



Town Budget Hearing and BOS Meeting
1/22/2019
Approved Minutes

Present: Selectmen Louise Lavoie, acting chair, Charles Moser; Brenda Wiley, Kathy Wile; Police Chief Kevin Maxwell, Fire Chief Fred Greenwood, Road Agent Dave Morrison, Town Clerk Deb Morrison; members of the public.

Called to Order: The BOS Meeting was called to order by Louise at 7:30 PM. It was noted that an accounts payable and payroll manifests had been signed.

The Budget Hearing was opened at 7:30 PM.

Proposed Town Warrant was addressed first –
Warrant Articles being proposed include:

#1 Election of officials

#2 accepting reports

#3 Operating budget of \$1,854,883

#4 Police Cruiser Reserve Fund – add annual amount of \$14,000

#5 Paved Road Maintenance - \$65,000 instead of \$50,000, the additional amount would allow for reconstruction of Greenville Rd from town line to crest of hill, including reclaiming, drainage

improvements, and gravel rolled in place. Paving would happen in 2020, once the road has settled. Reclaiming and paving Mitchell Hill and Abbot Hill Rds will also be done, and would be consistent with the 5 year plan of the Paved Roads Restoration Committee.

#6 FD Capital Reserve Fund - \$25,000, for purchase of new fire engine.

#7 HD Capital Reserve Fund - \$5000, for equipment/vehicle replacement

Comments from the public included a consensus that the amount was too low, equipment costs are high, and HD and its 12 vehicles should be at an equal level with the other 2 departments (police and fire). Selectmen replied that they are working to get a capital improvement plan in place which would include all vehicles for all departments, and a schedule for replacement. Inventories are needed from department heads as part of that process. Residents responded saying that is a great plan, but the level of funding that reserve fund is too low. Selectman Moser motioned to raise the amount to be placed in the HD equipment reserve fund from \$5,000 to \$15,000. Second from Louise, 2 votes to increase the warrant article request to \$15,000.

#8 Adopt the provisions of RSA 79-F regarding Taxation of Farm Structures and Land Under Farm Structures. Charlie explained this as a current use ordinance which specifically address assessment of structures and their footprints on property that are used for agricultural purposes, in an effort to preserve productive farms. The RSA requires specific and annual updates to maintain the status.

#9 To accept the gift of Tax Lot E-18 and establish it as part of the Town Forests. Selectman Moser explained this lot and another, E-10, were being donated by the same person, E-10, aka the Wolf Rock lot, would be accepted by Conservation Commission.

There being no further comments, discussion moved to the budget. Selectman Lavoie reviewed warrant articles, then moved through the rest of the budget by category.

6028 Conservation:

Expenses flat.

Culture & Recreation:

6024-04 Activities/Rec Committee line down, no 250th activities

6025- slight increase, mostly salary related expenses

6026 Library:

Removal of the library's share of the IT expenses results in a department decrease in what is otherwise level funded. IT expenses have been taken out of each department, and now appear as a separate line item (6011-03). This budget also has a replacement plan for equipment, with 2 computers being scheduled for replacement this year.

6027 Patriotic Purposes:

Expenses flat.

Debt Service:

6030-02 slight decrease in interest on bond

6030-03 Interest on TAN – further reduced, reflecting on \$0 needing to be borrowed in the last year

6000 General Government:

6000 – Executive

No increase for selectmen

6001 Election, Registration and Vital Statistics:

6001-01: Moderator fees , 1 election and town meeting only in 2019

Entire election budget down due to fewer elections than last year

6001-31 IT support removed from this section

6002 Financial Administration:

6002-04: Admin Ass't hours increased to 32hrs/wk

6002-05: , associated payroll costs

Tech support line removed, office equipment decrease no computer replacement this year.

Overall department increase of 10%

6003 Revaluation of Property:

Contract increase of 1% with assessor

6004 Legal Expenses:

Though spending in 2018 was down, keeping same budgeted amount for baseline legal needs

6005 Personnel Administration:

Overall insurance rates are up.

6005-05 rebate, meant to be a negative number

6006 Planning and Zoning:

6006-12 NRPC assistant will increase time to help with master plan, etc at request of planning board

6007 General Government Buildings:

6008 Cemeteries:

Increases due to WC

6009 Insurance:

6009-01 Property & Liability Insurance flat

6010 Advertising & Assoc Dues:

flat

6011 Other Gen Gov't:

6011-03 new line added with all IT costs

6022 Health:

6022-05 added for \$500 contribution towards Community Volunteer Transportation Co, which has supplied over 20 rides this past year to Mason residents, and utilizes 2 volunteer drivers, for medical appointments, shopping etc

Highways & Streets:

6018-08 Workers comp has increased

6018-32 Aggregate – up from last year to include gravel needed for Greenville Rd project as well as standard supply

Overall maintenance budget up 3%.

