

Auburn Budget Committee Meeting
October 19, 2017
Auburn Town Hall

Members Present: Peter Miles, Mary Beth Lufkin, Kevin Downing, David Wesche, Paula Marzloff, Dan Carpenter, Keith Leclair and James Headd

Others Present: Animal Control Officer Jarlene Cornett, Road Agent Michael Dross, Finance Director Adele Frisella and Town Administrator Bill Herman

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Jim Headd moved to elect Peter Miles as Chair of the Budget Committee. Seconded by Dan Carpenter. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Jim Headd moved to elect Mary Beth Lufkin as Vice Chair of the Budget Committee. Seconded by Keith Leclair. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Peter Miles noted the Committee last met on April 20, 2017 and the Committee has the minutes of that meeting to consider for acceptance.

David Wesche moved to accept the minutes of the April 20, 2017 meeting as printed. Seconded by Mary Beth Lufkin. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

2017 Tax Rate Presentation

Bill Herman provided the Committee with the breakdown of Auburn's 2017 tax rate as set by the NH Department of Revenue Administration (NHDRA). He noted the rate increased by 90-cents to \$21.15 per thousand valuation, but that was substantially better than the Budget Committee had been anticipating at the end of the 2017 budget process when a potential \$2.00 + rate increase was anticipated.

He indicated the lower than expected rate was due to the Auburn School District receiving a larger Education Grant from the State of New Hampshire than the year prior

(\$200,000 more), which is an off-setting revenue. And the Town's net assessed valuation increased at a substantially higher amount than normal. The net assessed valuation usually increases somewhere between \$8 and \$12 million dollars a year, while in 2017 it increased by \$18.5 million.

Mr. Herman noted the second issue tax bills were in process now and are scheduled to be mailed on October 20th, with a due date of December 4th.

Animal Control Officer

Mileage

Requesting \$600, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$581.19

ACO Medical

Requesting \$200, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$0

Veterinarian Charges

Requesting \$300, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$65

Boarding

Requesting \$300, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$210

Education

Requesting \$250, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$150

Dues

Requesting \$40, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$40

Miscellaneous

Requesting \$750, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$574.05

Animal Control Officer Jarlene Cornett met with the Committee and answered questions concerning several line items and general issues the ACO contends with. She noted she has been working as ACO for 25 years and still enjoys her position.

David Wesche moved to approve Animal Control Officer at a total of \$2,440 as presented, seconded by Paula Marzloff. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Highway and Roads

Road Agent Michael Dross presented the Highways and Road budget.

Highway Shimming

Requesting \$130,000, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$99,806.47

Road Agent Michael Dross outlined the process of shim and overlaying paved roads for the benefit of the Committee members.

Mary Beth Lufkin moved to approve Highway Shimming at \$130,000, seconded by Dan Carpenter. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Paula Marzloff asked the Road Agent how the work on cleaning and maintaining the retention ponds was progressing. He indicated they had cleaned out most of them this year, and that next year the work may largely consist of mowing the ponds to ensure no significant vegetation takes hold to lessen the effect of the drainage systems. He indicated Seth Potter of Stantec is inspecting and developing the work schedule for the detention ponds.

Highway Spring/Summer Storms

Requesting \$8,500, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$0

Highway Summer Subcontractors

Requesting \$138,000, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$176,594.53

The Road Agent indicated Highway Spring/Summer Storms has had some expenses, but they were been included in "Summer Subcontractor" and needs to be adjusted.

Paula Marzloff moved to approve Highway Spring/Summer Storms at \$8,500 and Highway Summer Subcontractors at \$138,000, seconded by Keith Leclair. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Highway Road Striping

Requesting \$20,000, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$425

The Road Agent indicated the contractor is coming in late October or early November, and he anticipates using the balance of the funds. The expense to date was for the hash box painted on Eaton Hill Road by the Auburn Village School. Dan Carpenter indicated this was requested by the Highway Safety Committee and it appeared to be working very well.

Dan Carpenter moved to approve Highway Road Striping at \$20,000, seconded by Jim Headd. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Highway Tree/Brush Cutting

Requesting \$42,000, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$36,640

The Road Agent indicated he has work scheduled within the month to remove six trees that will use the balance of the budget account.

Mary Beth Lufkin asked the Budget Committee members before moving further if they should have a discussion on what their overall philosophy or goals are for the 2018 budget process. She wondered if being level funded is what the Committee in general is seeking, or is a lower or higher budget amount desired. She wondered if it would be helpful to have a basic goal or philosophy as they look at all budgets.

Kevin Downing indicated he worked in the construction field and found the cost of supplies and commodities for work, the cost of supplies, the cost of metal, the cost of petroleum products, and commodities is everything, and the current market is increasing. In his opinion, a department manager who is indicating they can function with a level-funded budget is welcomed in his arena.

Mary Beth Lufkin moved with great pleasure to approve Highway Tree/Brush Cutting at \$42,000, seconded by David Wesche. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Highway Crack Sealing

Requesting \$1, level funded from 2016. Year to date expended \$0

The Road Agent indicated he did not plan to do crack sealing in 2016. Mrs. Marzloff indicated she generally disagreed with the Road Agent on this item. She felt crack sealing was a useful undertaking, while she knew the Road Agent did not favor it.

Mary Beth Lufkin moved to approve Highway Crack Sealing at \$1, seconded by Jim Headd. A vote was taken; Voting in favor: Dan, Kevin, Jim, Keith, David and Mary Beth. Voting No: Paula. The motion carried.

Highway Cold Patch

Requesting \$5,000, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$1,725

Mary Beth Lufkin moved to approve Highway Cold Patch at \$5,000, seconded by Paula Marzloff. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Highway Summer Gravel/Bankrun

Requesting \$1, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$38,703.41

The Road Agent reported they recycle as much material as they can through the road reconstruction work. As they work on a site, they remove the existing material and stockpile it at the Highway Garage property. They then bring a screen in to screen the material for re-use the following year in future projects. They also have begun a similar process for rip-rap. During the past year, he was not able to get the screening machine, so they had to purchase some materials.

Paula Marzloff moved to approve Highway Summer Gravel/Bankrun at \$1, seconded by Jim Headd. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Highway Summer Misc. Supplies

Requesting \$3,000, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$1,271.80

Dan Carpenter moved to approve Highway Summer Misc. Supplies at \$3,000, seconded by Paula Marzloff. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Highway Winter Subcontractor

Requesting \$382,000, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$352,077.59

Mary Beth Lufkin moved to approve Highway Winter Subcontractors at \$382,000, seconded by Paula Marzloff. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Highway Winter Salt

Requesting \$170,000, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$112,922.28

The Road Agent explained how the Town purchases salt through a State bid process. He also explained the differences in when road salt can be effective and when sand would be better suited.

David Wesche moved to approve Highway Winter Salt at \$170,000, seconded by Mary Beth Lufkin. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Highway Winter Sand

Requesting \$5,000, Level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$0

The Road Agent noted they had processed and stockpiled an approximate two-year supply of winter sand nearly a year ago. He wanted to maintain \$5,000 in this line item in the event they had to purchase sand at some point in the winter due to conditions that may not allow them to access the stockpile timely. Keith Leclair asked if this was the line affected by a discussion held with the Budget Committee about whether processing sand or purchasing sand was more cost effective. The Road Agent acknowledged it was, and although he didn't recall the exact numbers, he felt they had provided the Committee with the documentation that processing sand from a local source was more cost effective than purchasing the material.

Keith Leclair moved to approve Highway Winter Sand at \$5,000, seconded by David Wesche. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Highway Winter Repairs

Requesting \$8,000, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$5,321.54

The Road Agent noted this account is for carbide cutting edges for snow plows, bolts and miscellaneous items for the repair of equipment for winter maintenance.

Paula Marzloff moved to approve Highway Winter Repairs at \$8,000, seconded by Jim Headd. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Highway Bridge & Culvert

Requesting \$5,000, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$6,725.80

David Wesche moved to approve Highway Bridge & Culvert at \$5,000, seconded by Dan Carpenter. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Highway Guardrails, Gates, Etc.

Requesting \$1,000, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$0

The Road Agent noted they had some guardrails replacement work to be done on Coleman Road.

Jim Headd moved to approve Highway Guardrails, Gates, Etc., at \$1,000, seconded by Kevin Downing. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Highway Signs & Safety Equipment.

Requesting \$3,500, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$4,019.65

The Road Agent noted they have lost and replaced a lot of street signs this year for some reason. He also indicated he had been rehabilitating Stop signs with a new facing as opposed to just replacing signs, which are more expensive. But the repair can only be done once, and then the sign needs to be replaced, which also occurred this year.

Paula Marzloff moved to approve Highway Signs & Safety Equipment at \$3,500, seconded by Dan Carpenter. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Highway Catch Basin Maintenance.

Requesting \$5,000, level funded from 2016. Year to date expended \$560

The Road Agent reported this is work that is usually performed in November. This year, they will mainly be cleaning out the C-Throat drainage basins. He is anticipating using the majority of the budget account for this work.

Keith Leclair moved to approve Highway Catch Basin Maintenance at \$5,000, seconded by Paula Marzloff. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Highway Storm Water Maintenance.

Requesting \$15,000, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$14,749.02

The Road Agent reported this was the detention pond work they had discussed earlier in the meeting.

Mary Beth Lufkin moved to approve Highway Storm Water Maintenance at \$15,000, seconded by David Wesche. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

The Road Agent advised the Committee the Town was experiencing a problem with sink holes on Dartmouth Drive. At the present time the road is closed about half-way up the road due to a recurring hole in the middle of the road. The Town had performed a repair only to have it open up again after several weather events. The Town had various drainage pipes and conduit scoped to determine if there were any breaks, and none were found. The Town's engineers are reviewing the conditions and will be recommending a repair which likely will include some major reconstruction work to install underdrains and related improvements to pull water away from the middle of the road to the drainage swales. He indicated he did not know what a potential cost was or when it might be addressed, but leaving the road closed is not a long-term solution.

Executive Department

Selectmen Expenses

Requesting \$3,750, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$2812.50

Town Report

Requesting \$2,000, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$2,043.07

Voter Guide

Requesting \$3,700, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$3,700

Bill Herman advised the Committee Selectmen Expenses was a lump sum amount of \$1,250 per Selectmen that was intended to cover mileage, telephone and other similar expenses involved with serving as a Selectman. He also noted the Town Report is a legally required publication for the Town to produce. The Town prints approximately 500 books, but also makes the report available electronically via the Town web site. The book is produced internally through a desktop publisher and the expense is strictly a printing expense.

Mary Beth Lufkin moved to approve Selectmen Expenses at \$3,750, Town Report at \$2,000 and Voter Guide at \$3,700. Seconded by Paula Marzloff. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Legal Expenditures

General Legal

Requesting \$35,000, a decrease of \$15,000 from 2017. Year to date expended \$19,491.10

Labor Relations

Requesting \$7,000, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$5,985.51

Bill Herman reported general legal covers everything from general consultation to courtroom defense. At the present time, the Town does not have any legal cases pending except for a tax assessment case with Eversource (formerly Public Service of New Hampshire). Labor Relations is dedicated to any business associated with the Auburn Police Union. In 2016, the Town successfully defended an unfair labor practice complaint in front of the Public Employee Labor Relations Board, and also secured an amendment to the current three-year collective bargaining agreement concerning the implementation of shift differential payments to the officers. In late 2018, the Town and Union should be beginning negotiations on the next collective bargaining agreement that would come forward in 2019.

Mary Beth Lufkin moved to approve Legal Expenditures at \$42,000,000, seconded by David Wesche. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

General Government Buildings & Maintenance

Finance Director Adele Frisella presented the General Government Buildings & Maintenance budget request.

