

Budget Committee Minutes

5:00pm Wednesday, February 14th, 2018, Vinalhaven Town Office

Present- Andy Dorr, Bill Alcorn, Janann Sherman, Holly Sault, Eric Davis, Gabe McPhail, Jocelyn McLean, and Lucy McCarthy via teleconference phone. Del Webster and Margaret Qualey were both absent.

Minutes – Motion by Bill to approve the minutes from the February 1st meeting. **Second** by Janann, **Vote:** All in favor; **Motion carried.**

Section Review & Discussion

Selectmen- Proposal to drop budget to \$3,000 by eliminating \$500 contingency. There was a question as to how salaries compare to that of other towns. Andy: it ranges from town to town; a lot depends on the work load of selectmen and if they have additional duties (on board of assessors, etc). It was noted that there is no reduction for missed meetings. **Motion** by Janann to recommend the proposed amount of \$3,000. **Second** by Gabe. **Vote:** All in favor; **Motion carried.**

Assessor- Increase from FY18 to FY19. It was noted that this year the town has an island resident in this position, which makes hours more flexible and ability to do extra work/projects. The town assessment is higher than the State assessment so Wes has spent extra time looking into this, and working to identify any discrepancies to avoid revaluation--which can be very expensive. He has also been spending time reviewing properties in tree growth and working with property owners to comply with state regulations. Andy is proposing more time devoted to this position to complete these extra tasks. Proposing increase from 10 hours per week to 15. Bill asked about service fees and TRIO. Andy explained it's our software system that has different modules for different departments; the sketch module enables creating basic sketches of properties/building and is also good for CEO uses. Lucy asked for clarification about recommendations-15 hours per week? Andy: this would allow up to 15 hours, if needed. Multiple members agreed 15 hours would be appropriate given the work load and projects. Wages would be \$25,158 for 15 hours per week. Total for department would be \$29,183 including increased wage line. **Motion** by Janann to recommend the proposed amount of \$29,183. **Second** by Gabe. **Vote:** All in favor; **Motion carried.**

Legal Services- No proposed change from last year. Lucy asked about the status of a current legal case. Still waiting for final hearing. **Motion** by Gabe to recommend the proposed amount of \$15,000. **Second** by Eric. **Vote:** All in favor; **Motion carried.**

General Assistance- Proposed decrease of \$3,000. Andy explained there hasn't been the usage in recent years, also can statutorily over expend if it is absolutely needed. **Motion** by Lucy to recommend the proposed amount of \$3,000. **Second** by Gabe. **Vote:** All in favor; **Motion carried.**

Contingency- Proposed elimination of this line; Andy explained how contingency is redundant. **Motion** by Janann to recommend eliminating this line. **Second** by Gabe. **Vote:** All in favor; **Motion carried.**

Wage Sheet- The Maine Municipal salary survey was used to compare wages across communities. Can see ranges between highest and lowest wage paid in certain positions. Noted librarian, assistant librarian, and deputy clerk a slight increase (all less than \$1/hr) to get closer to median and be more in line with standards. Aside from those, 2% increase across the board.

Andy mentioned the potential constable position being considered by the selectmen; combined harbor master, animal control, & general ordinance enforcement. There are no other towns that currently have a similar type of position. Another option would be to increase Knox County deputy coverage. Potential wage rates for this were discussed, as well as the difficulty in attracting people to accept a position with low pay without offering some sort of benefits. There is still the question about whether this would be a seasonal position or not. Discussion also included how this type of position might be a better fit for what the community wants, rather than more deputy coverage. Also, potential economic return from fines/ fees being collected. It was noted how quality of life is affected when ordinances aren't enforced, and this position would be a town employee so there could be more oversight/control of enforcement. May have to increase the potential wage but could be possible to find someone. Gabe asked about qualifications, and Andy explained the training & classes that may be involved. Lucy asked about having a job description drawn up by selectmen/town office. It was noted again how Stonington manages their harbor, and the revenue it generates. Andy also explained cost of an island-based law enforcement department (another option); estimated about 400k a year- this is not currently being considered.

Agenda for next meeting

Next meeting will be held Wednesday, February 21st at 5pm. Topics to be discussed will be determined by early next week.

Adjourn

Motion by Janann to adjourn the meeting at 6:15 pm. **Second** by Gabe. **Vote:** All in favor; **Motion carried.**