6019 Highway Department Expenses:

6019-05 Equip.Maintenance – increase reflects grader repairs in addition to other anticipated costs

6019-06 Edges – increase

6019-08 Chains – increase to equip new truck with chains

6019-22 Supplies – includes both office and shop supplies, some new things needed for new shop

Overall increase of 1% in this area

6020 Street Lighting

As billed by Eversource

6012 Police Department:

6012-02 decrease, offset by increase in full time wages as position gets filled.

6012-07 Retirement increase as mandated by state formulae and filling the third full time position
Overall department increase of 29%, most of which was repair of grader and equipping new truck

6020 Street Lighting

No comments

Public Safety

6012 Police Department

Restructuring of pay scale to reflect retention efforts

Overall 6% increase

6013 Ambulance

New contract with significant increase was presented to BOS on Nov 20, 2018 by Brookline Selectmen and EMS Chief. Increases were significant, as town will now absorb a percentage of all costs, not just call costs. Without time to research and negotiate a contract with a different provider, this contract will be part of this budget. Selectmen and Chief Greenwood are planning to start a search committee to look into alternatives, if any. Agreed that Brookline Ambulance does a fine job, and have no complaints on service or skills.

New contract of \$75,251 reflects an increase of 219%.

6014 Fire Department:

6014-02 FD Stipend

Chief Greenwood explained the stipend given to EMS and FF volunteers is minimal, and hopes that increasing the stipend will help retain and attract more volunteers

6014-03 Workers Comp the other area to show major increase

Overall increase of 23%

6015 Building Inspection:

Flat funding

6016 Emergency Management:

No changes made

Sanitation:

6021-01 Wilton Recycling Center budget increase of 1%

Welfare:

No change from last year

Total Operating Expenses are up by 10.1%, or \$170,252.

Warrant Article totals are down 53%, or \$133,140.

Total Capital Outlay and Operating Expenses for 2019 –\$1,963,882.53, up by 1.4%, or \$27,111.

Liz and Garth Fletcher spoke on behalf of the Energy Commission regarding the addition of a warrant article for energy conservation work to be done on the Mann House. This work was outlined in the energy audit provided courtesy of Eversource, and in an estimate given by Newell & Crathern, and included insulation of basement walls, ceilings and walls, and lighting upgrades.

Selectmen replied they had not supported the original proposal of an article, feeling that the project needs more study on the building as a whole before doing this work, concern for the integrity of the building long term if it is too tight, potential issues with the preservation/historic listings goals for the building, and the town embarking on a major project of Town Hall Renovation as well as repairing the School House.

Question of doing the work incrementally, could elements be absorbed within the existing budget, could basement work at least be done – concerns about mold. Louise said the mold study done prior to repairs from the water leak had not indicated mold concerns. Charlie added that the proposal came in late, and the board did not want to rush into any decisions.

There being no further questions or discussion on the operating budget -

Charlie motioned to place before the Town a proposed operating budget of \$1,854,882.53 and a warrant including articles requesting \$119,000 in capital outlays. Second from Louise, 2 votes to present proposed budget and warrant to the town.

Final motion to adjourn the budget hearing made by Louise, second by Charlie, 2 votes to close the budget hearing at 8:54 PM.

Regular meeting resumed.

Approvals:

- Minutes of the Jan 8, 2019 BOS Meeting and Jan 15, 2019 work meeting, were reviewed.

Charlie motioned to accept the minutes of 1/8/2019 as written. Second from Louise, two votes to accept minutes as written.

Charlie motioned to accept the minutes of 1/15/2019 as written. Second from Louise, two votes to accept minutes as written.

- Pole License Application from Eversource – reviewed and signed by both selectmen, to be returned to Town Clerk for her signature.
- Investment Policy of Town of Mason – updated RSA’s, presented for annual review and approval by BOS. It was noted there was a disclaimer inkstamp on one of the pages that should be removed before final approval.
- Intent to Cut Timber for parcel J-10 was reviewed; signed by Louise, noted by Charlie that he has a business relationship with one of the owners, but did not feel there was any conflict of interest, then signed by Charlie as well.
- Quote from Bingham Lumber for timbers and roofing boards to be used at the schoolhouse, covered within the buildings budget. Louise motioned to approve the purchase, second from Charlie. Two votes to approve purchase of timbers purchase.

Other Business:

- Charlie reflected on whether a second budget hearing would be required as the amount of Proposed Warrant Article #7 had been amended. Kathy Wile to get that answer.

There being no public comment or further business, Louise motioned, second from Charlie, to adjourn the meeting. Two votes to adjourn made at 9:09 PM.

Next scheduled BOS Meeting is to be held Tuesday, February 12, 2019 at 7:30 PM at the Mann House.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Wile
Administrative Assistant