

Auburn Budget Committee Meeting
January 10, 2019
Auburn Town Hall

Members Present: Peter Miles, Chairman; Mary Beth Lufkin, Vice Chair; David Wesche, Paula Marzloff, Dan Carpenter, Alan Villeneuve and James Headd

Others Present: Dr. Charles Littlefield, Superintendent of Schools; Amy Lachance, Parks & Recreation Coordinator; Zach Eaton and Pat Kelley, Parks & Recreation Commissions; Nancy Mayland and Brenda Beer, Library Trustees; Kathy Growney, Library Director and Town Administrator Bill Herman

Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm

Approval of Meeting Minutes

David Wesche moved to accept the minutes of the December 20, 2018 meeting as presented. Seconded by Alan Villeneuve. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Recreation Improvements

In follow-up to a request made by the Budget Committee on December 20, 2018, the Parks & Recreation Commission developed a cost of adding lighting in the parking lot of Eddows Field. The cost estimate includes funds to purchase and install two light poles, four light fixtures with 145 W LED lights, two egress lights with 40 W LED 12' shoe box fixtures and to repair the current security lighting for a total of \$9,532.

Zach Eaton explained the key to the total cost and project is doing all of the work for all lights, including the planned lights for the Majors field and the soccer field, allint the same time frame for a cost savings on labor and rental of a lift. Discussion ensued among the Budget Committee members and Parks & Recreation members about the project, the estimated cost for lifts, and the overall project.

Alan Villeneuve moved to approve an increase to the Recreation Improvements account of \$8,332 for Eddows Field parking lot lights, seconded by David Wesche. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Review of Town Warrant Articles

Article #3 – Auburn Police Union Collective Bargaining Agreement

Mr. Herman provided the Committee with an overview of the proposed three-year contract for the Auburn Police Union that would run from April 1, 2019 through March 31, 2022. Although the contract covers a three-year period, only the funding to

implement the first year (2019) appears on the warrant. There will be separate warrant articles in 2020 and 2021 to fund years two and three. The proposal for FY 2019 includes an adjustment in full-time positions by advancement of a labor grade and a COLA, while part-time positions would receive a step increase and a COLA. Other changes in 2019 include an adjustment in how four holidays are paid and an increase of \$100 per year in uniform allowance for full-time officer and \$50 per year for part-time officers. The total cost impact of the proposed agreement for FY 2019 would be \$46,052.00.

Mary Beth Lufkin asked if the proposed contract would help to keep the department competitive in the marketplace, and Mr. Herman noted the department had some difficulty in hiring an already certified officer for the last position filled in 2018. In looking at comparative wages in the area, it was agreed there was an adjustment that should be made to the wage scale, which is what lead to the proposed labor grade change for the full-time positions. Labor and management believe this adjustment will keep Auburn competitive in the marketplace.

Alan Villeneuve moved for the Budget Committee to recommend the approval of Warrant Article #3 and the appropriation of \$46,052 to fund the Auburn Police Union Collective Bargaining Agreement. Seconded by David Wesche. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Article #5 – Town Buildings Rehabilitation Capital Reserve Fund

Mr. Herman advised the Committee there had been a number of items addressed in 2018 including the re-design of the front of the Town Hall, replacement of a door at the Safety Complex for the Fire Department, installation of a water softening system at the Pingree Hill Fire Station, the replacement of light fixtures in the front hall and community room at the Safety Complex and the painting of the exterior of the Town Hall. The projects have brought the building fund down to approximately \$30,000, and the Board of Selectmen were looking to replace those funds over a two-year period.

Mr. Wesche asked if more money might be needed, and Mr. Herman indicated when the fund was first established about 10 years ago, it was indicated the goal was to try and maintain \$100,000 in the fund. He noted the Board of Selectmen were attempting to keep total Town spending in 2019 close to the total level approved in 2018, so that was part of their decision process in requesting \$30,000.

