

Auburn Budget Committee Meeting
October 6, 2022
Auburn Town Hall
Meeting Room
Draft Minutes
7:00 PM

Members Present: Peter Miles, Chairman, Dan Carpenter, Joanne Linxweiller, Paula Marzloff, Kevin Downing, School Board Representative Janice Baker (@7:26 PM) and Selectman Representative Keith Leclair

Others Present: Selectman Michael Rolfe, Library Trustee Nancy Mayland, Library Director Daniel Szczesny, Finance Director Patricia Rousseau, Finance Assistant Mimi Friolet, Town Administrator Daniel Goonan, and Nancy Hoijer, Recording Secretary

Chairman Miles called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

- September 29, 2022

Ms. Marzloff recommended edits.

Mrs. Linxweiller motioned to approve the September 29, 2022 minutes as amended. Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 6-0-0.

- January 13, 2022

Mrs. Marzloff motioned to approve the January 13, 2022 minutes. Mr. Downing seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 6-0-0.

Budget Presentations

Finance Director Rousseau provided updated financials for the budgets being presented. Mr. Carpenter referenced the notation under expenditures to date 2022 “as of December.” Ms. Rousseau noted that the expenditures are as of October 10th.

- Library – Library Director Daniel Szczesny
 - Library

Library Director Daniel Szczesny presented the proposed FY 2023 budget for Library in the amount of \$64,151 which is a 20% increase from last year.

Mr. Szczesny provided a document entitled 2023 Budget Recommendations (Operational) August 9, 2022.

Mr. Szczesny noted circulation was the highest single month in August with 3,400 items or 150 per day. The Oceans of Possibilities summer reading program had 500 books read by students. Digital Circulation which peaked during the pandemic continues to be popular with an 11% increase this year with in house totals for 2021 13,900 and to date an increase of 26% to 17,500.

Mr. Szczesny noted the significant increases in fuel and electric for 2022 and 2023.

Mr. Carpenter asked about consistency with the Town Hall and other Town Buildings and Finance Director Rousseau explained there are different operating systems, different usage and different fuel types. For example the Highway Department is a pretty open building which uses propane, and the Safety Complex has experienced leaks and repairs with an aging system. There are also different fill up times with January likely to be much more expensive than December. Mrs. Mayland noted the library's system is outside and uses a kerosene mix because regular #2 heating oil would gel up in the cold temperatures.

Mr. Szczesny noted the library has taken steps to mitigate the increase such as sealing cracks and cleaning heating ducts and will be contacting the state to see if they can get an energy audit. He noted they use Palmer and the usage for 138 gallons has been \$638 which is a 65% increase. Ms. Linxweiller asked if all Town buildings used the same provider and Ms. Rousseau noted the Highway Department using propane uses Amerigas whereas the Library is using Palmer. Ms. Rousseau noted the Town has experienced a 50% increase in electric which is not as bad as the increase residents have seen.

Mr. Downing motioned to approve the FY 2023 Library budget in the amount of \$64,151. Mrs. Linxweiller seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 6-0-0.

- Library Review – Land & Land Improvements

Library Trustee Nancy Mayland presented the proposed FY 2023 budget for Library Land & Land Improvements in the amount of \$20,000 which is level funded from last year.

Mrs. Mayland noted that last year there was \$40,000 in the CIP for this year for the proposed expansion planning. They knew they would be behind a bit with COVID and split the amount between years 2022 and 2023. The Trustees did not spend the \$20,000 yet this year but are hopeful to have an RFP and choose the design build so they can sign a contract and encumber the funds by the end of the year.

Mrs. Mayland indicated they are meeting next week to get input from the Townspeople. Mr. Szczesny provided a handout for the Tuesday, October 11, 2022 meeting at 6:30 at the AVS Café.

Mr. Carpenter motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget for Library Land & Land Improvements in the amount of \$20,000. Mr. Downing seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 6-0-0.

- Full Time Position Request

Library Director Szczesny reported that the library would like to make the children's librarian position full-time. Mary Hrubiec has been with the Library for 13 years and would be the first full-time library assistant. Mr. Szczesny provided a document entitled Report for Bringing Mary Hrubiec on Board Full Time.

Mr. Leclair explained that there have also been requests from the Fire Department to add two full-time firefighter/EMTs and to make the Parks & Recreation Director position full-time and those would be discussed at the November 28th Selectmen's meeting and at the December 1st Budget Committee meeting.

Mr. Leclair advised that the Boards look at the position rather than the person as people come and go and recommended describing what that position will look like.

Mrs. Baker arrived at the meeting at 7:26 PM. Mrs. Baker asked with regard to the significant fuel and electric increases expected in the library and other budgets if there were a safety net should those budgets go over. Mr. Leclair responded that it was not unlike the SPED issue at school. While budgets are bottom line budgets if they are over expended a request can be sent to DRA to ask permission to over expend. There is approximately \$29 million in the fund balance.

- Advertising/Executive/Administration/General Government/Buildings/Legal/Solid Waste/New Line Request

- Advertising & Regional Associations

Finance Director Rousseau presented the FY 2023 proposed budget for Advertising & Regional Associations in the amount of \$10,120 with is a two percent increase over last year. She indicated the Selectmen had cut the \$200 budgeted for Robert Frost By-Way as they were uncertain what it was for. Mrs. Marzloff indicated the Committee meets once a month, rotating positions, and includes five other Towns, with the goal of promoting tourism. She was uncertain what the \$200 was for. She noted the Committee is made up of volunteers and

they have not discussed purchasing more signs. Finance Assistant Friolet questioned whether past expenditure was for attending a conference.

Mr. Downing motioned to approve the FY 2023 Advertising & Regional Associations budget in the amount of \$10,120. Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.

- Financial Administration

Mr. Leclair presented the proposed FY 2023 budget for Financial Administration.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve Line 3-310-1 Audit in the amount of \$13,500. Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.

Mr. Leclair indicated that the year five revaluation with Avitar will cost \$111,020 with only \$29,000 budgeted. Finance Director Friolet reported the balance of the fund is \$25,584.04. Mr. Leclair noted that there is a Social Health fund which has been unused with a balance of approximately \$15,000 that could be put in a Warrant Article to be abolished and moved to cover the revaluation expense, leaving \$71,000. Mr. Leclair questioned whether Avitar could provide an invoice this year so the Town could prepay a portion. Mr. Leclair noted there are ARPA however the goal of the Board has been to use them for capital improvements, not recurring expenses. Finance Director Rousseau indicated she would put a call into the auditors/DRA to see if this would be allowed.

Mrs. Baker motioned to table approval of Line 3-330-2 Annual Assessing Update. Mr. Downing seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.

- Executive Department

Finance Director Rousseau presented the proposed FY 2023 budget for Executive in the amount of \$10,500 which is a seven percent increase over last year. She noted the Town Report and Voter Guide have a projected increase of 13% and 10% due to increased printing costs.

Mr. Downing questioned whether any could go purely digital. Ms. Marzloff, Mr. Carpenter and Mrs. Linxweiller noted that some citizens would still prefer paper copies.

Mrs. Baker motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget for Executive Department in the amount of \$10,500. Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 7-0-0.

- General Government

Finance Director Rousseau presented the proposed FY 2023 budget for General Government in the amount of \$132,150. Mr. Leclair noting that the Line (1-120-1) for Village Crier Editor in the amount of \$1 had been removed during the Selectmen's review on Monday, not affecting the bottom line of this budget.

Mr. Downing motioned to approve Line 2-290-2 General Reimbursement in the amount of \$3,000. Mrs. Linxweiller seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Baker questioned the expenditure line for 3-310-2 General Consulting as only \$5,903 had been expended so far. Mr. Leclair noted that the line is fully expended almost every year.

Mrs. Baker motioned to approve Line 3-310-2 General Consulting Services in the amount of \$13,500. Mr. Downing seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Finance Director Rousseau indicated that the Interware contract was up \$100, the contract for Harris was up \$240 and Precision is up \$145 however there is a miscellaneous portion of \$1,590.

Mrs. Baker motioned to approve Line 3-340-1 Contracts Software & Maintenance in the amount of \$50,000. Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Linxweiller motioned to approve Line 3-390-1 Tax Map Update in the amount of \$5,000. Mr. Downing seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve Line 3-390-4 General Recording Feeds in the amount of \$300. Mrs. Baker seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Baker motioned to approve Line 5-410-1 Bank Charges in the amount of \$100. Mrs. Linxweiller seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Leclair noted that he received a memo from the Finance Director asking to add a line of \$2,000 for office furniture but the Board decided the new desk and chair for the Finance Assistant could be purchased out of the miscellaneous portion of \$3,000.

Mrs. Baker asked about the computers portion of the General Office Equipment line and noted this would allow two new computers to be purchased each year on a six-year cycle.

Mrs. Linxweiller motioned to approve Line 6-610-1 General Office Equipment in the amount of \$8,000. Mr. Downing seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Downing motioned to approve Line 6-611-1 Copy Machine Lease in the amount of \$350. Mrs. Linxweiller seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Finance Director Rousseau noted with regard to Line 6-620-3 Newsletter that the cost of printing and postage had significantly increased and were offset by a 20% increase in advertising revenues. Mr. Leclair noted that a survey is going out in the November Town Crier to ask about printed copy versus digital. A few printed copies could be made available at the library and school. Reducing the number of mailed copies would cause a loss to the ability to receive the bulk mail rate of .185 cents and negate the savings.

