

Town of Goshen
BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday April 24, 2024

CALL to ORDER: Chair Allan Walker called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Attendance: Chair Allan Walker, Vice Chair Ned Bixler, Paul Collins, Scott Tillmann, Robert Valentine, Jim Korner, Pat Reilly (alternate), Russell Murdock (alternate) and First Selectman Todd Carusillo.

Others: Garret Harlow Public Works Supervisor, Erin Reilly Parks, and Recreation Supervisor. Fire Chief Barry Hall

A motion to seat Pat Reilly was made by Bob Valentine, Ned Bixler seconded, it passed unanimously.

APPROVAL of MINUTES: A motion was made by Bob Valentine, Scott Tillmann seconded, and voted unanimously to receive the minutes of March 27, 2024, as written. **The motion was unanimously adopted, with Allan Walker abstaining.**

Ned Bixler asked if names of residents that speak publicly should be included in the meeting minutes as during the meeting it is publicly broadcast, and residents state their names and addresses, and the videos are available to residents. **Ned Bixler motioned that going forward the Board of Finance meeting policies will be amended to include the requirement that names of those who speak are to be recorded in the minutes. It was seconded by Scott Tillman and passed unanimously**

The motion to unseat Pat Reilly was rescinded when Jim Korner joined my Zoom. It passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Todd Carusillo, First Selectman said that Commission Clerk, Lee Kennedy's request for a pay increase was submitted to the Board of Finance. A subcommittee of Bob Valentine and Ned Bixler will convene to discuss wages and job description.

Lee Kennedy distributed to the Board of Finance and Todd Carusillo a formal request to have a job description as one had not been provided. The job description needs to accurately reflect the work environment for the abuse and bullying by elected officials that town employees are required to endure **without recourse** per the three members of the Board of Selectman. The request is for Abusive Conduct Pay.

Bob Valentine and Ned Bixler agree that this type of behavior is unacceptable, and that all employees should be protected. Bob Valentine stated that the Board of Selectman should make it clear to all elected officials that this behavior is unacceptable. Bob Valentine said that there are in fact job descriptions and town policies. Bob Valentine notes that that this may leave the town and the abusive individual with legal liabilities.

BUDGET PROJECTION REVIEW:

PUBLIC WORKS OPERATING BUDGET - DEPARTMENT 02

Current Budget 2023/2024 \$ 1,128,370.00 Proposed Budget 2024/2025 \$ 1,185,498.00

Garret Harlow presented a \$27,700 increase, a reduction from the previous \$29,480 increase proposed. The money was reduced from all over the budget and mostly from chip seal.

Discussed the 10 year average for Winter Road Maintenance (G/L 02-5707, 02-5702, 02-5703) as we have had less winter events by a couple of storms per year. This could be an opportunity for reduction.

Over the next couple of years, large drainage projects are expected to cost approximately 1.5 Million for the lining of pipes on West Hyerdale and drainage project on Route 63 in West Goshen. The Public Works is accumulating funds for these projects. Maintenance of the roads is a priority for the town. Bob Valentine noted that Goshen has a comprehensive road plan and is proactive.

Russell Murdock asked why the budget for Tree removal is flat with the disease in the ash trees, do we anticipate more work? Garret Harlow stated that a line item G/L 02-5722 Wood Disposal, was added with \$1,500 for the disposal of the unusable wood.

Pat Reilly asked about G/L 2-5005 Highway Consultant/Engineer Highway and the additional \$100 that was added. Garret said that this is to compensate for past reductions.

A motion was made to receive the budget by Bob Valentine, Paul Collins seconded, and it was unanimously adopted.

Capital Expenditures request 2024-2025 as revised 4/24/2024 4:2 pm

Truck Replacement	\$ 125,000.00 for large plow trucks
Truck Replacement - Additional	\$ 23,000.00 for lighter trucks such as pickup trucks
Equipment Replacement	\$ 85,000.00
Equipment Repair	\$ 6,500.00
Major Road Project	\$ 350,000.00
Woodridge Lake Drainage	\$ 20,000.00
<u>P.W. Facility Complex</u>	<u>\$ 60,000.00</u>
Total Public Works	\$ 669,500.00

In the past, 6-wheel trucks with Stainless steel bodies with the intent to refurbish it when a new chassis was needed. Garret Harlow said the bodies become rusted and not structurally sound. A builder looked at the large amount of work it would entail to refurbish it said it was not an economically feasible refurbishment. Garret Harlow is considering this in the Public Works ten year capital and nonrecurring plan.

RECREATION - DEPARTMENT 22

Current Budget 2023/2024 \$ \$ 212,285.00 Proposed Budget 2024/2025 \$225,559.00

Erin Reilly presented the budget showing a 14% increase overall. G/L 5002-22 · Camp Salaries and Wages increased to \$63,731 due to needing to use CITs to fill both roles of CIT and Jr. CIT (unpaid) as they have been unable to hire all the Jr CITs needed. The projected salary expenses were revised to ensure the Camp is properly staffed. Camp Supplies G/L 5055-22 increased to account for expenses being paid although the sponsors will offset the costs. Bob Valentine asked why we had less Jr CIT applicants as they are usually campers. Erin Reilly noted that last year most of the oldest campers are still not old enough this year.

Capital Expenditures request 2024-2025 \$ 28,700.00.

Camp Coch Facilities Projects	\$ 5,000.00
Exterior Painting	\$ 1,500.00
Playground	\$ 15,000.00 – at Camp Coch to replace noncompliant equipment.
Roof	\$ 2,000.00
Surveillance	\$ 3,700.00 - key fob system
Track Repair	\$ 500.00
<u>Weed Control</u>	<u>\$ 1,000.00</u>
Total Recreation	\$ 28,700.00

A motion was made to receive the budget by Bob Valentine, Ned Bixler seconded, and it was unanimously adopted.

FINANCIAL REPORTS: The board received and reviewed Financial Reports from Debbie Franklin dated 03/31/2024. \$58,483.50 was transferred and referenced in the Board of Selectman Report. It should be debited from the Town Line Road account

Waste Removal is expected to be overbudget by 53,850.60 due to the Final budget for MIRA being mistakenly reduced by \$44,900; actuals will put it overbudget. This will require a town meeting to resolve the problem.

TAX COLLECTORS REPORT: No report received.

CONTINGENCY - DEPARTMENT 59

Current Budget 2023/2024 \$ 40,000.00 Proposed Budget 2024/2025 \$ 40,000.00

A motion was made to receive the budget by Scott Tillman, Paul Collins seconded, and it was unanimously adopted.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS - DEPARTMENT 71

Current Budget 2023/2024 \$ 385,449.00 Proposed budget 2024/2025 \$ 431,333.00

Bob Valentine wants to discuss this with wages. As Goshen seeks to be a mid-salary employer, it should consider the entire employee package. For example, employees pay 5% for their insurance, while other organizations have their employee pay 16-18%. Allan Walker does not believe the employees are overpaid and health insurance is not the business of the Board of Finance.

A motion was made to receive the budget by Bob Valentine, Paul Collins seconded, and it was unanimously adopted

NEWSLETTER - DEPARTMENT 55

Current Budget 2023/2024 \$ 23,810.00 Proposed budget 2024/2025 \$ 24,493.00

The weight of the paper has been reduced so hopefully the increase will be minimized.

A motion was made to receive the budget by Bob Valentine, Paul Collins seconded, and it was unanimously adopted.

TOWN OFFICE BUILDING - DEPARTMENT 61

Current Budget 2023/2024 \$ 79,592.00 Proposed Budget 2024/2025 \$ 91,726.00

The budget is up by 15% and Computer Support, Yucatec, is driving the increase. There are more computers in use, and cyber security costs increase. Todd Carusillo suggested he send this out to bid.

A motion was made to receive the budget by Bob Valentine, Paul Collins seconded, and it was unanimously adopted.

WASTE REMOVAL - DEPARTMENT 03

Current Budget 2023/2024 \$ 271,941.00 Proposed Budget 2024/2025 \$ 354,262.00

Todd Carusillo said he was offered \$111/ton compared to MIRA at \$131/ton, The town would need to opt out of the MIRA contract. Paul Collins reminded that 20-23% of trash is recycled, and we do not get billed for this by MIRA.

A motion was made to receive the budget by Paul Collin, Ned Bixler seconded, and it was unanimously adopted.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE REQUESTS

Currently the Capital budget proposal is a 33 % increase. Combined with a 7.8% increase in operating costs, brings the total to \$542,000 - \$600,000 increase. We expect to receive \$680,000 from Region 20 and it would be irresponsible to spend it in one year.

Bob Valentine recommends we look at the total 1.4 million that was already appropriated and unspent in Capital Non-Recurring. The capital proposals need to be reviewed or it will create a large increase for the town, by 7.8% ; the drivers are the Public Work and the Fire Company. In similar local towns the increases are at 4-4.5%.

Chair Allan Valentine asks to send the budgets back to the Board of Selectmen and the departments and ask them to see what cuts can be made. If the cuts are insufficient the Board of Finance will have to cut the budgets.

The Town meeting is Monday 20th. The Board of Finance will meet next week on May 1st at 7:30 pm as scheduled.

FIRE MARSHALL BUDGET. \$620. A motion was made to receive the budget by Bob Valentine, Paul Collins seconded, and it was unanimously adopted.

The Board of Finance recommends more competitive bidding.

SELECTMAN'S REPORT:

Randy Frank recommended a 4% budgetary increase for the overall merit budget.

Todd Carusillo is working to reduce the tipping fees by talking to other potential service providers.

Woodridge Lake has not paid Goshen yet for what they owe for sediment work and catch basins. When monies are received, they will be transferred to Capital Nonrecurring.

The Library Board asked the Selectmen if people could donate directly to the library rather than to the Friends of the Library. The Board replied that funds such as these can be earmarked for a particular use.

CORRESPONDENCE: Bob Valentine provided the Board of Finance with an article on Fund Balance Guidelines for the General Fund.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Todd Carusillo said the town needs to complete a feasibility study and a needs assessment to build behind the Fire Company at 181 Sharon Turnpike. Afterward the property could be sold or kept for future use.

Bob Valentine said the needs assessment was discussed at the last meeting, and the Board of Selectman was to create an independent town committee with volunteers to perform the assessment for both Public Work and the Fire Company. Transparency for the residents is imperative, with no surprises. This still needs to be done. The Board of Finance recommended Todd Carusillo that the Board of Selectman create the committee.

Fire Chief Barry Hall strongly stated that the Fire Company knows the difference between want and need.

Bob Valentine and the Board of Finance stated concern for the Mil rate impact to the town, especially for those less fortunate.

Randy Frank recommended a 4% budgetary increase, therefore the elected officials including election workers will get a 4% increase. The individual employees will be rated based on job performance within the 4% budget.

Motion to give all elected officials, including election workers, a 4% flat raise, by Bob Valentine, Ned Bixler seconded, and it was unanimously adopted.

The meeting schedule was discussed. The next Board of Finance meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday May 1, 2024 at 7:30pm. The Town meeting is scheduled May 29, 2024 8:00pm to 9:00pm

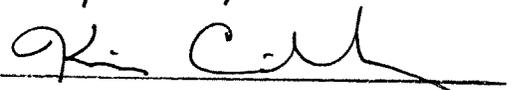
ADJOURN: A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Bob Valentine, Paul Collins seconded, and the motion was unanimously adopted, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:28 p.m.

Submitted by



Lee M. Kennedy - Board of Finance Clerk

Received Apr. 26, 2024 10:56 AM

Attest 
ASST. Goshen Town Clerk