

**Auburn Budget Committee Meeting
November 18, 2021
Town Hall
Minutes
7:00 PM**

Members Present: Peter Miles, Chairman, David Wesche, Vice-Chairman, Dan Carpenter, Kevin Downing, Paula Marzloff, Joanne Linxweiler, School Board Representative Janice Baker and Selectman Representative Keith Leclair

Others Present: Tax Collector Susan Jenkins, Road Agent Mike Dross, Parks & Recreation Coordinator Amy Lachance, Parks & Recreation Commissioners Zach Eaton, Margie McEvoy and Pat Kelly, Building Inspector Carrie Rouleau-Cote, Land Use Administrator Denise Royce, Town Administrator William Herman, Finance Director Patricia Rousseau, and Nancy Hoijer, Recording Secretary

Chairman Miles called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Meeting of November 4, 2021

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve the November 4, 2021 meeting minutes. Mrs. Marzloff seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Budget Presentations:

Mr. Herman provided the Committee with a running total of the FY'21 and FY'22 budget comparison.

Highway Department

Road Agent Mike Dross presented the proposed FY 2022 budget for the Highway Department in the amount of \$1,101,100.

Mr. Dross noted the first line Highway Shimming 3-385-1 was reduced by \$50,000. Highway Road Striping was increased by four percent due to the cost of paint. A lot of paving was done this year so the Cold Patch line 3-385-7 was reduced by 50%. Winter salt increased \$20/ton and Line 3-386-4 was increased 29% as 3,000 ton would cost approximately \$200,000.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve Line 3-385-1 Shimming of the Highways & Roads FY 2022 budget in the amount of \$180,000. Mr. Downing seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Linxweiller motioned to approve Line 3-385-2/Spring/Summer Storms of the Highways & Roads FY 2022 budget in the amount of \$8,500. Mr. Wesche seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve Line 3-385-3 Summer Contractor of the Highways & Roads FY 2022 budget in the amount of \$200,000. Mrs. Baker seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Linxweiler motioned to approve Line 3-385-4 Road Striping of the Highways & Roads FY 2022 budget in the amount of \$25,000. Mr. Wesche seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve Line 3-385-5 Tree/Brush Cutting of the Highways & Roads FY 2022 budget in the amount of \$42,000. Mrs. Marzloff seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve Lin3 3-385-7 Cold Patch of the Highways & Roads FY 2022 budget in the amount of \$5,000. Mrs. Linxweiler seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Baker motioned to approve Line 3-385-8 Summer Gravel/Bankrun of the Highways & Roads FY 2022 budget in the amount of \$1,500. Mr. Wesche seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Linxweiler motioned to approve Line 3-385-9 Summer Misc. Supplies of the Highways & Roads FY 2022 budget in the amount of \$1,600. Mr. Downing seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve Line 3-386-3 Winter Subcontractor of the Highways & Roads FY 2022 budget in the amount of \$382,000. Mr. Downing seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Linxweiler motioned to approve Line 3-386-4 Winter Salt of the Highways & Roads FY 2022 budget in the amount of \$220,000. Mr. Wesche seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Baker motioned to approve Line 3-386-5 Winter Sand of the Highways & Roads FY 2022 budget in the amount of \$5,000. Mr. Wesche seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve Line 3-386-6 Winter Repairs of the Highways & Roads FY 2022 budget in the amount of \$7,000. Mrs. Linxweiler seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Downing motioned to approve Line 3-387-2 Bridge & Culvert of the Highways & Roads FY 2022 budget in the amount of \$5,000. Mr. Wesche seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Baker motioned to approve Line 3-387-4 Guardrails, Gates, Etc. of the Highways & Roads FY 2022 budget in the amount of \$1,000. Mrs. Marzloff seconded the motion . A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Linxweiler motioned to approve Line 3-388-1 Signs & Safety Equipment of the Highways & Roads FY 2022 budget in the amount of \$2,500. Mrs. Baker seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve Line 3-390-1 Catch Basin Maintenance of the Highways & Roads FY 2022 budget in the amount of \$5,000. Mr. Downing seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Downing motioned to approve Line 3-390-2 Storm Water Maintenance of the Highways & Roads FY 2022 budget in the amount of \$10,000. Mr. Wesche seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Road Reconstruction

