0-1.

V. Consent Agenda

Mr. Leclair read out loud, and offered for inspection, the Consent Agenda, dated November 27, 2023, which consisted of an Accounts Payable Manifest dated November 29, 2023 in the amount of \$332.74, an Accounts Payable Manifest dated November 29, 2023 in the amount of \$102,030.63, and an issuance of longevity pay for employees with 5+ years of service, pursuant to the Personnel Policy.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve the Consent Agenda dated November 27, 2023. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

VI. New Business

A. 2024 Budget

i. Highway

Road Agent Michael Dross presented the proposed Highway budget in the amount of \$1,233,836 which is a 7.65% increase from last year.

Road Agent Dross reviewed projects proposed for next year including the Depot Road intersection. Town Administrator Sterndale noted it would be close with engineering and asked how easy the DOT piece would be. Mr. Rolfe noted it was not too technical and would be safer. Mr. Leclair asked the length of the project and Road Agent Dross indicated it would be a 3–4-month summer project and that there would be more sight distance.

Mr. Leclair asked about shimming, and Road Agent Dross indicated if there were enough, he would like to do Sonya Drive and Matthew Drive next at a cost of approximately \$40,000. If the budget were reduced, he would do Matthew and Sonia next year. Mr. Carroll asked the cost for those two cul-de-sacs and Mr. Dross estimated \$25-\$35,000 combined. He indicated he did not know next year's price for asphalt yet. Mr. Dross recommended finishing Wilson's Crossing.

Road Agent Dross indicated there would be culvert work needed.

Mr. Carroll recommended reducing line 207 (Highway Shimming) from \$250,000 to \$225,000.

Mr. Carroll motioned to approve line 207 of the proposed FY 2024 Highway budget in the amount of \$225,000. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, Mr. Rolfe abstained. The motion passed 2-0-1.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve lines 203 (new line - Highway Wages) of the proposed FY 2024 Highway budget in the amount of \$1 and line 206 (Road Agent Stipend) in the amount of \$2,733. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, Mr. Rolfe abstained. The motion passed 2-0-1.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve line 208 (Summer Storms) of the proposed FY 2024 Highway budget in the amount of \$8,500. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, Mr. Rolfe abstained. The motion passed 2-0-1.

Mr. Leclair asked Town Administrator Sterndale if there was any FEMA funds coming back to summer storms and Mr. Sterndale indicated approximately \$20-\$30,000 although it may take three years to receive it.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve line 209 (Summer Subcontractor) of the proposed FY 2024 Highway budget as presented. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, Mr. Rolfe abstained. The motion passed 2-0-1.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve line 210 (Road Striping) of the proposed FY 2024 Highway budget in the amount of \$45,000. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, Mr. Rolfe abstained. The motion passed 2-0-1.

Mr. Carroll motioned to approve line 211 (Brush Cutting) of the proposed FY 2024 Highway budget in the amount of \$45,000. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, Mr. Rolfe abstained. The motion passed 2-0-1.

Mr. Carroll motioned to approve line 212 (Cold Patch) of the proposed FY 2024 Highway budget in the amount of \$10,000. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, Mr. Rolfe abstained. The motion passed 2-0-1.

Mr. Leclair asked about the price for salt and Mr. Dross noted it is down to \$72 ton from \$76/ton last year.

Road Agent Dross noted there could be some return from an insurance claim for \$5-\$6,000 for an accident that did damage. The estimates were provided to the Police Department.

Town Administrator recommended getting MS4 data.

Road Agent Dross noted detention ponds were not done this year so they should be done next year.

Mr. Carroll motioned to approve lines 213-304 as presented. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, Mr. Rolfe abstained. The motion passed 2-0-1.

Road Agent Michael Dross presented the proposed Road Reconstruction budget in the amount of \$600,000 which is a 30.43% increase from last year.

Mr. Leclair asked about expected revenues from state or federal grants. Town Administrator Sterndale indicated that \$40,000 were expected next year.

Mr. Leclair motioned to table approval of Line 301 Road Reconstruction. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, Mr. Rolfe abstained. The motion passed 2-0-1.

Mr. Leclair recommended that when Road Agent Dross' term was up in March that his term be extended until June so that a new hire can shadow him.

ii. Parks & Recreation

Parks & Recreation Coordinator Amy Lachance presented the proposed budget for Parks & Recreation in the amount of \$180,563.

Mrs. Lachance reviewed line 247 Senior Trips proposed at \$16,000 which is a 100% increase from last year. She noted due to the popularity of the trips many seniors were waitlisted and she would like to increase the trips from two to four to accommodate demand.

Mr. Leclair asked about offsetting revenue for the trips. Mrs. Lachance indicated the fee for the trip was increased to \$25. Mr. Leclair questioned this should be increased further. Mr. Carroll agreed and recommended increasing the fee for the trip to \$40. Mr. Leclair asked if there was a wait to give waitlisted seniors the first opportunity for the next trip.

