

**TOWN OF RUTLAND SELECT BOARD OPEN MEETING  
HELD VIA PUBLICALLY ACCESSABLE CONFERENCE CALL LINE  
NOVEMBER 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

Out of an abundance of caution around the covid-19 virus, this meeting was held via a conference call line which was made publicly available for anyone to call into.

- Board members present Joshua Terenzini, Mary Ashcroft, Sharon Russell, Joe Denardo, and John Paul Faignant
- Meeting opened at 6:08 P.M.

The Board discussed the draft budget proposals for fiscal year July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021 thru June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

1. Mr. Denardo asked if discussing a pay raise rate for town employees was appropriate to do at the beginning since it affected lines in all the budgets to be discussed. A 3% increase has been done in the past.
  - a. Ms. Russell moved to approve a 3% compensation increase for cost of living to include all town departments. Ms. Ashcroft seconded the motion.
  - b. Mr. Terenzini said that the committees used a 3% increase when calculating their budgets, as part of a past standard practice.
  - c. Mr. Faignant said the standard practice has been to take the expected cost of living adjustment and round up, and that it has been coincidental it has been 3% each year. He also agreed that it should be a 3% increase this year but that it would be an exception.
  - d. The motion passed 5-0.
2. The board reviewed the Recreation budget first.
  - a. The proposed budget is a .23% decrease to last year. The total budget is proposed at \$158,321 with \$128,321 to be raised by taxes.
  - b. Ms. Russell moved to accept as presented. Mr. Denardo seconded the motion.
  - c. Ms. Ashcroft asked about the decrease in maintenance. Mr. Rowe said this level should be fine.
  - d. The motion passed 5-0.
3. The board reviewed the Fire budget.
  - a. The propose budget is a 1.26% decrease to last year. The total budget to be raised by taxes is proposed at \$241,370.
  - b. Mr. Denardo asked if the 3% increase was factored in. Mr. Terenzini said it was added when the committee met.
  - c. Ms. Ashcroft asked about the decrease in maintenance and equipment. She wanted to ensure nothing was being shortchanged. Chief Clark said there should be no issues. A large portion of the maintenance being spent was on the truck that is being replaced in the next fiscal year.

- d. Ms. Ashcroft asked about the increase in office supplies. Chief Clark said this is due to new equipment being leased to replace obsolete equipment.
  - e. Ms. Russell moved to accept the budget. Mr. Denardo seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.
4. The board reviewed the Police budget.
- a. The proposed budget is a 4.77% increase to last year. The total budget is proposed at \$455,966 with \$345,566 to be raised by taxes.
  - b. The anticipated income of \$110,400 is an increase this year due to additional reimbursement being received from the Town School to cover expenses for the School Resource Officer.
  - c. A line for the K9 program is being proposed with initial funding of \$4000. Other expenses for the program will be raised through donations and grants.
  - d. Health insurance has a bigger increase due to an employee change and adding family plan insurance coverage.
  - e. The part time officer position is being dissolved and the first and second officer positions have been given pay increases.
  - f. The line for part time office staff is increasing more than 3% over last years number due to an error being discovered mid-year where the employee had been under paid. A correction was made, and this represents the increase over the corrected number.
  - g. The vehicle purchase / lease line decreased due to only 1 lease agreement being needed as one has been paid off.
  - h. Ms. Ashcroft moved to approve the police budget as presented and corrected. Ms. Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.
5. The board reviewed the Highway budget.
- a. The proposed budget is a 2.82% decrease to last year. The total budget is proposed at \$983,803 with \$873,803 to be raised by taxes.
  - b. Mr. Denardo discussed that the General and Highway budgets both have lines in them for stormwater. The committee discussed dissolving the line in the Highway budget and moving the funds to a single line in the General budget.
  - c. Ms. Ashcroft discussed the increase in the culvert replacement line which includes the need to replace a culvert on Gleason Road where it is failing. \$50,000 of this line is earmarked for that project.
  - d. Sidewalk grant and engineering services are down.
  - e. Ms. Ashcroft moved to approve the budget as presented. Ms. Russell seconded the motion. Mr. Hathaway said the anticipated income of \$110,000 includes money from state aid. There have been some legislative changes so he is not sure how much it will affect this number, but it is likely to increase. The motion passed 5-0.

