

**Town of Auburn
Board of Selectmen
Stritch Meeting Room
Town Hall
December 5, 2022
7:00 PM**

Selectmen Present: Keith Leclair, Michael Rolfe and Tom Carroll

Others Present: Police Chief Ray Pelton, Lieutenant Charles Chabot, Sergeant Kevin Cashman, Finance Director Patricia Rousseau, Assistant Finance Director Mimi Friolet, Town Administrator Chris Sterndale, and Nancy Hoijer, Recording Secretary

I. Call to Order

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

II. Public Comments

III. Appointments with the Board

IV. Manifest

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve the Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$75,069.29. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

V. Consent Agenda

Mr. Leclair read out loud and offered for inspection the Consent Agenda for the week of November 28, 2022 which included: a Longevity Pay Manifest in the amount of \$10,450, and two releases of reclamation surety.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve the Consent Agent for the week of November 28, 2022. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

VI. New Business

A. Conservation Commission Appointment – Lyndsey White

The Board was provided with the application of Lyndsey White for appointment to the Conservation Commission. Mr. Leclair indicated he talked to Mr. Porter and while he could not be here tonight, he recommended the appointment.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to appoint Lyndsey White to the Conservation Commission for a three-year term to expire in 2027. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was

taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

B. Elderly Exemptions

Town Administrator Sterndale provided a Memorandum dated November 16, 2022 concerning the Town's elderly exemption amounts and eligibility requirements. Mr. Sterndale expressed concern with the five-year revaluation coming in 2023 with large increases in valuation expected that current recipients will likely see big increases in their tax bills next December.

Mr. Sterndale indicated the amount exempted, which reduces the value of a primary residence subject to taxation, for ages 65-74 is \$150,000; \$170,000 for ages 75-79 and \$210,000 for ages 80+. Mr. Sterndale provided the eligibility limits for income: \$25,000 for single and \$40,000 for married; and assets: \$40,000 for single and married persons. He noted the primary residence is not considered an asset for purposes of eligibility.

Mr. Sterndale proposed a Warrant Article for Town Meeting in March to increase the value of the exemptions by 50%: for ages 65-74 \$225,000; \$255,000 for ages 75-79 and \$315,000 for ages 80+.

Mr. Sterndale indicated the Board might also consider adjusting for rising incomes and/or to expand eligibility by increasing the income or asset limits. For those receiving Social Security benefits there have been COLA adjustments up to 10% over the last two years.

Mr. Leclair asked when the last time the Elderly Exemptions were changed and Mr. Sterndale indicated he believed it to be eight or nine years ago. The Board would have until about the third week of January to decide. Mr. Leclair asked that the matter be kept on the agenda under old business.

Finance Director Rousseau expressed concerns with affecting welfare recipients as the taxes have to be paid before anything else.

C. 2023 Warrant

Town Administrator Sterndale provided the Board with Draft Warrant Articles for 2023 including the Operating Budget, Police Contract, Fleet Maintenance Account appropriation, Accrued Liabilities appropriation, Elderly Exemptions, discontinuance of the Social Health Fund, MWW Land Swap and Veteran's Tax Credit.

Mr. Leclair indicated "March 2023" should be removed from the language of the Police Contract Warrant as that date will have already passed.

Mr. Sterndale noted the language for the Veteran's Tax Credit change comes from the change in RSA. If the Town does not make the change the language would revert back to previous. This procedure comes from the DRA.

Mr. Sterndale reported that Town Counsel reviewed the Land Swap language today.

Mr. Leclair reminded that the appropriations for the 2023 Revaluation and 2028 Revaluation is not shown on the list of Warrant Articles for 2023. The Board discussed at their previous meeting appropriating the \$25,000 marked for the 2023 Revaluation and then \$25,000 per year for the next five years beginning in 2023 so that there would be enough by the next revaluation in 2028. Mr. Sterndale will add this to the 2023 Warrant Articles.

Mr. Leclair noted that with the cost of the upcoming 2023 Revaluation expected to be \$112,000, less the \$25,000, there would be a balance of \$87,000 for the 2023 Revaluation.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget for Financial Administration Annual Assessing Update (Line 3-330-2) in the amount of \$87,000. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

VII. FY 2023 Town Budget

A. Insurance Benefits – Patricia Rousseau

Health, Dental & Disability

Finance Assistant Friolet presented an update since the last meeting on the proposed change to the Town's Health Insurance benefits. She noted that by changing the deductible to \$1,000 and offering employees a \$500 FSA the Town would see a savings of \$84,000 and employees would see a savings in their premiums. She noted the term would be from July 1 to June 30th rather than the calendar year and the plan would be under the same provider. There would not be a change in the first six months of the calendar year. There is one retired person on the zero deductible plan which could be grandfathered. The deductible is per person, capped, up to three persons, in a family plan. Mr. Leclair noted it would be very rare for the entire three persons in a family plan to exhaust their deductible. Mrs. Friolet noted there could be some changes to educate employees on and the provider would have a number to call to direct employees where to go for lab tests and x-rays, etc.

Lt. Chabot asked about confidentiality with the FSA card and Mrs. Friolet noted only the amount is disclosed not to who or for what. The Insurance Company would manage the program and charge an administration fee of \$2.95 per person/mo. Employees can also deposit up to \$3,050. Chief Pelton asked about rolling over the FSA funds. Mr. Leclair noted there is usually a grace period of up to three months but would lapse if not used.

Mr. Leclair noted the Union would need to be noticed 60 days in advance and the Personnel Board should be notified. Chief Pelton noted an MOU could be done to reflect the percentage changed.

Mrs. Friolet noted the FY 2023 budget for the Town portion with the new full-time positions would be \$419,307.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve the FY 2023 Health, Dental & Disability budget in the amount of \$455,367. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

B. Tabled Budget Items

i. Fire Apparatus Fuel

Finance Director Rousseau reported she has not received any new information on fuel rates from the State. Mr. Sterndale reported speaking with Chief Williams who recommended leaving the line where it is.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget for Fire Apparatus Fuel in the amount of \$20,000. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

ii. Longevity Pay

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget for Longevity Pay in the amount of \$11,000. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Old Business

A. MWW Pit Agreement and Land Exchange

Town Administrator Sterndale provided the Board with drafts to review of the Pit Agreement with MWW and the proposed Purchase & Sale Agreement for the land swaps with MWW.

Mr. Sterndale noted the MWW Board would review the documents before they are authorized by the Selectmen.

Mr. Leclair indicated the Pit Agreement establishes the agreed volume of sand and gravel removed between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 202 – 14,000 cubic yards for a total sales price of \$35,000 or \$2.50/cyd, paid as a credit under the PILOT Agreement at \$3,500 per year.

Mr. Leclair indicated the Purchase & Sales Agreement details the land swaps with MWW for the 84 acres by Battery Point/Audubon, the three acres for cemetery expansion and the acreage off Hooksett and Depot Road to move the road for safety reasons. Mr. Sterndale noted there would be a signed P&S before Town Meeting and will wait for the MWW Board to review the documents and come back to the Town.

Mr. Leclair noted the date on the second page, section seven, is listed as March 30, 2022 and should be changed to read March 30, 2023.

IX. Committee Reports

Mr. Carroll reported Parks & Recreation are meeting tomorrow night.

Mr. Sterndale noted he invited the AVS Board to meet on 12/19 but didn't push it and the next meeting could happen in February.

X. Other Business

XI. Upcoming Meetings

A. Mon. Dec 19, 2022 – Year End Encumbrances

XII. Minutes

A. November 28, 2022

Mr. Leclair recommended edits.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve the November 28, 2022 Public Meeting Minutes as amended. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

XIII. Non-Public Session pursuant to 91-A:3(II)(a) *The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee*

By Roll Call Mr. Leclair motioned to go into non-public session pursuant to 91-A:3(II)(a). Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: Mr. Leclair voted aye, Mr. Rolfe voted aye and Mr. Carroll voted aye. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting room was closed to the public at 8:03 PM.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to come out of non-public session. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting room was reopened to the public at 8:49 PM.

By Roll Call Mr. Leclair motioned to seal the minutes of the non-public session. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken: Mr. Leclair voted aye, Mr. Rolfe voted aye and Mr. Carroll voted aye. The motion passed unanimously.

XIV. Adjournment

Mr. Leclair motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 PM. Mr. Rolfel seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Hoijer, Recording Secretary