

**TOWN OF BEDFORD  
TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES  
November 2, 2019  
BEDFORD MEETING ROOM  
10 MEETINGHOUSE ROAD**

**ROLL CALL:** A budget workshop of the Bedford Town Council was held on Saturday, November 2, 2019 at the Bedford Meeting Room, 10 Meetinghouse Rd. Present were Bill Duschatko (Chairman), Melissa Stevens (Vice Chair), and Councilors Denise Ricciardi, Phil Greazzo, Dave Gilbert, Chris Bandazian, and Catherine Rombeau. Also present was Town Manager Rick Sawyer and Finance Director Tammy Penny.

Chairman Duschatko opened the meeting at approximately 8:00 AM.

Supervisors of the Checklist – Joan McMahan, Beverly Yuksel

Ms. McMahan stated that all three Supervisor of the Checklist positions were going to be up in March; a 2-year, 4-year and a 6-year. Both Barbara Chagnon and Beverly are planning to run. She has been in this position for 13 years and she's not going to run.

The budget includes staff hours for four elections, training, postage, office supplies, miscellaneous, which includes advertising for the elections. They have also requested a \$1.00/hour increase in wages. They didn't request an increase last year.

Councilor Bandazian questioned the large increase in wages compared to 2016 when there were also four elections. Ms. McMahan explained that the number of undeclared voters has increased, which requires a lot of time as far as reporting and entering the information into the computer as well as the number of registered votes has increased.

Town Clerk – Sally Kellar

Councilor Stevens asked about the \$500 for custodian for each election. Ms. Kellar stated that it's not a flat fee. It depends on how many custodians are working to get done what needs to get done. Councilor Stevens wanted to know if the school determines how many custodians and Ms. Kellar wasn't sure. She was going on invoices she's found from past elections. Mr. Sawyer explained that Public Works usually does the set up and take down, but if there is a snowstorm then they rely on the school to help out, so it's weather dependent. Also, for a general election, there is no school in session so the Town pays 100% of the cost, but in March for the local election, school is in session and the Town and School split the cost.

Ms. Kellar stated that her first year as Town Clerk has gone well. She attended her first Town Clerks Association meeting. She's looking to get more training next year that's offered and maybe attend another conference. All the training she's had so far for elections and vital records has been great.

Councilor Bandazian wanted to know if the use of the counter clerks had been fairly stable as far as dog licenses. Ms. Kellar stated that she's there most of the time, but there is one counter clerk that does vital records. If they are doing a motor vehicle registration they do offer to register the dog too. Sometimes they prefer to go see her, but it all depends. Mr. Sawyer thought it had been a great year. The newer window clerks have been fantastic at helping and this and Sally with the transition. It's been a wonderful year with that relationship inside the building.

#### Cemetery Trustees – David Bailey (Chairman), Art Alden (Secretary)

Mr. Bailey mentioned that there was a \$500/year stipend for the secretary as he does the recording for all of the meetings and all the record keeping. Property Repairs and Maintenance includes mowing contract, stone repair for Back River Road cemetery, tree and stump removal. Mr. Bailey stated that they returned 55% of their budget back to the Town from lot sales.

Councilor Stevens wanted to know what they are using a metal detector for. Mr. Bailey explained that that's how they find the medallions that mark the graves.

Councilor Ricciardi mentioned all the work the Cemetery Trustees do. Mr. Bailey noted that trustee Steve Wiggin is very handy and is able to do a lot of repairs, which saves the Town money and also the Highway Department helps out sometimes. Mr. Sawyer mentioned that they do a lot of work behind the scenes that nobody sees.

#### Planning – Becky Hebert

Ms. Hebert highlighted some 2019 projects including the 2020 master plan, which she hopes to have a draft copy by the end of the year.

Ms. Hebert stated that the 2020 Planning budget was similar to last year's with no significant increases. There is a reduction of \$18,500 over last year's capital reserve deposit due to the shift in the timing for the next master plan update. They want to align the 2030 master plan update with the census. Mr. Sawyer stated that it was also a recommendation by the Planning Board to delay the 2030 master plan.

Mr. Sawyer explained that in the capital improvements plan where they typically save for the master plan, instead of just increasing the amount that they would save, because they have more years to save, he didn't budget anything for the 2020 budget. They will probably start in two years to save for the 2032 master plan if that's the date they are targeting, to delay it by two years. It may end up being three years depending on how they see the census data roll out.

Chairman Duschatko wanted Ms. Hebert to comment on her revenue projections. Ms. Hebert stated that the revenue projections are based on the amount of permit application fees they anticipate from the land use boards. They are estimates. It's hard to determine an exact amount.

Mr. Sawyer stated that they increased Planning Board by \$10k based on historical revenues that have come into that. They still have a bit of a historical situation going on with the Planning Board, Zoning Board, and the Historic District Commission where their revenue funds go into a separate stand-alone account and then they withdraw the amount that is budgeted. There are a little bit of savings in those accounts, which is why they feel comfortable being able to take an extra \$10k from that account. He thought it made sense in a future budget to eliminate those special funds and just have those revenues roll in as part of the regular general fund budget.

#### Assessing – Bill Ingalls

Mr. Ingalls stated that there was a new line in the budget labeled Maintenance Contract in the amount of \$1,115, which is the assessor's share of the Ricoh printer contract for the downstairs printer/copier. They are assuming 20% of that overall budget based on their use of the copy machine. Mr. Ingalls stated that monies were set aside under the capital reserve deposits for the next upcoming valuation update currently scheduled for the year 2021 continuing their program of updating assessed values every other year.

