

**ASHLAND BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2014  
ASHLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
5:30 PM**

**MINUTES**

Chairman David Ruell called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM with a roll call.

Present: David Ruell, Dave Toth, Mardean Badger, Norm DeWolfe, Christine Cilley, Harold Lamos, Mark Scarano, Sandra Coleman

Alternates Present: Fran Newton, Rene Liebert

Absent with Notice: Jamie Lyford

Others present: Tim Paquette, Eli Badger, Susan MacLeod, Alice Staples, Sara Weinberg

**Land Use Boards**

01-4191-10-110 LU PT Assistant - The Land Use boards have requested an Administrative Assistant to deal with land use issues. The assistant will provide timely office support, reduce attorney fees, ensure that boards are kept up-to-date, provide effective and unbiased guidance for applicants, and facilitate communication between boards and departments. Legal counsel has advised the Planning and Zoning Boards that no voting member of a board should deal directly with applicants. S. MacLeod said that currently there is no one in the town hall who can assume the duties of the Administrative Assistant. E. Badger said that the boards originally asked for a 20 hour per week position at salary of \$20 an hour. The Select Board cut the position to 12 hours per week based on the anticipated initial workload and funding considerations. Part funding for the position will come from revenues from application fees.

01-4191-10-331 LU Legal - D. Ruell asked why the budget for legal fees has increased. S. MacLeod explained that the boards have incurred additional legal fees because of past mistakes but that an Administrative Assistant will help reduce legal fees by ensuring that processes are followed correctly.

01-4191-10-610 LU General Expenses - The General Expenses line covers the cost of minute taking. In prior years this expense was divided between the Planning Board and the Zoning Board but the lines were combined in 2013. The cost was based on an estimate of 12 meetings for ZBA and 20 meetings for the Planning Board.

**Department of Public Works**

10-4311-10-110 HA Salaries - T. Paquette asked the committee to consider realigning his salary with other department heads in the town and would like to see the salary in the mid \$50's. The Select board went with a 3% increase.

10-4311-10-115 HA Salaries OT - Selectmen cut this line based on 2014 actual spending.

10-4311-10-331 HA Training - This line shows an increase but was raised to the level proposed last year. The line was reduced as a result of the default budget.

## **Highways and Streets**

01-4312-20-411 HWY Heat - This line was increased by \$500 in anticipation of increased heating costs.

01-4312-20-430 HWY Equipment Maintenance - This line was increased by \$3,750 to cover increases in maintenance costs.

01-4312-20-450 HWY Vehicle Expenses - The increase of \$3,000 is based on actual expenses.

01-4312-20-491 HWY Garage Telephone - This line was increased by \$175 based on actual spending.

01-4312-20-614 HWY Uniforms - T. Paquette increased the line speculating on the new contract. Selectmen decreased the line based on actual costs.

01-4312-20-740 HWY Equipment - This line was increase by \$13,000 to cover the upgrade to digital radios. T. Paquette is applying for grants. DPW is part of public safety, especially in the winter and needs to be in communication with other town departments.

01-4312-20-612 HWY Winter Maintenance - T. Paquette said that this line has been overspent because of the harsh winter last year. Additionally, the cost of salt has gone up.

01-4312-20-640 HWY Building Expense - This line has been increased by \$800 based on anticipated expenses for doors and furnace repairs.**Mechanic – Street Lighting**

01-4314-10-610 MECH General Expense - This line has been increased by \$600 based on the amount requested in the previous budget.

01-4314-10-740 MECH Equipment - T. Paquette has shifted expenses from equipment to general expenses.

## **Transfer-Recycling**

01-4324-10-397 SWD T/R Landfill Testing – T. Paquette said that this line may be reduced once actual spending is determined.

01-4324-10-610 SWD T/R General – The Selectmen cut this line based on actual spending.

01-4324-40-560 SWD Solid Waste District Dues - T. Paquette said that we will not have a final figure until the district determines the dues for 2015 later this year.

01-4324-80-565 SWD T/R Hauling - This line was reduced based on current hauling trends. T. Paquette is concerned that the hauling fees will increase.

## **Library**

01-4550-10-110 Library Wages - Salary increases are based on the schedule developed by the library in 2014. The increase is \$0.25 an hour for all employees. There is both a cap and a minimum for each position.

0194550-10-610 Library General Expenses - Expenses for new computers are included in the budget.

The Library is planning on submitting a warrant article for \$25,000 for a new library.

### **General Discussion**

M. Scarano asked about revenues. N. DeWolfe said that the town is still working on revenue projections and the default budget. The town is also working on warrant articles.

The committee agreed to begin deliberation on the budget at the next meeting even though the revenue projection has not been completed. The committee also agreed to review the budget by department and identify areas of disagreement for further research and discussion.

The next meeting will be on November 6, 2014, at 5:30 p.m. in the Elementary School Library.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Toth