

TOWN OF EPSOM  
BUDGET COMMITTEE  
NOVEMBER 30, 2023

**Attendees:** Marylou Keane, Chairman; Joni Kitson, Vice Chairman; Gary Kitson, Water District Representative; Meadow Wysocki, Selectmen's Representative; Joyce Heck; Floyd Graham; Linda Hodgdon; Penny Graham; Michael Muise, School Board Representative; Mary Frambach; Nancy Wheeler

**Not in Attendance:** Len Gilman

**Other Attendees:** Deb Sullivan; Virginia Drew; Pat Curley; Katlin Camidge; Scott Elliott

Marylou opened the meeting at 7:04 PM.

**LIBRARY**

Mrs. Curley discussed the Library budget. She noted that in 2023 they have almost doubled the number of programs presented. They have been working on maintenance items both inside and outside the building.

Mrs. Camidge noted in the past there was one line for books. They have broken it into 3 lines. They are using money from the trust account to purchase items; however, they have concerns it will be depleted. The periodicals are magazines that are well circulated. The audio books will be deleted in the future as patrons use e-readers and iPads, etc. Many people are using the Video Materials. The Website fees are increasing next year. They are attempting to increase the services provided also.

The Town Budget is taking over the Old Library maintenance and utilities so its costs are removed from these lines.

The electric line has been increased along with the fuel line.

Mrs. Camidge discussed the Library budget is divided between maintenance and utility costs and then programs, etc. Supply costs have increased.

Penny noted the budget total at the bottom of the page is \$249,221 and is different from what is in the budget. Mrs. Sullivan noted what is in the Town budget is from an October draft budget.

Penny noted in the past they were told about the groups, etc. that use the building. Mrs. Camidge listed some of the groups that use the meeting room and offered to provide a

written list but it was not requested. Penny asked if there is a policy for using the building, Mrs. Curley noted they are open to the community. Penny asked about Sunday use. Mrs. Camidge noted there has been issues with Sunday use and the Trustees have therefore had to tighten the policy. Mrs. Camidge noted she has to be available when people are using the building. Use considerations were discussed.

Katlin explained we were the recipients of the Family Place Grant which is a federal grant that funds two 5-week sessions every year for children in target age birth to 2 years. Each 5-week session covers literacy reading and writing, speech and language, music and movement (motor skills, large and small), and health and nutrition. A newsletter goes out from the library to young parents and kids interested in youth services to reach this younger audience. All materials are funded by the grant and specialist volunteers head up each of the 4 units, rotating over the 5 weeks. This early identification of any concerns allows for a chance to address those concerns. This early involvement is so beneficial for many reasons not the least of which is readiness for school.

Marylou asked about the wages, they will be \$153,721. Mrs. Camidge noted she has quarterly staff meetings to bring the staff current on events and procedures. Mrs. Camidge noted that last year they had reduced the number of hours for part-time employees, but are increasing them this year due to need as they were too aggressive on the reduction last year. There are 2 full time employees and 6 part-time employees; some part timers with very limited hours. Volunteers are used to cover books, assist with some events, etc. Mrs. Camidge discussed grants that they have received and how they are support for the public. Items that are available to the public outside of books, etc. were noted.

**Nancy motioned to change the wages line in the Select Board budget to \$153,721 (Line 4550110) to reflect the Library's latest numbers, Floyd seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

## **HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT**

Mr. Elliott, Road Agent, noted his budget has increased approximately 10%. He has requested a \$1.00/hour increase for the full-time employees. They have a part-time employee and also use workers from the State Prison. The overtime line has not changed.

He has increased the snow removal line (Line 4314120). He noted lines that he had to increase. He also noted that roads that were paved this year have been striped.

He will reduce the amount of paving next year. He will not use Capital Reserve Funds to rebuild the balance in the fund. He noted repairs that had to be completed due to the storms this year. Epsom did not qualify for the federal reimbursement.

He increased the salt and sand lines as the cost of salt has increased.

He would like to have the Pipes and Culverts returned to \$3,000 as the Select Board had reduced it to \$2,500. Floyd asked about the Pipes and Culverts. Marylou asked if the \$500 could come from another line. Mr. Elliott did not believe it could.