Mr. Leclair recommended doing a third trip rather than four. It could be something different or a second trip for a popular event.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve line 247 (Senior Trips) of the proposed FY 2024 Parks & Recreation budget in the amount of \$12,000 to allow for a third trip, unique or double up with an equal option for seniors to go. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve line 248 (Family Events) of the proposed FY 2024 Parks & Recreation budget in the amount of \$15,500. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve lines 249 (Ski Program), line 250 (Community Service Award), line 251 (Soccer Program), line 252 (Senior Dinners) of the proposed FY 2024 Parks & Recreation budget as presented. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

Mr. Leclair asked the ASC balance and Mr. Eaton indicated \$25,000 with repairs to the irrigation system costing about \$2,000 and purchase of replacement goals. Mr. Eaton noted Rory Hurl will be taking over as president.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve line 253 (Coordinator Salary) of the proposed FY 2024 Parks & Recreation budget as presented. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve line 254 (Maintenance Worker) of the proposed FY 2024 Parks & Recreation budget in the amount of \$16,707. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve line 255 (Fuel and Maintenance) of the proposed FY 2024 Parks & Recreation budget in the amount of \$4,000 and line 256 (Playground & Parks) in the amount of \$3,000. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

Mr. Eaton noted that tick spraying was last done a couple of years ago and the League paid. Mr. Leclair asked the Baseball League balance and he indicated it was \$38,000 with plans to order uniforms, to do a new speaker in the clubhouse and trying to double up the batting cage net. He noted field work to be done to finish up what Plaza Landscaping had started to cut back the base line, to work on the additional parking area and finishing the fence, the gated area (aprox. \$300). He noted the overhang was on hold and estimated to be \$11,000.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve line 257 (General Maintenance) of the proposed FY 2024 Parks & Recreation budget in the amount of \$17,750. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve line 258 (Ice Rink) of the proposed FY 2024 Parks & Recreation budget in the amount of \$500. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

Mrs. Lachance noted that line 262 online software had increased 11%.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve lines 259-266 of the proposed FY 2024 Parks & Recreation budget as presented. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

Mr. Leclair questioned the condition of the Severance School parking lot and guessed it would need repair in three more years.

Mr. Leclair asked how many programs were being done and Mrs. Lachance reported there were 40 programs total in 2022 and 74 were run in 2023. She noted 764 participants in the building, 94 programs total and 111 including senior trips and concerts.

Mr. Rolfe asked how much revenue was brought in and Mrs. Lachance reported \$33,000 gross/\$8,141 net through October and expenses from the Revolving Fund for supplies (furniture, curtains, tables). She noted the tree lighting came out of the Revolving Fund. Town Administrator Sterndale urged that items that benefit the entire town are not the ones to do, as it is offsetting for programs that fees have been paid into. Mr. Leclair recommended using the Revolving Fund to reduce the rent, utilities and maintenance by 20%.

Mr. Leclair asked the Revolving Fund balance and Mrs. Lachance indicated \$39,000 through October (since 2017) with \$13,000 added this year.

Mr. Leclair asked about outside group usage and the possibility of use for one-time birthday parties and bridal showers.

Mr. Leclair motioned to amend approval of lines 264 (Severance School Rent) of the proposed FY 2024 Parks & Recreation budget in the amount of \$16,920; line 265 (Severance School Utilities) in the amount of \$5,000, line 266 (Severance School Internet-WIFI) in the amount of \$2,250 and line 267 (Severance Building Maintenance) in the amount of \$3,384. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

Parks & Recreation Coordinator Amy Lachance presented the proposed budget for Recreation Improvements in the amount of \$9,000 after eliminating the pickleball court project estimated at \$15,000. She noted Mr. Rolfe and Road Agent Dross cut a drain in so the water would flow out.

Mrs. Lachance proposed repairs to the clubhouse totaling \$2,000 which the Selectmen agreed could be done now.

Mr. Eaton proposed sidewalk work estimated at \$7,000. Mr. Rolfe recommended getting an estimate from Advanced when they are going to be in town next. Mr. Rolfe will reach out to them for a quote. The Selectmen recommended getting an additional quote.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve line 295 (Recreation Improvements) in the amount of \$7,000. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

C. Remaining Budget Items

Town Administrator Sterndale reviewed some of the tabled budget lines such as Road Reconstruction, the vote for the police cruiser line and poll pads requested by the Town Clerk. The Board indicated they were in favor of replacing the counting machines this year.

B. MOU

Town Administrator Sterndale presented the proposed MOU concerning the transition of Mr. Kelly leaving Parks & Rec. Mr. Leclair recommended putting trash removal into the employment agreement for the new hire and noted it is not a one-person job as those barrels can weigh 70-80 lbs.

Mr. Carroll motioned to authorize Town Administrator Chris Sterndale to sign the MOU. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

VII. Old Business

A. Elderly Exemption

Town Administrator Sterndale provided the Board with a spreadsheet with different options to meet with Mr. Tardiff's request to increase the income and assets for the elderly exemption. He noted one option would allow more to qualify but would lessen the relief to the those existing qualified seniors. Mr. Rolfe questioned if the town had ever been asked to help more and Mr. Sterndale noted a few had been denied due to higher income.

Mr. Leclair indicated a .02-.03 cent increase on the tax rate would be an acceptable option to reach more seniors. Mr. Sterndale noted the asset level could also be increased.

Mr. Leclair recommended Mr. Sterndale review option two with Mr. Tardiff to see if that is what he supports.

VIII. Committee Reports

VIII. Minutes

A. November 20, 2023

Mr. Carroll recommended edits, to page 4 changing the word proposed to probable and on page 7 to eliminate a hanging indentation under committee reports.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve the November 20, 2023 meeting minutes, as amended. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

B. Consideration of Unsealing Non-Public Meeting Minutes

- i. Jan 4, 1993
- ii. Feb 1, 1993
- iii. Feb 22, 1993
- iv. Mar 8, 1993

Mr. Carroll motioned to unseal the minutes of the non-public minutes as presented. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

IX. Adjournment

Mr. Rolfe motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 PM. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Hoijer, Recording Secretary