

Budget Committee Minutes

4:30pm Monday, March 13th, 2017, Vinalhaven Town Office

Present

Andy Dorr, Jocelyn McLean, Holly Sault (via telephone), Janann Sherman, Margaret Qualey, Gabe McPhail, Eric Davis, Delwyn Webster, Bill Alcorn

Minutes

Motion by Janann to approve the minutes from 3/6. Second: Bill. Vote 6-0-0. Motion passed.

Section Review & Discussion

1. Law Enforcement

Discussion- Service fees have increased this year. The computer service fee is new. Bill suggested contacting a local person, Levi Mootz, to help with IT work and potentially lower the cost of this. Andy: Again, we're working with sensitive information, and I went with a Maine Municipal Association approved company. We can potentially contact him to work with certain buildings. DMR transport is the biggest part of this section. Haven't seen a bill yet for it, but that doesn't mean we won't get one. We don't want to have a \$0 line for DMR transport, though, and be crippled when we need it.

Bill suggested to have a total of \$1,725 for this line- \$750 for 1 DMR trip, \$300 for towing charges, and \$675 for the computer service fees. Gabe pointed out that if there have already been three DMR trips this year, why would we only budget for one?

Motion by Bill to recommend a decrease of \$1,500 to a total of **\$1,725 for the Service Fees** line. Second: Margaret. Vote 5-1-0. Motion passed.

Margaret stated that she is opposed to paying for housing for the Deputy. It is a big expense. There was discussion about whether or not lodging and utilities should be paid on top of the current salary and island stipend. **Motion** by Bill to accept the recommended amount of **\$10,200 for Lodging**. Second: Margaret. Vote 4-2-0. Motion passed.

Regarding the Travel and Transportation line, Gabe asked why we are going with \$1,000. Bill proposed going with \$750 for this section. **Motion** by Bill to recommend a \$250

decrease to a total of **\$750 for Travel and Transportation**. Second: Gabe. Vote: 6-0-0. Motion passed.

Equipment repair is vehicle repairs. Margaret asked why the car isn't covered by Knox County. Andy: Because the vehicle is only for here, they won't cover it. The contract states that the town provides the vehicle and any maintenance or repair costs. Bill: How old is the vehicle? Andy: It's a 2014 or 2015. Eric noted that the deputy really needs to have a reliable vehicle. Andy also noted that the vehicle already has 50 or 60k miles on it. **Motion** by Bill to recommend a decrease of \$1,000 to a total of **\$2,000 for Equipment Repair**. Second: Delwyn. Vote: 4-2-0. Motion passed.

Andy stated that there has been a huge decrease in the Supplies budget to a proposed total of \$500. **Motion** by Bill to accept the recommended amount of **\$500 for Supplies**. Second: Gabe. Vote: 6-0-0. Motion passed.

Delwyn stated that he is opposed to the gas bill. The car is often left idling which costs the town money. **Motion** by Gabe to accept the recommended amount of **\$5,000 for Gas and Oil**. Second: Janann. Vote: 5-1-0. Motion passed.

Margaret stated she is opposed entirely to the utilities section. **Motion** by Bill to recommend a decrease of \$1,000 to a total of **\$4,500 for Utilities**. Second: Janann. Vote: 4-2-0. Motion passed.

Motion by Bill to accept the recommended amount of **\$2,040 for Telephone**. Second: Janann. Vote 4-2-0. Motion passed.

This is a 40 hour a week position. Andy mentioned that other towns are starting to contract with counties now for law enforcement services. Bill asked about the Island Stipend of \$5,200. There was agreement that it is a way to entice people to take the job. Margaret: Does that get paid to the County? Andy: The 91k includes the stipend. Eric: I can see why it's difficult to get people to do this job; living here is a big adjustment. Margaret noted how awful it was when there was no deputy here. Andy: The benefit of having a resident officer is the follow up is better; it's not just passed on to the next person. Bill: Is it possible to have discretion over the amount of overtime? Andy: You can recommend to cut back the amount of hours. Bill expressed concern that after a while overtime gets built into the salary and people start to expect it. Andy: The selectmen can reduce the hours if they want to. Andy noted that the current Deputy really works as a community police officer, in many ways keeping the peace, and is a great asset to the island. It was mentioned how much he helped out during the February snowstorm, and that he often will patrol and let public works know if there is a dangerous spot on the road. Andy also mentioned that he can't be everywhere at once

and that people need to call when there's a problem, because otherwise he won't be aware of it.

Bill made a suggestion to reduce half of the stipend. Gabe expressed concern with the benefits, and in the future addressing the housing and utilities instead of the stipend. Can see enticing with a stipend but housing and utilities seem a bit excessive. Bill would like to find out what the past overtime amounts have been. It was agreed to address the overtime next year.

Motion by Janann to accept the recommended amount of **\$85,000 for Contracted Services**. Second: Gabe. Vote: 4-2-0. Motion passed.

The Budget Committee has recommended an overall decrease of \$5,725 to a total of \$111,725 for the Law Enforcement section.

2. Insurance

Discussion- \$500 was added for Road Treatment after the fact. This covers the town in case of claims of damaged water sources due to road treatments. Delwyn: Does this cover vehicle deterioration? Andy: No. Delwyn: how many miles of road does this cover? Andy: There are about 40 miles of public road at \$13.50/mile.

Bill noted that there was an increase in general insurance. Andy: Marjorie always budgeted for 10% increase. It generally falls between 6-8% and varies from year to year. We saved \$10k by switching to MMA Property and Casualty Pool.

There was an explanation of the contingency in the Workers comp section. Andy: We don't want to under-budget this; there is no way to predict what it will be. It was noted that unemployment is based on the previous year.

Airport coverage was new last year. The airport property was covered as town property but not for use as an airstrip. Margaret noted that Penobscot Island Air must be covered. Andy: Yes but the airstrip itself is not. Margaret asked if this all goes to one insurance company. Andy: all except the airstrip which is covered by J Edward Knight. The rest is through MMA.

There was a consensus that the road treatment insurance is not necessary right now.

Motion by Gabe to accept the recommended amount of \$71,800. Second: Bill. Vote: 6-0-0. Motion passed.

3. Donations

Discussion- Andy didn't put his recommendations in this section. Margaret stated she doesn't believe the town should be giving donations. Andy mentioned the Memorial Day donation covers flags and markers for graves. Gabe stated she dislikes the idea of buying disposable flags; wishes there was a more sustainable way, like taking the flags up later in the season instead of just throwing them out. Eric stated he will bring this up to the cemetery committee to consider taking flags up and reusing them. There was agreement to set the **Memorial Day donation at \$1,400** this year.

Penquis Cap provides central heating, child & adult food, & low income home energy assistance to people in need. The request was made by the organization for a donation of \$629. Gabe proposed honoring this request. There was agreement to set the **Penquis Cap donation at \$629.**

The Surplus Food donation last year was set at \$500. It was agreed to set the **Surplus Food donation at \$550.**

Life Flight requested \$1 per island resident, divided by two. The committee agreed to set the **Life Flight donation at \$1,000.**

New Hope for Women provides support for abused women. Last year the organization requested \$500. It was agreed to set the **New Hope for Women donation at \$500.**

Penobscot East does research on lobsters, scallops & ground fish, and does the Eastern Maine Skippers Program. Holly mentioned that the Skippers program is very important. Bill: improving the ocean catch is also very important. Gabe: As a town, are we going to donate based on requests, or based on the work the organization does? Margaret: Donations shouldn't be a tax burden- working people can donate to these organizations but people on fixed incomes shouldn't be forced to. Gabe: Moving forward, who are we supporting?

It was decided to further discuss and finish up this section at the next meeting.

4. Next Week's Agenda

- * Donations
- * Harbor Master
- * Library
- * Transfer Station
- * Schedule additional meeting
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Adjourn

Motion by Gabe to adjourn the meeting at 6:15pm. Second: Bill. Vote: 6-0-0.
Motion passed.

Next meeting will be Monday, March 20th at 4:30pm

Additional Notes: