

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

January 25, 2024

Lincoln Town Hall, Lincoln, NH

(video on YouTube) (approved)

ATTENDING: Chairman Mike Simons, Vice-Chairman Herb Gardner, Wayne Baltzer, Paul Beaudin, Tracey Brumlik (Zoom), Dennis Ducharme, Brian Gallagher, Brent Hansma, Cindy Lloyd, Al Poulin (Zoom), Jim Spanos, Becky Farnsworth, Carina Park

Absent: Ray D'Amante, Selectperson Tammy Ham,

Audience: Carol Riley, Chief Beard, Deputy Chief Ryan Fairbrother, Assistant Deputy Chief Mike Weeden

Call to order: 5:30

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION: "To approve minutes from January 9."

Motion: Herb Second: Cindy Yes: 10 Motion carries unanimously

MOTION: "To approve minutes from January 11."

Motion: Herb Second: Dennis Yes: 10 Motion carries unanimously

MOTION: "To approve minutes from January 17."

Discussion:

Lines 11, 20 31, 34, 39, 42, 45, 49, 54, 66 fix the spelling of Tara Tower's name

Line 11 fix the spelling of Brianna Fairbrother's name

Motion: Herb Second: Dennis Yes: 10 Approved as amended

BUDGETS TO REVIEW:

LIBRARY:

Carol Riley states that the library has been serving the community for 118 years old and is open 54 hours a week. There space is used by a number of groups and clubs. She states that their budget stays basically the same year to year except for Contracted Services, Utilities and Wages, which is out of their control. Contracted Services went up because of the cleaning contract. Electricity was able to go down because they budgeted more than what was needed.

The Friends of the Library donates about \$5,000 a year to offset the budget. Two grants were received totaling \$2,700 for the purchasing of books. Some areas of the budget were cut such as: reference and magazine subscriptions, since the interest and need isn't there. Carol will be attending the Library Association Conference in Ohio this year, which costs \$2,100.

In discussing wages, Carol reads a letter from a Library Trustee, Pat Surabian. He states in his letter that the Trustees are requesting that wages for the library increase by 6%. Carina states that the BOS were thinking of possibly increasing a few individuals' pay not the entire department. The Budget Committee discusses their concerns in increasing one department's wages by 6% when all other departments increased by 4%. Carina states that wages increased by 6% last year. Wages have not kept pace with the cost of living. Carina states that the library is governed by the Trustees and that even if we do not vote for the wage increase, that they can still choose to increase it, but would have to find the money elsewhere.

FIRE:

Chief Beard states that wages (on call) went over budget and has been increased for this year. There were 250 calls this past year. Twin State Fire Mutual Aid and Truck Repairs were moved out of Contracted Services and put in a different category. Telephone, Electricity, Fuel, Equipment, Materials and Supplies all remained flat. Propane costs increased because of the new contract.

Carina states the pay per year plus the hours they worked, divided by how many calls they went on and the average is 3 hours per call. Chief Beard states that for any call, there is a two-hour minimum cost per responder. We do not charge or collect from mutual aid calls. Responders get a step increase based on the training they have completed. Training wages are given for responders while taking the fire fighter 1 and fire fighter 2 class.

Chief Beard states that they will request that a new CIP line be created so that a UTV vehicle can be purchased for about \$30,000. Carina states that we got a grant for \$40,000 for the structure analysis of the fire department building. There are issues with the trust system, which will need to be fixed.

Paul questions when we will have to transition to a full-time fire department. Carina states that the system they use now is working well, and if it stops working, they will reevaluate.

PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION:

Carina states that last year she surveyed about 60 municipalities and we are the only one that does not offer health insurance to a spouse or dependents. We offer the best single-person plan, but it's the only plan we offer. This limits our ability to be competitive in the labor market. Therefore, when open-enrollment starts in July, non-union members will be offered coverage with a \$1,000 or a \$3,000 deductible option opposed to only the single-person, 0% deductible plan we have now. In the past town employees were not wanting to switch from a union job to a nonunion job because then they wouldn't have coverage for

their families. This has both limited our ability to get new employees and to promote employees from within. Private and public sector benefits are different. If we were to make no changes, the cost would be \$362,000, as apposed to the \$400,000 that is being asked for. Carina states that we are down 1 non-union and 1 union employee.

Life and Disability Insurance are remaining flat. NH Retirement set their own rates.

OTHER BUSINESS: Due to having to vote on all the budgets, Herb suggests we start the next meeting at 5 pm. Next meeting will be January 30th at 5 pm. Jim requests the committee have a copy of the electricity contract for the next meeting. Paul requests that the committee have a copy of the survey for the next meeting.

MOTION: "To adjourn at 7:23 pm."

Motion: Paul

Second: Dennis

Motion carries unanimously


Chairman Mike Simons

2/2/24
Date:

