

Budget & Finance Meeting
Wednesday, December 8, 2021 via Zoom
3:00 PM

Present: Doon Hinderyckx (TO), Pat Harvey, Frank Severy, Greg White, Barb Dehart, Nancy Woolley, Lois Bond, Rob Gardner, Robert Meagher, Julie Smith (TO), Kristin LaPell (TO)

Absent: Jim Bowen

Guests: John Champion, Highway; Norm Christensen, Recreation; Terry Severy, Fire, Water & Sewer

Agenda: Continued review requests from Town Departments

Julie suggested that, in the absence of information from the State, that the State Aid to Highways be listed at \$120,000. Presently the Town receives quarterly payments of \$28,000.

John suggests leaving the amounts as listed for New Boston Rd (Stockbridge), Liberty Hill Rd (Pittsfield), Little Hollow Rd (Braintree)

Roadside Mowing: John reported that a tractor and side-arm mower would be in Rochester for 5 weeks starting July 11, 2022, and that the Town crew would do the mowing.

Pat suggested that Town consider purchasing an attachment for the loader to accomplish roadside mowing. Discussion ensued and suggestions made that the real cost of ownership should be considered – repairs, insurance, effectiveness.

Equipment, Parts: John discussed the cost of grader tires, and the cost of chains due to the price of steel doubling. Town will benefit from a Federal program price of \$12,000, installed.

Radio needs to be replaced.

Contracted Services: John explained that this would cover excavator, street sweeping, etc.

Bridges/Bandrails: Price of steel is up. Need guard rails on Maple Hill Rd (\$9100). . Hopes that the Brook St guard rails will be installed on December 10.

Culverts: Remove the word “Bands”.

Resurfacing: John hopes to accomplish more paving in the Village, and recommends reducing the Gravel line by \$32,000 to accomplish this. Will check with Joan on small G4ants for paving. West Hill needs gravel, but the bridge negates movement with loaded trucks.

Doon commented that there is discussion about placing electric charging stations on the small park near the Post Office.

Gas, Oil: go up to \$34,000.

Garage Electricity: Move to \$1,800.

Greg indicated that Highway is 4.2% over FY22 and that Parts and Payroll are the largest contributor to the increase.

Highway Truck: Waiting for interest figures. Consider 6-7 year payout. Julie will e-mail Greg when figures come in.

Future: Culverts at Town Line Rd, Jerusalem Hill, West Hill

Rob expressed his concern for maintenance of the Highway Garage. Comments made on the condition is not good, but has been this way for years and was poorly built!

Discussion on the need for a Capital Policy update. Two Rivers assisted with the initial policy. Greg will contact Two Rivers to determine if help from them would be available; whether there is money to assist. What does Town need to put together for a new Policy?

Recreation:

Norm explained that minimal donations are received from the public, and that Youth Sports Registration was down due to COVID. \$1,200, based on registrations of \$25 - \$50 from each child for each sport, is about the norm.

Expenses: Discussion on Summer Concerts that Joe Schenkman puts together, and the cost and the interest has been fairly consistent over the years.

Youth Sports received new uniforms at a cost of \$2,000, plus insurance for baseball and the charter is around \$400-500.

Salaries: Carrie McDonnell receives a salary of \$800 for her work managing soccer and basketball. Norm, following Caitlin Vellieux's resignation, took over baseball.

The **Miscellaneous** line covers overages in Concerts and repairs to the tennis courts.

Norm requests that funding the Tennis reserve continue. There will be a need for re-surfacing in the not too distant future.

SkateSpace (Size: 110 feet x 85 feet) is being returned to Recreation, with \$1,800 for plowing and \$1,000 for maintenance. Will John Gorton plow this winter. His tractor is too large and the chains destroy the liner and the ice. If John plans to plow, he'll be asked to remove the chains. Norm reported that the sides of the rink had been shored up to make the rink more stable. The \$1,000 liner had been donated this past winter, but will likely have to be replaced in another year. Benches need replacement. Inquiry made as to how many people use the rink. Possibly 5 people per night. Not really known. First and foremost, the rink is good for the kids; it is used for the after school program.

Rob Gardner wanted to know whether there were any fundraising efforts for concerts like is done in Hancock. No.

Fire - Terry Severy –

Terry reported a complement of 21 firefighters.

Maintenance: The siding on the front of the firehouse needs replacement. Use the Building Reserve Fund for new siding.

Compressor: Fire Department is getting a "New" compressor. Has to be certified each year.

Air Packs: Need re-certification - \$1,500 - \$2,000. Fill air bottles.

Phone/Public Safety – Dispatching

Water-Sewer – Rates were increased! Sprinkler system needs to be certified each year. *Should have a new line for ‘Sprinkler System’.*

Dues: For State Firefighters Association

Meetings/Education: Because of Covid there were no meetings. There are Rochester firefighters who would like to attend meetings.

Hoses: Fire Dept tries to replace some hoses each year. Current inventory if ancient!

Electricity: Changing lights. Reduce request to \$1,500

Gas/Oil – Higher because of increases in heating oil, and SkateSpace flooding.

Greg: Indicated that budget is up 8%.

Discussed a new 550 truck. Current truck is 23 years old. Could be upwards of \$75,000.

Water:

Assistant Operator will be working additional hours to become more proficient.

Sampling: Unsure of testing prices

Water building needs painting. Reduce to \$2,000.

Electricity – reduce to \$3,000

Reservoir: Terry is working with engineers to replace valves. Looking for grant money.

Sewer:

Assistant Operator needs more training

Engineering: up to \$4,000 – inspections

Samples: move down to \$3,000

Telemetering rates are up.

Repairs: Move back to \$3,000. Is ARPA money available.

Tanks Maintenance: Terry reported that field behind school required less pumping. Tanks at the tennis courts require pumping every 3 months.

Site 4 – Valves not working well and will need replacement.

Greg reported that right now the General Budget is up 19.4%, or \$100,000.

Total Budget is up 9.8%, or \$124,000.

Areas of Concern:

Fund Balance: \$41,680

Salaries

Benefits,

Energy, Equipment, Cemetery, Audits, IT Services

Mowing

Plowing

Frank spoke with Tony about Library needing a petition because of their increase request.

December 15 Meeting:

Cemetery

Windsor County Sheriff

Adjourned: 5:15