

Budget & Finance Meeting
Wednesday, November 18, 2020 via Zoom
3:00 PM

Present: Doon Hinderyckx, Pat Harvey, Frank Severy, Greg White, Barb Dehart, Nancy Woolley, Lois Bond, Vic Ribaud, Rob Gardner, Julie Smith, Kristin LaPell, Becky Klein

Absent: Robert Meagher, Jim Bowen

Guests:

Zoom Meeting recorded by Doon.

Agenda: Continued discussion on 2021 Town Health Insurance for eligible employees
Review of Park, Cemetery, Highway and Lister Budgets, further discussion on
Health Plans and Employee Contributions

As the meeting started, Rob Gardner wished to discuss his view of the charge of the Budget & Finance committee and their role in the annual budgeting process. He feels that the committee should be looking at the larger picture of the Town, namely, dual issues facing the Town – the purchase of the high school building and what will happen if the school merger with Stockbridge should collapse, rather than reviewing and commenting on line by line items within each department. The process should be looked as if the Town was a business.

Rob's comments drew discussion concerning the economic reality of the town and stimulation for the future direction of the town. Doon suggests that grants can play a role and Greg inquired as to whether Rob was referring to a reduction in town services. Greg does feel that the combined town/school budgets should be looked at before being individually finalized, rather than each entity only reviewing their own budget. Vic commented that Rob's comments deserve consideration. Barb made reference to the use of Reserve Funds and Capital Planning which looks to the future. Frank commented on the deteriorating condition of town buildings, and the need for planned maintenance. Pat commented on acquiring the high school building, and what will the town do with it - could acquire it and sell it in the future? Envision Rochester has been exploring options for future use. The future of the high school building is not likely going to spell the future of the town. Greg commented that the challenge of the future of the town has been looked at many times, and will require working capital and a very ambitious volunteer group to work towards the future.

The B&F meeting started at 3:45. A running list of cut expenses is needed. Please note areas where we need information.

Health: Julie discussed Health Insurance with employees, and they saw no need to have Hickox & Boardman present material through ZOOM. Julie feels that she can handle the explanation, particularly when the Highway employees said they knew what they wanted – the Platinum Plan.

The Selectboard then voted that contributions for the MVP Health Plan would be:

Town Contribution: 84% of Single Premium

Employee Contribution: 16% of Single Premium

Review Employee Percentage Contribution to Two Person and Family Plans – (to be attached to these minutes when completed)

Town Contribution to SelectCare (HRA) to be further discussed.

Park Request:

Repairs – Park: The lower part of the bandstand needs painting (green); flooring and steps need pressure washing; the flagpole needs painting (white and black); a new cleat needs to be made. Painting the flagpole will require a lift. **Frank** will pursue licensed and insured paint contractors.

Assume **Mowing** will remain at \$1971.00. Mowing Contract through Fall 2021.

Tree Maintenance: \$1,500

Tri-town Youth Raking: Requires more discussion

Park Electricity: Keep at \$400.00

****Misc Expenses – Park: Increase to Keep at \$550.00** – Flags should be added to this line (\$150) per Office.

SkateSpace/Winterfest: Keep at \$2,800.00 – Requires more discussion with Norm Christiansen

** American and Vermont Flags – approximately \$150

** *Cemetery Veteran Flags which we added to this category should be removed and charged to Cemetery (\$200)*

Cemetery: Discussion ensued that the bulk of the Cemetery budget is mowing. The Cemetery Commission is concerned that needed work on the 7 cemeteries is not getting done because of the lack of money. Additionally, there is a need to survey the Bingo and West Hill cemeteries and the new portion of Woodlawn cemetery, and also improve the method of maintaining records and deeds in the Town Office. The CC is dependent on funds disbursed from the Cemetery Trust funds managed by the Trustees of Public Funds, and are grateful to the taxpayers of the Town of Rochester for making up the difference. Sales of lots which require an additional amount for perpetual care are invested in the Cemetery Trust by the Trustees.

We are fortunate that Steve Twitchell will continue taking care of these cemeteries for the immediate future, but he is talking about retirement. When we look at what the Town mowing and sidewalk plowing contracts are, it can only be assumed that a cemetery maintenance contract will substantially increase. It's not easy to mow and weed wack around monuments! Rob suggested that the CC could reduce its mowing times by one-half to save money and consider the use of those funds for other expenses, but as Becky indicated, people who own those lots expect them to be maintained properly.

Cemetery Commissioners request for FY22 funding: **\$25,360.**

Highway:

Salaries & Overtime: Look at 2% salary increases

Health Insurance: Look at above – 84/16% Town/Single EE

Hickox & Boardman: \$500.00 – split between 2 Highway & 1 Office - \$360/140

15.00 per ee, per month; times 12 – Highway & Office – **Julie**

2.50 per ee per month; times 12 - Highway & Office - **Julie**

Health Insurance OptOut (John) – Percentage of Premium and Overtime hours – **Julie**

Life & Disability: Are premiums going up? **Julie**

SelectCare – formerly Health Equity HRA: **To be further discussed**

Garage Water/Sewer: Is garage metered? I would assume that most of the water is not going into the septic system? **Julie**

Mowing: Increase of \$1,000 - Check Cooter

Town of Braintree: Check with Cooter to see if rates are going up. **Doon**

Equipment Rental – Excavator for ditching

Trash Removal: Rates going up? **Julie**

Bridge & Bandrails: Did we combine with Culverts? Julie or Doon

Culverts & Bands: Combined with Bridges? Brook Street - Julie or Doon

Resurfacing: Cooter would like to repair streets around Village

Salt – Price drop.

Cooter has a question on truck due for replacement. Funding?

Signs: Increase to \$2,000 because of theft and damage.

Listers: Request is same at FY 21 - **\$4,978.**

Appropriations: Most have been received and Greg has added amounts requested to the list.

One Planet is again requesting **\$3,125** for the Rockbridge Summer Camp.

Pat commented on Jeff Gephart's energy study of Electricity, Heat and Fuel Consumption (Oil/Propane)

Need for:	Granville Rescue	Vic
	A.b.l.e. Trash Haulers	Julie
	Windsor County Sheriff	Julie
	Fund Balance to Greg	Julie
	Plus more I am sure!	

Adjourned: 5:00 PM

Nancy Woolley