Mr. Elliott noted that most of the training is free and on-line. He has to be recertified for culvert installation at a cost of \$50.00.

Mr. Elliott likes to keep the maintenance up on the Kenworth. It is an old truck, but very dependable.

General supplies are items for the workers supplied from the Department of Corrections – lunch, water and gloves.

Mr. Elliott noted that he had a blower and weedwhacker stolen from the back of his truck.

The fuel line was decreased by \$3,000 as well as the electricity and heat lines as costs have decreased.

He is researching grants to complete repairs on Leighton Brook Road and Leighton Brook. It is not work the Highway Department can complete as they do not have the necessary equipment.

**Linda moved to increase Pipes and Culverts Line (Line 4314635) by \$500 to \$3,000 and reduce Training and Conferences Line (Line 4316370) by \$300 to \$100; Joni seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Marylou asked if he would have the normal warrant articles. Mr. Elliott will have them along with one to lease/purchase an excavator.

Linda asked about the Capital Improvement Program information. Gary discussed the replacement of the backhoe; it should occur in 2025. The other funds were also noted.

Marylou noted she had the verification for the Police Department increase for internet costs. The increase will be \$1,140 for the line (Line 4217430).

**Joni moved to increase the PD Repairs and Maintenance \*C\* Line (Line 4217430) by \$1,140, Linda seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Meadow noted that the Fire Department will be having similar issues due to the new internet system. She noted that if there is an emergency the system would not have the capacity required. It was discussed that the Emergency Management Director may ask for the required increase.

Meadow noted that the Select Board did vote to encumber the funds from the Warrant Articles for the Police and Fire Department potential new employee wages. Marylou asked if the funds would be in the default budget; they will be. The total amount in the

Warrant Articles is \$98,000. It was discussed to remove \$7,200 for equipment with an increase of \$90,800.

The costs would include:

<u>Account #</u>	<u>Account</u>	<u>Amount</u>
4221110	FD Wages	\$28,535
4211120	PD Wages	25,714
4155210	Health Insurance	24,593
4155220	Payroll Taxes	787
4155230	Retirement	<u>11,171</u>
	TOTAL	\$90,800

Nancy asked about the town's portion of the retirement and if it would be increasing in July, Deb did not believe it would be. Deb noted the percentages are:

Police Employees 31.28%

Fire Employees 30.35%

Other Employees 13.53%

**Nancy made a motion to reduce the following budget lines:**

<b>4221110</b>	<b>FD Wages</b>	<b>\$28,535</b>
<b>4211120</b>	<b>PD Wages</b>	<b>25,714</b>
<b>4155210</b>	<b>Health Insurance</b>	<b>24,593</b>
<b>4155220</b>	<b>Payroll Taxes</b>	<b>787</b>
<b>4155230</b>	<b>Retirement</b>	<b><u>11,171</u></b>
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$90,800</b>

**Joni seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

**Floyd motion to move from the Fire Department Equipment Line (Line 4221682) \$1,140 and add the amount to the Repairs and Maintenance Line (Line 4221430).**

Meadow noted that she would not be comfortable with doing this until discussed with the Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director. Floyd noted that equipment could be purchased from the Morrison funds. Floyd noted he made the motion for discussion purposes. **Floyd withdrew the motion.** Meadow will discuss with the Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director Dept.

Marylou noted she had met with Jack Finley, SAU Superintendent. The binders will be available Friday, December 8. The schedule will not change with the December 14 meeting to be held at the School Library. Marylou had asked for a step-by-step detail for how the school surplus is handled.

## **Minutes**

The minutes of November 7, 2023 were reviewed and amended.

**Joni motioned to approve the minutes of November 7, 2023, as amended; Meadow seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

The minutes of November 16, 2023 were reviewed and amended.

**Joni motioned to approve the minutes of November 16, 2023, as amended; Mary seconded the motion. The motion passed.**

Marylou noted the next meeting will be December 7 at 7 at the Library.

Linda noted the BCEP public hearing will be at 5:30 on that day.

The Water District will present its budget on January 4.

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

Marylou adjourned the meeting at 9:02 P.M.

Respectfully,

Betsy Bosiak  
Recording Secretary