Mr. Dross presented the proposed FY 2022 Road Reconstruction budget in the amount of \$600,000 which is level funded from last year. Mr. Dross noted next year the Department will work on Squirrel Drive and sections of Dearborn Road or Depot Road. He noted \$300,000 of Road Reconstruction funds was used for additional paving, shim and overlay this year with the approval of the Selectmen. Mr. Leclair added that paving at the Pingree Fire Station came out of this budget this year.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve the FY 2022 Road Reconstruction budget in the amount of \$600,000. Mrs. Linxweiler seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Parks & Recreation

Parks & Recreation Director Amy Lachance presented the proposed FY 2022 Parks & Recreation budget in the amount of \$79,322.

Mrs. Lachance noted fees for Senior Trips will be increased from \$15 to \$20 next year. Trips were held in October and December because spring could not be done this year.

Mrs. Baker motioned to approve Line 0-001-1 Senior Trips in the amount of \$7,000. Mr. Wesche seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Line 0-001-2 Family Events was increased 37% over last year due to the fact deposits had been paid in 2020 and Old Home Day cancelled so the second half was able to be used in 2021.

Mrs. Marzloff motioned to approve Line 0-001-2 Family Events in the amount of \$13,000. Mrs. Linxweiler seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Line 0-001-4 Ski Program was reduced from \$5,600 to \$1.00 due to the unavailability of buses for the Ski Program.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve Line 0-001-4 Ski Program in the amount of \$1.00. Mr. Downing seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Line 0-001-6 was budgeted at \$150 to allow for 2-3 people to receive community service awards.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve Line 0-001-6 Community Service Award in the amount of \$150. Mrs. Baker seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Linxweiler motioned to approve Line 0-001-7 Soccer Program in the amount of \$1,900. Mrs. Baker seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Senior Dinners was level funded although last year was downscaled. The January dinner was done on a "to-go" basis and she hopes this January that dinner will be brought back.

Mr. Carpenter motioned to approve Line 0-001-8 Senior Dinners in the amount of \$1,800. Mr. Downing seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Line 2-250-1 Fuel & Maintenance was level funded and she noted the old police car is working well as the Parks & Recreation work vehicle.

Mr. Downing motioned to approve Line 2-250-1 Fuel and Maintenance in the amount of \$4,200. Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Baker motioned to approve Line 3-360-1 Playground & Parks in the amount of \$3,000. Mrs. Linxweiler seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve Line 5-550-0 General Maintenance in the amount of \$13,800. Mrs. Marzloff seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Line 5-550-4 Ice Rink was funded at \$500 due to the maintenance cost of the new portable ice rink being unknown.

Mrs. Baker motioned to approve Line 5-550-4 Ice Rink in the amount of \$500. Mr. Downing seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Trash removal Line 5-560-1 was lowered to \$1.00 as no new receptacles will be purchased next year.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve Line 5-560-1 Trash Removal in the amount of \$1.00. Mrs. Linxweiler seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Wesche motioned to approve Line 5-560-2 Chemical Toilets in the amount of \$6,520. Mrs. Baker seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Office Supplies was increased to \$4,950 so that an online registration program could be purchased. The second year will cost \$2,850. Mr. Leclair noted program fees can be raised \$5-\$10 to pay for the program. Credit card users would pay a fee and those writing a check can still be entered manually. The program would also send confirmations and generate reports.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve Line 6-670-0 Office Supplies in the amount of \$4,950. Mrs. Linxweiler seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Severance School is still under negotiations with Manchester Water Works and will not be ready to move in until mid-year. The online registration program will reserve spots, and everyone would contribute a small fee. Insurance would be covered for liability with Primex.

Mrs. Lachance noted the storage building has been completed and items that were stored all over Town have been retrieved and stored properly.

Building Inspector Rouleau-Cote asked about plowing and Mr. Leclair noted the Highway Department would plow.

