

**Budget & Finance Meeting**  
**Wednesday, December 16, 2020 via Zoom**  
**3:00 PM**

**Present:** Doon Hinderyckx, Pat Harvey, Frank Severy, Greg White, Barb Dehart, Nancy Woolley, Vic Ribauda, Rob Gardner, Julie Smith, Kristin LaPell

**Absent:** Robert Meagher, Becky Klein, Jim Bowen, Lois Bond

**Guests:** John Champion, Amy Wildt, RSUD School Board

Zoom Meeting recorded by Doon.

Agenda: Highway, Health Contracts, Office, Amy Wildt, Stockbridge Petition to Stockbridge Selex, Impact on Rochester

**Highway:**

Garage – Water/Sewer – Move to \$500.

Braintree – Maintenance – reduce to \$7,000 based on two previous years

Roadside Mowing – Leave at \$17,000. Tractor rental may go up. Cooter is looking at a different type of mower. Had to hire Trees Inc to remove a tree with bucket at a cost of \$1,000

*Trash – Remove \$960*

Equipment Rental – Ditching – Excavator Rental

Bridge & Bandrails – Increase to \$7,000. Put guardrails on Brook St above reservoir.

Culvert/Bandrail – Several culverts sized 18/24” necessary. Normal maintenance. Cooter spoke about his culvert inventory. Keep at \$7,000

Paving – Cooter wants to do some paving, particularly in the Village, in late Spring 2021 and carry over project to FY22. The \$10,000 estimate for paving at the Town Garage was underestimated.

Property Ins/Auto, Liab Ins – Probably OK

Chloride – Leave at \$9,000

Salt – Keep at \$42,000

Signs – Much thievery – leave at \$2,000

Cooter discussed replacing the Western Star tandem. B&F encouraged him to get pricing now as it would be a year+ before the truck would arrive. Pat to look into fleet leasing. Possibility that municipalities do not qualify. Auditor Nathan Hawley thinks that with current financing options that financing would be appropriate.

**Office -**

Income: Refunds to Town – Insurance policy on claims.

Trustees of Public Funds will discuss how much they will recommend be given to the Town at their Monday, December 21 meeting.

Julie reported that the State is requiring that land records be digitized, which will be a costly and time consuming project. She will approximate cost.

Office computer Software and Disaster – Becky Donnet, working with Brian \_\_\_?\_\_\_, will have a **proposal for our 12/23 meeting**

County Tax – Always comes in late, so go with \$7,400

Recreation – Miscellaneous – Norm indicated that this is a catch-all for odds and ends.

Fire – Julie has submitted the Roster and is waiting to hear from VLCT.

Amy Wildt, a member of the RSUD school board and liaison to the Rochester Selex, joined us at 4:00, and answered questions about the petition to de-merge the Stockbridge and Rochester schools which had been presented to the Stockbridge Selex, and the impact this would have on both towns. The school board has not met since the petition was delivered. Amy consulted with the White River Valley Supervisory Union Superintendent, Jamie Kinnarney, in responding to our questions. She commented that the merger provides stability to both towns and schools, but that there is room for improvement in some areas. Kids are doing well; there is a big push for literacy in both schools; there is interaction between the teachers; nurse, guidance and some staff are shared. Prior to COVID, pre-schoolers visited each school, participated in Winter Wellness programs, traveled to the Museum of Science, and participated in combined arts programs. There has not been much sharing of facilities.

Census: Rochester 79 – Stockbridge 46 or 48 – there is a hope that with families moving into the area that we would see more children attending the schools. Also hoping that we'll be able to attract more children from Granville and Hancock, which means more tuition! The schoolboard is trying to get a handle on high school students.

The Superintendent will provide for each school a breakdown or both Income and Expense by school right after the first of the year.

Stockbridge Selex will put the petition on their Town Meeting warning. If it is a positive vote, Rochester will be required to have a vote within 60-90 days. If that vote is positive, the issue on de-merging goes to the Board of Education.

Chelsea and Tunbridge, within our Supervisory Union, are working on re-structuring their K-8 schools – possibly Pre-K – 4 in one town and 5-8 in the other town.

We discussed the importance of informing Rochester voters about what is happening in Stockbridge, and this needs to happen sooner rather than later. A suggestion was made to establish a Friends of the School to assist in communicating things between school-students and community.

Adjournment: 5:00

Nancy Woolley