

Town of Milton
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
October 25, 2022

ATTENDANCE:

Members: Laura Turgeon (Chair), Bob Carrier, Mike Beaulieu, Lisa Gautreau, Humphrey Williams, Stephanie Mills, Kimberly Ward; Absent: Peg Hurd.

Staff: Pat Smith – Public Works Department, Clarence Nason – Public Works Department

Laura Turgeon, Chair, opened the session at 6:00PM.

1.) Pledge of Allegiance: Laura Turgeon, Chair, led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2.) Roll Call:

- a. Ms. Turgeon, Chair, led the roll call of members to determine if a quorum was present. Laura Turgeon (Chair), Mike Beaulieu, Humphrey Williams, Stephanie Mills, Kimberly Ward, Bob Carrier. A quorum was present. Note: Lisa Gautreau joined the meeting after the roll call was taken.

3.) Review / Approve Minutes:

Minutes of October 11, 2022:

Mr. Williams motioned to approve the October 11, 2022, minutes with corrections. Ms. Gautreau seconded the motion.

All were in favor- **Laura Turgeon, Lisa Gautreau, Humphrey Williams, Mike Beaulieu, Stephanie Mills, Kimberly Ward, Bob Carrier** voted Yes. **Mike Beaulieu** abstained. **Motion Carried – 7/ 0/ 0.**

4.) BC Business Conduct and Participation:

Discussion with Pat Smith – Public Works regarding the 2023 budget proposal. Ms. Turgeon thanked Mr. Smith for attending the meeting. Mr. Williams has worked closely with Mr. Smith regarding the budgets for Government Buildings, Highway and Solid Waste. The focus has been on ways to bring these budgets down. Mr. Williams noted there were just a few areas where the Budget Committee had recommendations to reduce the budget.

Proposed Budget Changes:

- a.) Operating Supplies – default based on a recommendation from BOS was reduced to \$37,500 by decreasing \$24,500 from the gravel line-item (due to ARPA funds & available road construction money). Mr. Smith said the big increase in this area is primarily due to the winter sand costs – with a 40% increase the cost will be ~\$35,000 which will leave \$2,500 remaining for the signs line. Mr. Smith significantly reduced his overtime line-item – from \$44,000 down to \$26,000. But noted If there is a hard winter, it would have a major impact on this line. Mr. Smith explained that having a bottom-line budget, he would be able to adjust another line to increase the overtime line if needed. Mr. Williams said 2023 will not be an easy year and additional budget adjustments will occur. Mr. Smith noted they try to buy supplies in bulk as much as possible to save money.
- b.) Equipment Maintenance – Originally submitted at \$75,000 (maintenance of vehicles) which

was a 50% increase over last year's budget. Mr. Williams suggested a 20% increase and acknowledged there will be a lot of maintenance especially for the dump trucks.

Mr. Williams – longevity lines were added to the budget (also to other departments budgets). Overtime was not added as a separate line-item. Mr. Smith – Government Buildings FT salary - additional \$5,000- covers two positions for plowing & snow removal in downtown area. Highway overtime was reduced to \$26,000 (from \$44,000). Solid Waste overtime - \$2,000.

Mr. Williams – Government Buildings budget – 1.01% increase; Highway – 2.93% increase; and Solid Waste 1.82% decrease. Total increase for Mr. Smith's three departments is under 2% at 1.69%.

Mr. Carrier asked for clarification on why the department secretary's position went to full-time. Mr. Smith said the position now includes 12 hours work for the BOS as their role as Cemetery Trustees and provides administrative support. Mr. Williams also addressed a question submitted by Mr. Carrier regarding an equipment purchase through Seacoast Security – an invoice that was submitted for \$1,995. Mr. Smith said because there were several break-ins, he needed to purchase security cameras both at the transfer station and highway department. This invoice was for the equipment and installation.

Clarification for the Sullivan Tire charges for Transfer Station equipment maintenance – Mr. Smith said he is trying to get a more accurate view of costs. He said another contributing factor to this line being over is due to BOS contract for groundwater monitoring at Lockhart Field. Mr. Williams – this will be an annual contract – as this is a state requirement it will be a default item under the Town Administrator's Contract Services line-item.

Ms. Turgeon and the Budget Committee thanked Mr. Smith for attending the meeting. Ms. Ward questioned the status of the various Prime accounts used for some purchasing. Mr. Williams – they will be looking to change this to just one Prime account with multiple users which will help to reduce costs.

Mr. Williams – Regarding the Milton Public Library – in reviewing the various RSA's, the Library personnel are not town employees. While the Library Trustees control salaries and costs, the Budget Committee determines the actual budget. The Trustees determine how they want to spend the money. Mr. Beaulieu pointed out there are two public libraries – one at Nute High School and the Milton Free Public Library; the statute says the town should fund only one library. Mr. Williams – the library at the school is funded as a separate entity. Mr. Carrier – the library is not essential to running the government. Ms. Turgeon – definitely not two libraries. Mr. Williams agreed; it is a service to the community and are required to provide funding for a public library.

Ms. Turgeon asked if the committee members were ready to vote on the budgets submitted by Pat Smith or if additional review was needed? Mr. Beaulieu felt comfortable and also reminded the members Mr. Smith had said if additional monies were needed (due to impact of hard winter) he would approach the BOS first.

Ms. Turgeon asked for a motion to vote on the three budgets submitted by Pat Smith – Highway, Solid Waste and Government Buildings. Mr. Beaulieu motioned to approve the budgets. Seconded by Ms. Gautreau. Mr. Carrier requested the motion include specific breakdown per budget. Mr. Beaulieu amended his original motion.

Mr. Beaulieu motioned to approve \$282,000 for Government Buildings. Ms. Gautreau seconded the motion. All were in favor - **Kimberly Ward, Mike Beaulieu, Lisa Gautreau, Humphrey Williams, Stephanie Mills, Bob Carrier, Ms. Turgeon** voted Yes. **Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

Mr. Beaulieu motioned to approve \$768,110 for Highway. Ms. Gautreau seconded the motion. All were in favor - **Kimberly Ward, Mike Beaulieu, Lisa Gautreau, Humphrey Williams, Stephanie Mills, Bob Carrier, Ms. Turgeon** voted Yes. **Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

Mr. Beaulieu motioned to approve \$219,545 for Solid Waste. Ms. Gautreau seconded the motion. All were in favor - **Kimberly Ward, Mike Beaulieu, Lisa Gautreau, Humphrey Williams, Stephanie Mills, Bob Carrier, Ms. Turgeon** voted Yes. **Motion Carried – 7 / 0 / 0**

Additional Budget Discussion/Clarifications: Legal Services for lawsuit – regarding Three Ponds Investment LLC. Some charges have been adjusted. This is the type of charge that is not typically anticipated. Professional Services – Recording Secretary charges are typically charged under Contract Services – line-item adjustments. Expenses for Vachon (audit) should also be charged to Contract Services – this will also be adjusted. Geo Insight (under TA line-item) – Mr. Williams will get clarification where expenses should be charged.

5.) Town Expenditure Reports:

Mr. Williams sent the reports to the members prior to the meeting. Currently the town is at the 75% mark for the year. Without encumbered funds and warrants, the town is under the budget. This is major considering additional charges for this year which the town never had previously.

Projected charges:

Fire Department expenditures – projected \$170,000 over.

Planning Board currently over – some of this will be taken care of with the capital reserve.

Sewer Department – will be addressed through their funding.

Solid Waste – projected to be over – 84% spent.

Town Clerk – \$16,000 paid out for previous Town Clerk. According to TA there are town employees currently with large amount of vacation time due to them. Upon town employees' retirement, they are entitled to cashing in unused leave time. Will be tracking a new line-item to help determine the associated costs for the leave of town employees. This must be accounted for so the same situation with the previous Town Clerk does not occur in the future. Ms. Turgeon – this is for town employees, not elected officials. Mr. Williams – the line-item will be under Insurance and Benefits. Mr. Beaulieu – this money should be put away so there is not a big hit when this happens. A smart budget standpoint would account for this.

Cemetery – maintenance is done for the year. Expenditures to date projected \$12,950.

Mr. Carrier – regarding Cemetery: Cemetery Trustees – Warrant Articles rules and regulations.

