

TOWN OF EPSOM  
BUDGET COMMITTEE  
DECEMBER 16, 2021

**Attendees:** Marylou Keane, Chairman; Joni Kitson, Vice Chairman; Gary Kitson, Water District Representative; Virginia Drew, Selectmen's Representative; Meadow Wysocki; Mary Frambach; Joyce Heck; Len Gilman; Linda Hodgdon; Penny Graham; Joy Sheehan (via telephone)

**Not in Attendance:** Michael Muise, School Board Representative

**Other Attendees:** Deb Sullivan; Chad Decker; Pat Hickey; Cheryl Gilpatrick; Kathy DesRoches

Marylou opened the meeting at 7:02 PM.

**Welfare – Pat Hickey**

Mrs. Hickey indicated that it is difficult to determine this budget. She increased the funeral costs as she was notified of an upcoming increase.

Meadow asked about her Training and Conferences Line. Mrs. Hickey noted that she did not know if a conference would be held this year, but she could call for assistance if needed.

Len asked about the Deputy Welfare wages. He asked what would require someone to help her. Mrs. Hickey indicated if she was sick or was injured. He asked what would happen if that money was taken out of the budget.

Virginia often noted the Welfare Officer and Deputy would do things together but are not currently due to COVID. Len asked if the Welfare Officer's wages could be used to pay the Deputy if she was covering for the Director. Virginia noted that the Welfare Officer is an elected official and would get paid if she were ill. These wages could not be used for the Deputy Director.

It was asked if the Deputy is paid hourly. Mr. Decker noted that often Mrs. Decker works without putting in for wages. It was discussed that an hourly wage should be set by the Board of Selectmen.

**Planning Board – Kathy DesRoches**

Dr. DesRoches noted they had a reduction in the budget as the Town staff is doing much of the work. She noted they were unable to attend trainings in 2021 due to COVID.

Deb clarified that the printing is mostly for notices in the newspaper.

Linda asked the revenue figures for the Planning Board. Deb noted that it was \$4,900.00.

### **Conservation – Chad Decker**

Mr. Decker noted a line item they added is for the recording secretary of \$750.00. The secretary would receive \$75.00 per meeting as they are usually shorter than other committee meetings.

Maintenance is higher due to parking issues at the Town Forest and new signs had to be installed. They have several new members that should be attending the training conference if it occurs this year.

Gary asked what they do for Mapping – Trails. Mr. Decker noted that the maps keep disappearing. They are looking to develop something permanent that people can scan with their phones rather than having maps available.

They are proposing a new trail that will be about eight miles long.

Meadow asked if they are working on any easements or acquisitions. Mr. Decker indicated they are working with the Richard Harkness property for an easement. It would be part of a watershed that would join with other easements in the area.

Penny asked about other accounts or funds. Mr. Decker noted they do have other funds to help with easements and acquisitions. The balances for the various funds were: \$44,613 – Trust Fund; \$94,989 – Conservation Fund; \$30,751 – Conservation Reserve Fund.

The Trust Fund is for agricultural easements. They are finding out what the Conservation Fund can be used for. They do not know what the Reserve Funds can be used for.

Joni noted once they know how the funds can be spent some of the money can be used to obtain easements.

### **Highway Department – Scott Elliott**

Mr. Elliott noted snow removal is high as they do not know how much snow would be occurring in 2022. He noted that no Pavement Striping was completed in 2021 due to COVID.

Mr. Elliott has increased the Salt & Sand Line as the cost of salt has increased 35%. He lowered the phone bill as he has been trying to keep that cost down.

No trainings occurred in 2021.

The equipment maintenance line was decreased.

The Diesel Fuel Line was increased by \$3,000 and Gas Fuel Line was increased by \$2,000.00.

Mr. Elliott thought the Operating Supplies Line was \$3,000; but the budget showed \$3,600.00. He indicated that \$3,000.00 should cover the costs.

**Joni motioned to lower the Operating Supplies Line from \$3,600 to \$3,000; Meadow seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Mr. Elliott discussed the Highway Reconstruction Line should be \$35,000 rather than the \$40,000 in the budget.

**Meadow motioned to reduce the Highway Reconstruction Line by \$5,000.00 from \$40,000 to \$35,000; Linda seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Mr. Elliott discussed the Uniforms Line was to be increased to \$1,400.00 as the employees would need to purchase new shoes and shirts.

**Joni motioned to increase the Uniforms Line by \$400.00 from \$1,000.00 to \$1,400.00; Meadow seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

The Repairs and Maintenance Line is the same as 2021.

The Bridge Expense Line was reduced by \$1,000.00 as no bridge work is planned for 2022.

Mr. Elliott discussed working on Swamp Road and Mountain Road in 2022. In 2023 he will be requesting another employee. Mr. Elliott discussed it is not safe to have an employee working alone on the roads.

Virginia asked if he took funds from his Capital Reserve Funds in 2021. Mr. Elliott noted \$76,264 was used from the Road Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund. Paving was completed on North Pembroke Road, Mountain Road, Echo Valley Road and Center Hill Road.

Penny asked if there would be a Warrant Article for the Road Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund. There will be for \$150,000.00 for the reconstruction of Swamp Road.

Marylou noted members could review the Five Year Budget on their own.

Deb reviewed the revenue figures for 2021. She noted last year DRA indicated to lower the Rooms and Meals Tax expectations. She has been informed the figure will be higher than projected; increasing from \$121,000 to \$351,000.

The Town will not receive Municipal Aid for 2021. This figure is being combined with the Rooms and Meals Funds. Deb is trying to find out if the Town will be receiving any Municipal Aid funds in 2022.

Marylou asked if the Revenues could be updated for the January 6 or 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Penny noted that BCEP would be requesting \$252,953.00 from the Town of Epsom. Linda noted it was a \$6,953.00 increase for last year.

## **Minutes**

The minutes of December 9, 2021 were reviewed and amended. The minutes were not approved as they were not forwarded to Mr. Connors for his amendments. They will be sent to Mr. Connors for his review.

Gary noted the SAU budget increased by 9.6%. Marylou noted an e-mail she just received from Ms. Wheeler, SAU Business Administrator, indicating that she would not be able to attend the meeting on December 21<sup>st</sup> for the school budget presentation.

It was noted that the Budget Committee does not have any input into the SAU budget.

Len noted the School Board has five members and is concerned that no one attends the Budget Committee meetings. Issues were discussed that the School Board should have a member attending the Budget Committee meetings.

Virginia discussed issues with budgets from the School and County in that the Town has no input for those budgets.

**Len motioned to adjourn the meeting; Meadow seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Marylou adjourned the meeting at 8:45 P.M.

Respectfully,

Betsy Bosiak  
Recording Secretary