6. The board reviewed the General budget.
  - a. Mr. Faignant gave his recommendations on figures for the Health Officer and Second Constable lines based on the past expenses incurred. The Health Officer compensation was reduced by 50% over last year. The Second Constable line was increased to allow for additional road patrols. Ms. Ashcroft commented that Mr. Faignant was recently sworn in as a special officer of the Town Police Department giving him additional authority and jurisdiction.
  - b. Mr. Faignant moved to approve the Health Officer and Second Constable budgets as presented. Ms. Russell seconded the motion. After a brief discussion, the motion was withdrawn, and approval will be included as part of the entire General budget.
  - c. Mr. Denardo asked about the income received from the Transfer Station for the punch cards which are purchased. Town Treasurer Kari Clark will follow up as to where the income is posted.
  - d. A line was added to the Transfer Station section to show utilities. It was not included on the original sheets sent out.
  - e. Food scrap disposal was broken out to its own line.
  - f. Transfer Station Manager Larry Dellveneri said the Hazardous Waste expenses are going up and asked the line to be increased to \$6000 from \$5000.
  - g. One of the trash compactor boxes needs to be replaced. There is no depreciation account setup for the transfer station. When the committee met, they discussed proposing an account be funded through a new depreciation allocation of 1/8<sup>th</sup> of a cent with a \$50,000 cap. It is not known if the damaged box can be repaired or if it needs to be replaced. A discussion was had as to where the funds would come from. This topic will be included on the agenda for the next full board meeting to be discussed in detail. Mr. Dellveneri said he received an estimate for repairing of \$4000. An estimate to replace it was received and was \$7300 delivered.
  - h. Ms. Ashcroft brought up the salary line for the Town Clerk and Town Treasurer. She gave background of setting the current salary when she was elected and felt it was time to give Ms. Clark an increase beginning January 1<sup>st</sup> and then increase it 3% July 1<sup>st</sup> of 2021. This is due to recognizing the effort Ms. Clark has shown since being elected. Ms. Ashcroft did not have a specific increase in mind. Mr. Faignant stated the initial salary assigned was inside of a range the board had to use based on the skills brought to the job and the salary was not cut at the time she started. Mr. Faignant also stated this topic should be brought before the personnel committee before being brought before the whole board. Mr. Terenzini stated the starting salary was \$52,000 after the election. July 1<sup>st</sup>, there was a 3% increase applied bringing the current salary to \$53,500.

- Ms. Ashcroft moved the discussion of the Town Clerk and Treasurer salary be moved to the personnel committee. Ms. Russell seconded the motion. Mr. Terenzini commented with a 3% increase on her current salary would come to \$53,105. The motion passed 5-0.
- i. The mileage line for Second Constable was dissolved due to the associated costs being included in a previous budget line. The Health Officer mileage line was reduced from \$550 to \$200.
- j. There are no expenses related to Cheney Hill, the lines will be able to come off the budget next year. The line for the Rutland Town Seniors will remain. Ms. Ashcroft said Jim Hall reached out to her and said they have enough funds in their account to not need additional funding for this year.
- k. The costs for The Circle are expected to remain the same for this coming year with a near full schedule of editions planned.
- l. The total General budget as discussed so far is \$1,064,342. There is anticipated income of \$150,000 and anticipated 1% local tax revenue of \$1,050,000. This represents an overall budget increase of 3.25%.
- m. Discussed the stormwater expense line. After some discussion about fees and programs that are charged to this line, Ms. Ashcroft moved to zero out the Highway budget line and add \$1000 to the proposed General budget line for a total of \$42,000. Ms. Russell seconded the motion. Mr. Denardo express concerns with this number being too low, after hearing what fees and programs are charged to this line. He suggested changing the line to \$45,000. After further discussion, the line was changed to \$45,000.
- n. Ms. Ashcroft discussed the increase in the building maintenance line for Town Hall. Mr. Denardo said this was due to the planning needed for the remodel of the downstairs area. Some of the increased cost will be used to hire some professional services to look at redesigning the space.
- o. Discussed adding a new line for maintenance of the Cemetery next to Town hall. This would be used to fund work needing to be done there. A fence will be needed at some point in the future but does not need to be included in this budget.
- p. The county tax numbers entered are based on the best estimates of the Town Treasurer.

Mr. Denardo moved to adjourn. Ms. Ashcroft seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Mr. Bill Sweet

11/16/2020

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Joshua C. Terenzini, Chairman

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Mary Ashcroft, Clerk

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John Paul Fignant

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Joseph Denardo

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Sharon Russell

Center Rutland, VT.