Alan Villeneuve moved for the Budget Committee to recommend the approval of Warrant Article #5 and the appropriation of \$30,000 to Town Buildings Rehabilitation fund. Seconded by Paula Marzloff. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Article #6 -- Property Rehabilitation Expendable Trust Fund

Mr. Herman advised the Committee that similar to the Town Buildings Fund previously established, the Board of Selectmen were also interested in establishing a fund that could help maintain and improve Town property other than buildings. He indicated this could be anything from skating rinks, sidewalks, parking lots, tree removal, parks, monuments, parking lot lights, etc. He also noted it is possible money in the fund could serve as the Town's match for grant programs such as the multi-use path project that could attract funding from the NHDOT. Mr. Miles asked if there was a desired amount of money to have in this fund, and Mr. Herman noted there was not a stated goal, but the Capital Improvement Plan indicates a fund balance of \$100,000 over two years.

Mary Beth Lufkin moved for the Budget Committee to recommend the approval of Warrant Article #6 and the appropriation of \$50,000 to Town Property Rehabilitation fund. Seconded by Alan Villeneuve. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

Review of School District Warrant Articles

Article #3 – School Construction, Renovation & Expansion Expendable Trust Fund

Mr. Villeneuve reported the School District established this fund a number of years ago with a goal of maintaining a balance of \$150,000. The \$15,000 requested is to replace funds spent during the past year on issues related to the heating system boiler and an abatement issue, in addition to being able to address items in the Capital Improvement Plan moving forward.

Mary Beth Lufkin moved for the Budget Committee to recommend the approval of Warrant Article #3 and the appropriation of \$15,000 to the School Construction, Renovation & Expansion Expendable Trust Fund. Seconded by David Wesche. A vote was taken; all were in favor, the motion carried unanimously.

The Chairman recessed the meeting at 7:03 PM. Members of the Budget Committee signed the MS-727 School Budget form during the recess.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting at 7:10 PM.

Public Hearing on Proposed Budgets

The Chairman noted he would read each of the warrant articles that deal with the appropriating of money and the Committee's recommendation, and would then ask for any public comment or questions after each article.

Nancy Mayland thanked the Budget Committee members for their work on the current year's budgets, in addition to past years. She noted she knows it is not an easy task, but she felt the Budget Committee has always been fair in their efforts and decisions.

Auburn School District 2019-2020 Budget

The Chairman read Warrant Article #2 concerning the proposed operating budget of \$15,821,623 which is recommended by the Budget Committee. Dr. Littlefield answered a couple of questions concerning the operating budget.

The Chairman read Warrant Article #3 concerning the addition of \$15,000 to the School Construction, Renovation & Expansion Expendable Trust Fund. Nancy Mayland asked if this fund was similar to the Town Buildings Rehabilitation Fund, and Mr. Villeneuve responded it was.

There were no further comments or questions on the School District budget or warrant articles.

Dr. Littlefield noted this would be his 13th and last budget in Auburn as he is retiring at the end of the school year. He noted he appreciated the Committee's work over the years as they held his feet to the fire. But he felt they have done their job professionally and were always good to deal with. He wished the committee good luck in the future.

Town Meeting Warrant and Budget

The Chairman read Warrant Article #3 concerning the proposed collective bargaining agreement with the Auburn Police Union and the appropriation of \$46,052 to fund the first year of the three year agreement. There were no questions or public comment offered.

The Chairman read Warrant Article #5 concerning the addition of \$30,000 to the Town Building Rehabilitation Capital Reserve Fund. There were no questions or public comment offered.

The Chairman read Warrant Article #6 concerning the proposed establishment of a Town Property Rehabilitation Fund and to appropriate \$50,000 to the fund. There were no questions or public comment offered.

The Chairman read Warrant Article #8 concerning the proposed Town operating budget of \$5,566,310 and a default budget of \$5,428,759. Mr. Herman reported with the Committee's approval of additional funding earlier in this meeting for parking lot lighting at Eddows Recreational Filed the proposed operating budget total would increase by \$8,332 to a total of \$5,574,642. There were no questions or public comment offered.

With no further public comments or questions, the Chairman closed the public hearing at 7:20 PM.

The Chairman thanked the members of the Budget Committee for their work on the 2019 Town and School District budgets.

Adjourn

Jim Headd moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 PM. Seconded by David Wesche. A vote was taken; all were in agreement, the motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM.