

Budget Committee Minutes

4:30pm Monday, March 20th, 2017, Vinalhaven Town Office

Present

Andy Dorr, Jocelyn McLean, Holly Sault, Janann Sherman, Gabe McPhail, Eric Davis, Delwyn Webster

Minutes

Motion by Gabe to approve the minutes from 3/13 as amended. Second: Janann. Vote 5-0-0. Motion passed.

Introduction

There was discussion regarding correcting the minutes from March 13th. The telephone section of Law Enforcement was missing the second to the motion. It was agreed Janann was who seconded this. There was also discussion about the flags for the cemetery on Memorial Day. Eric spoke with the cemetery committee and the flags are meant to be disposable, and are fairly inexpensive.

Section Review & Discussion

1. Donations

Discussion- Janann: Donations are not appropriate, unless it's traditional and the town has been doing it for many years. Andy: The Memorial donation could potentially be a part of the cemetery account. Gabe: Is there any way surplus food could be part of General Assistance? Andy: No, these are two very different programs and surplus food is its own entity. This donation just covers the ferry tickets for the organization. Janann asked what Penobscot East does. Gabe: It's a marine research program. Andy: The organization studies marine resources in Maine.

Gabe: Is it appropriate as a town to be deciding on donations? Holly: How many people on the island are these organizations serving? Andy explained how different towns handle donations differently; some don't do donations at all, and some put a cap on the total amount the town can give. Eric: Should we go with the amounts we already approved and drop the others? Holly asked if the donation requests were ongoing or if they send them during a certain time of year. Andy: they generally align with their fiscal year.

Motion by Gabe to recommend moving the memorial donation to the Cemetery Account. Second: Delwyn. Vote 5-0-0. Motion passed.

Gabe stated that she feels donations should be cut from the budget. Janann agreed and mentioned that there are too many decisions to be made regarding donations. It was noted that a lot of time is spent on this section and there isn't agreement across the board whether this is something the town should even be doing or not.

Motion by Gabe to recommend cutting donations from the budget entirely. Second: Delwyn. Vote 4-1-0. Motion passed.

Holly noted that she disagrees that it should be cut entirely; this is something that should be revisited in the future.

2. Harbor Master

Discussion- Delwyn brought in a report on Stonington's Harbor Master position. It was noted that the Harbor Master there receives much higher pay and has more dedicated hours. There is also an assistant to the Harbor Master.

Janann asked if Stonington is a comparable harbor to Vinalhaven. Andy: We're second only to them for landings in Maine; the harbor has a majority of working vessels. Janann: What fees do we collect? Andy: none. Gabe: What has been recommended by the Harbor Committee? Andy: They've suggested no fishing in the harbor, a different tie-up system based on the length/size of boats. Janann asked again about fees, and noted that the people who are using the harbor should be the ones paying for it. Andy: this section is all covered by boat registrations; it's not coming from taxes. It was noted that this section doesn't use all of the revenue the town receives from boat registrations. The excess revenue goes into the general fund.

Dell noted that how Stonington runs their harbor should be considered; and that with a more serious position with a higher salary rules could be better enforced.

Motion by Gabe to accept the recommended amount of \$13,705, with a side-note that if the Board of Selectmen choose to increase this up to the full amount of the expected revenue (\$18,000), the committee would support that also. Second: Janann. Vote 4-1-0. Motion passed.

3. Library

Discussion- Andy mentioned that the library gets a lot of support from the Friends of the Library. Eric: do we know how many donations they get? Andy: The library income line shows donations but we don't know about what the Friends of the Library collect. Eric: in the past they didn't want that amount known so the budget wouldn't be cut. Andy noted that the relationship between a library and a town is an interesting one. Some libraries are private; they are generally run as a separate entity from the town. Janann noted that the insurance is up from last year. Andy: there was an amount of time last year, when Valerie was out, and after she passed, that no employee was receiving that benefit, so last year's amount does seem lower. Gabe noted that service fees have gone up. Andy: In addition to the computer fees, a professional cleaning service that should be an annual thing hasn't been done in many years, so that has been added. Andy noted that the books & magazines have been reduced, with the Librarian's approval, as the full budgeted amounts haven't been used in the past.

In the Utilities section, it was noted that there is no water meter on the building, so the town's sewer fees are based on a flat rate instead of actual consumption. Gabe made a suggestion to look into the equivalent metered cost to see if that would be more cost effective than the current situation.

Delwyn made a recommendation to see what an air to air heat pump would cost- his understanding is that it is cheaper to heat with than fuel.

There was agreement that the \$400 water line should be removed, since the library has a well.

Motion by Janann to accept the recommended amount of \$92,195 (with the \$400 water expense taken out). Second: Delwyn. Vote: 5-0-0. Motion passed.

4. Transfer Station

Discussion- Andy: The \$2,000 in equipment is there as a contingency. Last year we budgeted for a camera system/portable scales; neither have been bought yet. Gabe: What are the shop supplies? Andy: things like shrink wrap, any small tools needed.

Andy: Gas & Oil decreased by \$200. Gabe: Do they burn waste oil for heat at all? Andy: no, it's a monitor. Gabe: Are waste oil burning units expensive? There was agreement that they are expensive. Andy: another alternative could be using a heat pump for that space.

There was an increase in metal. In 2015 the town budgeted for 26 trips, but ended up having 42 trips. Gabe posed the question of whether in an ideal world, fees would pay for this, and if the solid waste committee should look into increasing fees. She also noted that the solid waste committee will look into ways to reduce the cost for taxpayers. There is an increase in hazardous waste; Andy is proposing \$10,000 to begin transporting the ash from the burn pile to the mainland. The PPE section has gone up. Following the safety audit this year, there is personal protective equipment that needs to be provided.

Motion by Janann to accept the recommended amount of \$357,565.

Second: Gabe. Vote: 5-0-0. Motion passed.

5. Next Week's Agenda

Monday

- * Planning
- * Debt Service
- * Administration
- * Town Property
- * Contingency

Tuesday

- * Public Works
- * Capital Projects

Adjourn

Motion by Holly to adjourn the meeting at 6pm. Second: Delwyn. Vote: 5-0-0
Motion passed.

Next meeting will be **Monday, March 27th at 4:30pm**

An additional meeting has been scheduled for **Tuesday, March 28th, at 4:30pm**