Mrs. Baker motioned to approve Line 9-940-1 Improvements Severance School in the amount of \$22,000. Mr. Downing seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Recreation Improvements

Parks & Recreation Director Amy Lachance presented the proposed FY 2022 budget for Recreation Improvements in the amount of \$35,720. The proposed amount was reduced at the recommendation of the Board of Selectmen to use the second half of the cost of the Softball Lights to be paid by tax dollars already raised in the fund balance. Mr. Eaton noted in the past

the contractor has provided donation toward labor costs. Soccer benches would be replaced as well as the frog spring toy at Circle of Fun.

Mr. Wesche asked how much additional use the softball lights would allow, and Mr. Leclair noted tournament activity would increase by two games at the back end on Friday, Saturdays and Sundays. The proposal is in the Capital Improvement Plan and was presented three years ago when soccer and baseball were done, and this would provide for girls' softball since the boys' teams got lights on their fields last year.

Mrs. Baker motioned to approve the FY 2022 Recreation Improvements budget in the amount of \$35,720. Mrs. Linxweiler seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Wages & Salaries

Mr. Leclair noted the Joint Personnel Board met and unanimously approved the COLA increase which is made up of the CPI & Social Security Increase, resulting in a proposed COLA increase of 5.25%. The step increases of 2% was also approved by the Joint Personnel Board by a split vote. He noted there was no COLA increase last year, which he said he learned had been a sore point with many employees. In 2021 there was a step increase and in 2020 there was a significant bonus paid to first responders through federal money but none for other employees who worked through Covid. The Town found funds for a smaller bonus for other employees in 2020.

Mr. Herman provided a spreadsheet showing the increases proposed. He noted the Default 2022 column is the starting point of current wages. A COLA only is the next column. Step only is two columns over. The combined increase for COLA and Step is the next to last column. In responding to a question from Mrs. Baker, Mr. Herman noted the difference in first year and second year is noted because if a COLA is granted, the increase would begin on April 1st and only cover nine months of the next fiscal year. And for Step increases, they are issued on the anniversary date of an employee's hire which are spread throughout the year. He also noted Step increases are issued only based on a satisfactory job performance. So, the second year is added to show what the impact for the full 12-month increase would be.

Mr. Miles noted he was not sure COLA was the best way for the Town to proceed as it only served as a pay raise. He recommended the COLA be based on the average salary instead of across the board. He felt 5.25% for a COLA increase is considerable with a 2% step increase.

Mr. Herman noted there is senior work force in Auburn and some employees are at the top of their scale and not eligible for step increases, but the Town can provide a \$500 bonus instead.

Building Inspector Carrie Rouleau-Cote asked when the last wage study was done, and Mr. Herman noted it was in 2011 although some positions newly hired have been researched more recently.

Mrs. Baker noted the resulting increase based on all the variables the second year is in the 3% range. Mr. Herman noted one employee who was at the top of her pay scale had retired this

year and there is a difference in Parks & Recreation. Mrs. Baker noted those salary reductions are baked in. The net effect of COLA would be 4.4%.

Mrs. Baker and Mrs. Linxweiler were in support of both. Mr. Downing noted the Town needs to be competitive. Mr. Wesche agreed that treating employees well is key to retention and supports both the COLA and step this year.

Mrs. Linxweiler motioned to accept the COLA & step increase. Mr. Wesche seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Auburn Police Union – Collective Bargaining Agreement

Mr. Herman noted the Agreement is for five years and the cost impact for the first year is \$53,022.06. This would be on the Warrant Article for year one. The result for the Police Union is a new wage scale separate from Town employees with the first of five years the most expensive. There would be one additional holiday, the day after Thanksgiving. Their COLA increase would be 1.5% and step would be 3%. Mr. Leclair noted comparisons were done with neighboring Towns. Mr. Leclair noted the Department is a good department and job retention is good.

Mr. Wesche motioned to recommend the FY 2022 Collective Bargaining Proposal. Mrs. Baker seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

**Next Meetings: Tuesday, November 23rd at 7:00 PM – 6:00 PM (AVS – Media Center)
 Thursday, December 2nd at 7:00 PM**

Adjourn

Mrs. Marzloff moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 PM, seconded by Mr. Wesche. A vote was taken; all were in agreement, the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Hoijer,
Recording Secretary