Mrs. Linxweiller motioned to approve Line 6-620-3 Newsletter in the amount of \$30,000. Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Baker motioned to approve Line 6-630-1 General Postage in the amount of \$8,700. Mrs. Linxweiller seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Rousseau noted that the Selectmen had voted to increase Line 6-645-1 from \$1,700 to \$2,500 due to the three-year expenditure history which were greater than \$1,700.

Mr. Downing motioned to approve Line 6-645-1 Conferences, Seminars & Dues in the amount of \$2,500. Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Linxweiller motioned to approve Line 6-670-1 General Office Supplies in the amount of \$9,000. Mrs. Baker seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve Line 6-680-1 General Advertising in the amount of \$450. Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Downing motioned to approve Line 6-690-1 Miscellaneous Budget Expenditures in the amount of \$1,250. Mrs. Linxweiller seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

- Government Buildings & Maintenance

Finance Director Rousseau presented the proposed FY 2023 budget for Government Buildings & Maintenance in the amount of \$158,945.

Mrs. Baker motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget for Government Buildings & Maintenance in the amount of \$158,945. Mrs. Marzloff seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

- Legal Expenditures

Mr. Leclair presented the proposed FY 2023 budget for Legal Expenditures in the amount of \$28,000. He noted the Selectmen reduced the requested amount by \$2,000 so that it is level funded from last year.

Mr. Leclair noted drivers in 2022 of employment and land use issues and electronic voting machines.

Mrs. Linxweiler motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget for Legal Expenditures in the amount of \$28,000. Mrs. Marzloff seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

- Solid Waste

Finance Director Rousseau presented the proposed FY 2023 budget for Solid Waste in the amount of \$21,000 which is a six percent decrease from last year with the hazardous waste line down by 12%.

Mr. Carpenter motioned to approve the FY 2023 Solid Waste budget in the amount of \$21,000. Mr. Downing seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

- Welfare/Agencies/Intergovernmental

- Direct Assistance

Finance Assistant Friolet presented the proposed FY 2023 budget for Direct Assistance in the amount of \$10,000 which was reduced by the Selectmen by \$5,000.

Mrs. Marzloff asked if given the significant rise in fuel and electricity costs if it made sense to reduce the line. Mrs. Baker referenced past expenditures of which the highest was in 2020 in the amount of \$9,640.66. Mr. Leclair noted

there were other programs the Town contributes to that assist with these requests such as Rockingham Community Action who does fuel assistance. Ms. Rousseau noted that homeowners are liened and have to payback the Town which can often made applying to other programs more appealing.

Mrs. Linxweiller motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget for Direct Assistance in the amount of \$10,000. Mrs. Marzloff seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

- Health Agencies & Hospitals

Finance Assistant Friolet presented the proposed FY 2023 budget for Health Agencies & Hospitals in the amount of \$5,875 which is level funded from last year.

Mrs. Baker asked if these were more like a donation and Mrs. Friolet indicated that each of the agencies reach out each year with a request letter.

Mrs. Linxweiller motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget for Health Agencies & Hospitals in the amount of \$5,875. Mrs. Marzloff seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

- Intergovernmental Welfare Payments

Finance Assistant Friolet presented the proposed FY 2023 budget for Intergovernmental Welfare Payments in the amount of \$4,471 which is level funded from last year. She indicated this is the line that contributes to Rockingham Community Action which is where applicants are referred for fuel assistance. Mr. Leclair noted this is the provider most use.

Mrs. Baker motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget for Intergovernmental Welfare Payments in the amount of \$4,471. Mrs. Marzloff seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Other Business:

Mrs. Baker reviewed the Budget Committee meeting schedule for meeting with the School Board. They are available to meet on November 17th. The Board agreed that the meeting will take place at the school, at 6 PM, with Police and Parks & Recreation going first.

Mr. Carpenter asked for a few minutes to discuss the Fire Department's request for more full-time personnel and their schedules. Mr. Leclair indicated that there could be any number of different schedules to accommodate shifts. Mr. Goonan spoke from experience about the difficulty getting call members to respond in the middle of the night when they work in the morning. Manchester has the same difficulty in attracting personnel. Mr. Carpenter asked

about having two available Monday through Friday during the day shift. Mr. Goonan noted 85-95% of the calls are for medical and Mr. Sterndale spoke to similar difficulties at Nottingham and trying to meet the industry response standard of seven to eight minutes rather than taking twice that time. Mr. Carpenter asked if it were possible for personnel to sleep at or have living quarters at Pingree Hill Station.

Finance Director Rousseau noted the Personnel Board meets again on November 3rd.

Next Meeting: Thursday, October 20, 2022 7:00 PM

Adjourn

Mr. Downing moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 PM, seconded by Mr. Carpenter. A vote was taken; all were in agreement, the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Hoijer,
Recording Secretary

Note: Any person with a disability who wishes to attend this public meeting and needs to be provided a reasonable accommodation in order to participate, please call the Town Hall (603) 483-5052, or contact the Committee Secretary so that arrangements can be made.