Mr. Katwick had suggested the town hiring a sexton. Mr. Williams – the town is now paying the public works secretary an additional 12 hours per week to take care of administrative duties – this is not paid out of the Cemetery budget. Previously these costs would have come from the Cemetery budget. The \$12,950 only covers contracted services. 2021 Town Report shows the budget breakdown for the year and income covered including perpetual care. The town is responsible for 18 cemeteries – with that the \$12,950 is not going to be able to cover everything. Ms. Turgeon is confused why the town is responsible for Milton's family plots? Mr. Williams – the town is not responsible for them. There are four cemeteries with perpetual care plots the town maintains – Milton Mills, Union, Plummer & Silver Street. Mr. Carrier believes the town does need a sexton to help manage them. Mr. Williams – the BOS is looking into a sexton; have received training from Mr. Katwick; added administrative hours; and worked to account for other expenses. This amounted to \$12,950. This does not account for funding the town might receive. Mr. Williams acknowledged there are other questions and additional information still needed. If Mr. Katwick or other Cemetery Trustees have questions or concerns, he needs to share directly with the BOS. Ms. Turgeon – how does a family plot also have perpetual care? Mr. Carrier – for \$600 cost of the plot, \$200 goes automatically to perpetual care. The Trustees adjust yearly from the perpetual care interest to pay for that upkeep. Mr. Carrier – the BOS does not have the time to take care of this and should hire a sexton. Mr. Williams – the BOS will continue to look at this. Because hiring a sexton means creating a new position and paying for that position, the town cannot do this without putting this forward as a Warrant Article for a town vote. There is no mandate requiring the town have a sexton.

Mr. Williams – prior to 2016, average budget increase was over 7%. The last couple of years, everything has been kept in check. Last year the budget increase was at just over 2%. For the upcoming year, what was currently proposed from department heads was 7% above the operating budget and 4.64% above the default. After review and adjustments, the increase is now 1.46% over last year's budget, while remaining below the default. The meeting next month with the School Board is critical especially regarding the 2% cap and their budget represents 2/3 of the total budget. It will be important to understand what the School's needs are and what the wants are. Services still need to be maintained. Ms. Turgeon – it's important to emphasize any budget adjustments will not cut services to the town nor to the residents. Mr. Williams – to add any new services, they need to be via warrant article and give the town the right to accept or reject those new services.

- 6.) School Expenditure Report, Revenue and Grant Reports:** Ms. Hurd was unable to attend the meeting. Mr. Beaulieu pointed out the school is currently overspent in most areas – as this is early in the budget, this could be a problem. Ms. Turgeon is hopeful things will level out as the year progresses. Mr. Williams – it's important to understand the first two months of the budget (July and August) reflects the salaries are spread out over 12 months even the school season is only for 10 months. While not always, this typically would even out. Mr. Beaulieu noted the overages are more than just the salary lines. Ms. Turgeon – appears they have overspent on digital books, math curriculum, and may have moved things to other line-items. The Budget Committee needs to better understand why they are moving things around. This will be addressed during the November joint meeting between the Budget Committee and School Board. She suggested providing questions and concerns ahead of this meeting to the School Board to help them

prepare. As they do budget one year ahead, Ms. Turgeon is curious what the school will be asking for the 2023-2024 budget. Ms. Turgeon would like to have a better understanding of what over-encumbered means. Mr. Williams – this can be confusing. The School Board is anticipating costs for the over-encumbered line-item. The school encumbrance is different than a town encumbrance. It is important to understand how they define and use an encumbrance. Their fiscal year is July 1st to June 30th.

Ms. Turgeon would like the school setup their contract services like the town currently does. Ms. Hurd has requested Mr. Williams help adjust the spreadsheets to accommodate this. Mr. Williams – looking at the totals, the school expense is 16.74% at 25% of the year. Overall, they are under budget. The School Board budget will be supplied to Budget Committee members prior to the joint meeting.

Mr. Beaulieu pointed out the town should provide hard copy of needed documents; electronic is an option.

7.) Other business that may come before the board:

a.) There was none.

8.) Public Comments or Questions on Budget Committee Meeting Topics: There was none.

9.) Next Meetings: November 17, 2022 – Joint meeting with BOS and November 29, 2022 - Joint meeting with School Board (at Nute)

10.) Adjournment:

- a. Ms. Turgeon stated she would entertain a motion to conclude the meeting.
- b. Ms. Gautreau motioned to adjourn at 7:56PM; Seconded by Ms. Ward. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Winslow-Weiss, Recording Secretary – Budget Committee