Town Hall - Telephone

Requesting \$5,100, an increase of \$100 from 2017. Year to date expended \$3,503.93

Highway - Telephone

Requesting \$1,200, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$736.75

PD/ACO - Telephone

Requesting \$10,250, an increase of \$200 from 2017. Year to date expended \$6,692.17

FD/OEM - Telephone

Requesting \$6,900, an increase of \$100 from 2017. Year to date expended \$4,969.14

P&R - Telephone

Requesting \$600, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$0

Town Hall - Electric

Requesting \$4,000, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$2,914

Highway - Electric

Requesting \$2,800, an increase of \$500 from 2017. Year to date expended \$1,775.24

Safety Complex - Electric

Requesting \$13,500, an increase of \$1,500 from 2017. Year to date expended \$7,702.18

Pingree Hill - Electric

Requesting \$2,200, a decrease of \$100 from 2017. Year to date expended \$2,223.40

P&R - Electric

Requesting \$2,000, a decrease of \$500 from 2017. Year to date expended \$1,054

Town Hall - Heating

Requesting \$4,500, a decrease of \$1,000 from 2016. Year to date expended \$1,133.68

Highway - Heating

Requesting \$8,000, a decrease of \$500 from 2017. Year to date expended \$3,629.83

Safety Complex - Heating

Requesting \$12,000, a decrease of \$1,000 from 2017. Year to date expended \$5,019.01

Pingree Hill - Heating

Requesting \$3,000, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$1,531.14

Repairs & Maintenance

Requesting \$5,900, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$1,915.82

Municipal Property Mowing

Requesting \$28,000, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$16,271

Plant Costs

Requesting \$4,810, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$3,135.11

Bottled Water

Requesting \$300, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$186.48

Janitorial Supplies

Requesting \$500, an increase of \$100 from 2017. Year to date expended \$421.96

The Committee members focused on the heating and electric costs for the various Town buildings with an eye towards some potential savings on the budget. Keith Leclair asked about the Town's fuel rate, and Bill Herman indicated when the Town last went out to bid, only one vendor offered a flat fixed rate, which appeared to be high. All other vendors offered a mark-up from the daily cash price, which is also the basis of the various State of New Hampshire contracts for heating fuel. Adele Frisella reported the budgeted amounts are based on past experience with the guess work for the coming year. She noted she had prepared these numbers right after the Texas flooding when forecasts were for escalating fuel rates.

Keith Leclair moved to approve General Government Buildings & Maintenance at \$113,000, seconded by Mary Beth Lufkin. Mr. Leclair indicated his number is based on reducing Town Hall Heating by \$500, Highway Heating by \$500, Safety Complex Heating by \$1,000 and Pingree Hill Heating by \$560. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried.

Regional Associations

NH Municipal Association

Requesting \$5,265, an increase of \$216 from 2017. Year to date expended \$5,049

Southern NH Planning Commission

Requesting \$3,560, an increase of \$26 from 2017. Year to date expended \$3,534.48

Paula Marzloff moved to approve Regional Associations for a total of \$8,825, seconded by Dan Carpenter. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried.

Solid Waste

Solid Waste Hazardous

Requesting \$6,500, level funded from 2017. Year to date expended \$451.50

Landfill Monitoring

Requesting \$10,000, an increase of \$5,500 from 2017. Year to date expended \$9,100

Roadside Pickup Container

Requesting \$300, a decrease of \$200 from 2017. Year to date expended \$0

Bill Herman reported the main issue of concern in the Solid Waste budget is a new requirement for the Town to be sampling for PFOAs in its landfill monitoring activities. A test was done this year that determined PFOAs were present in the water samples. This lead NH Department of Environmental Services to have the Town test any private well within 500-feet of the landfill monitoring wells (there are two) and various groundwater sample locations. This also was done that indicated there were no issues at the private wells, but PFOAs present in the ground water sample. The Town is required to pull another round of samples on the landfill property in November. The proposed increase in the Landfill Monitoring account is to provide for anticipated additional testing in 2018 the Town will be required to do as a result of the PFOA issue.

Mary Beth Lufkin moved to approve Solid Waste at a total of \$16,800, seconded by Dan Carpenter. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Adjourn

Dan Carpenter moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 PM. Seconded by Paula Marzloff. A vote was taken; all were in agreement, the motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.