

TOWN OF EPSOM
BUDGET COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 7, 2023

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

Not in Attendance:

Other Attendees: Rob Topik; Ted Virgin; Virginia Drew; Bob McKechnie; Joe Wysocki; Laura Scarbo

Marylou opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Emergency Management

Ted Virgin, Emergency Management Director, discussed the Emergency Management Budget. He noted the update occurring for the Hazard Mitigation Plan. He discussed that there is communication between the Fire Department and Emergency Management.

Ted discussed updates that have been completed at the school and items that will be continue to be upgraded.

Ted noted since he has taken over the position, he has obtained approximately \$26,000 in grants. He noted that the funds were matching grants. They have used in kind services, etc. for the matching funds. He has included additional funds in the Equipment Line (Line 4290810).

Ted discussed that there is a payment of \$2,000 to license the frequency for the school radios. The printing line was reduced to zero. He may have to purchase radios as many are older and do not have access to all frequencies used now.

Ted noted they have discussed having a table top exercise. He noted this year he would like to have an exercise where people would be told where they would be, etc.

Meadow noted there were expenses for setting up the generator. The Emergency Management Director applied for additional funds and it was awarded. This is why he hasn't used all his funds, to date, but plans to.

Ted noted he would be putting in a Warrant Article establishing a Capital Reserve Fund for Emergency Management to have a repeater on Fort Mountain. He also would like

funds if something that comes up needs to have upgrades, etc. Len asked about maintenance costs for the repeater. Ted noted it will be about four years before the system could be purchased. He noted the cost for maintenance could be between the Police, Fire Department and Emergency Management.

Meadow discussed with the new computers at the Fire Department will need the upgraded internet.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector

Laura Searbo noted that the majority of the changes and increases were due to having four elections in 2024. She noted there was additional funds for the ballot clerks and meals for the workers.

Laura hopes to have a company who will stuff and post all tax bills next year. She will print the bills and mail separately bills to people who have more than one bill.

Parks and Recreation

Joe Wysocki discussed last year's budget (2023). He noted they will be reviewing the fees for the use of Webster Park areas to be sure they are covering all costs incurred by a usage.

He discussed they had planted 13 trees last year and would like to plant more next year.

Joe noted the expenses and that a tree fell on the large concession stand. Insurance covered the expense to repair the building but not to remove the tree. This portion is still an open item with the insurance company. Next year they plan to remove 2 other trees. Joe noted the projects that were completed this year.

Joe noted they are requesting \$30,600 for 2024. If they have to make cuts it will be in projects proposed. He noted there are project back logs.

Joe noted the garage had a break-in with microphone equipment having been taken. He noted there is a lot of activity at the park.

Meadow noted there are volunteers who assisted in maintenance at the park.

Planning Board

Bob McKechnie, Vice Chair of the Planning Board, noted the budget was decreased a small amount. They had to increase the legal fees due to cases that will be forthcoming.

Meadow noted that all the printing is being completed by the Select Board office.

Linda asked what the revenue for the Planning Board consisted of; the revenue for 2023

was \$3,483. It comes from application and other fees.

Rob Topik asked the number of cases handled by legal fees. Bob did not know. He noted there are also regular discussions with the attorney regarding various aspects of ongoing work, etc.

Joni asked what the procedure is for contacting the attorney. Bob noted only the chair is authorized to contact the attorney. Bob noted they also try to use the NHMA for advice for finding information. Joni also asked if all questions are posed in writing and answered in writing. Bob said yes.

Rob asked if there are zoning questions does the Board use the Zoning Board to respond to questions. It was noted that the Planning Board does interact with the Zoning Board.

Marylou asked if anyone attended the BCEP public hearing. Linda explained they did not have a quorum so they had a discussion, but could not vote on the budget.

Meadow discussed the internet increase for the Fire Department. The amount will be \$1,040. They are looking at completing the transaction via electronic billing which would reduce the cost slightly.

Gary asked if the equipment line was reduced could funds be taken from the Morrison Funds to cover those costs. Meadow was not sure but was going to look into it.

The minutes of November 30, 2023 will be reviewed next meeting.

Marylou noted the next meeting will be at the school. The binders will be available tomorrow and Gary will get to as many people as possible.

Linda motioned to adjourn; Mary seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Marylou adjourned the meeting at 8:02 P.M.

Respectfully,

Betsy Bosiak
Recording Secretary