Mr. Sawyer stated that when he presented the Capital Improvement Plan 5-6 weeks ago, he included funding for a future full measure and list 10 years out. After further conversations with Bill, and Bill speaking with other communities, they've decided that they don't believe they need to plan on doing that in 10 years and maybe never. Based on how DRA has been working with other communities and especially how good our data is and how good of a job our team does, they don't believe they will be asked to do a full measure and list and they don't feel they need to put those costs onto the taxpayer if they aren't going to have to do it.

Mr. Ingalls stated that the overhead change detection flyovers they did this time helped them pick up and remove a great deal of properties and improve their accuracy. They are next scheduled to do that as part of their update program in 2022. They want to give a few years' time to be sure there are enough changes to eliminate or add. This is in addition to all of the work they do in the field. They look at approximately 1,000 parcels a year on a regular basis.

Councilor Stevens wanted to know if each department was taking care of their own copier. Ms. Penny explained about all of the copiers being used by the different departments and the one downstairs that is used by Planning, Finance and Assessing, so they split those costs.

#### Public Works – Jeff Foote, DPW Director

- Building Maintenance - Peter Barbuto

Mr. Foote stated that it is somewhat level funded except for the \$500k that the Town Manager put in for the Fire substation.

Mr. Sawyer explained that that line item was there for any design work that they may want to do for any facility work going forward. They could also remove it and include it as part of any bond if they were to think about a larger request. They could roll this into the bond and not do it as part of the regular appropriation. It's in this budget because the Capital Improvement Plan line item for facilities design build that the Council discussed at length last year is appropriated to this line item in the budget. They still have the mix of capital budget and general fund budget. They are trying to be separated, but the easiest way to present the budget to the Council was to show these together. So this is really a capital request that is showing up in the regular appropriation discussion. Hopefully next year they can have two different budgets; one for capital and one for the rest of the appropriations, so they can see them separately.

Councilor Gilbert stated that if they took the \$500k out, their budget is very representative of last year.

Mr. Sawyer stated that the only increase would have been in the capital reserve deposit. The Library parking lot has \$34k in it to bring that full appropriation up to \$150k. They call it the Library parking, but it's also for Town Hall and BCTV as well.

Mr. Foote explained that there was an item that even though it's a winter maintenance obligation, it comes out of facilities. Its \$45k for a sand shed, which is required as part of the MS4 permit. So they've reduced the winter maintenance budget by the same amount.

Mr. Sawyer mentioned other items in the capital reserve including Town-wide security upgrades and future Transfer Station improvements.

Councilor Stevens wanted to know if they could earmark the \$500k as something they may want to drop off. Mr. Sawyer stated that the Council could take that out if they were going to move forward with some kind of bond request for facilities overall or they could just take it out if they don't want to move forward with any design work in 2020. They have some options.

Chairman Duschatko wanted to know when that gets taken out as unexpended appropriations and Mr. Sawyer replied as soon as he can't justify it any longer. He's hopeful that they can at least justify that they are doing some work either with marketing or coming up with graphics to present to the public for a facilities conversations that they might roll out at community wide meetings over the next few weeks or months before Town meeting if they did choose to put a larger request forward.

- Public Works Administration – Denise Nobert

Ms. Penny explained that the extra pay period in 2020 will be about a 3.8% increase on all departments. Mr. Sawyer stated that in the regular wage line and the percentage looks higher than they normally expect it to be, it's because they are paying for an extra 80 hours across the board. This year the extra time earned is at the end of 2019, but

they don't get paid for it until 2020. They are going to change it for next time, so they budget for when the time is earned and not when the paychecks come out.

Mr. Foote stated that there is an increase in conferences and training. They have a new GIS CAD technician and it's going to be beneficial to the community as far as residents being able to use the website, it will be more transparent, and more information on it. The MS4 is costing the Town a lot of money. As part of that, they are going to improve their organization and ability to communication with the public. The GIS mapping and the information that can be supplied by a good updated system is beneficial to the community. They want to expand it even more to show more of what they do on a daily basis. They need training for folks to be able to realize those needs and goals.

- Local Road Maintenance – Denise Nobert

Mr. Sawyer stated that it's been a goal of the Council to get a \$2 million funding for this line item when it makes sense as soon as possible. The way the Capital Improvements Plan is laid out is that this line will get to \$2 million so they are doing road maintenance, not rebuilding, using local road funds. It's 3 or 4 years out when they get to a full funding of \$2 million.

Mr. Sawyer stated that one of the changes he made was \$15k that is needed to replace a pedestrian bridge in the Van Loan Preserve. His suggestion is that they work with the Conservation Commission to use Conservation funds to do that work. It's what the Conservation Fund is there to do.

Councilor Stevens wanted Mr. Foote to explain the machinery and equipment. Mr. Foote explained that they need equipment to collect all of the GIS data. Councilor Rombeau noted that it was the same amount requested as last year and they didn't use as much of it. Councilor Gilbert stated that it was a placeholder in case a piece of equipment fails or needs repair. If it doesn't, then they don't use it. Ms. Nobert stated that the software needs to be updated every year. Mr. Sawyer stated that the only thing to come out of that line item was the LED streetlight conversion.

- Highway – Denise Norbert

Mr. Foote stated that the Highway Department originally requested an additional equipment operator, but he explained that they are withdrawing that request.

Ms. Nobert stated that under professional services, they moved the mowing from local roads to highway. They also had an increase for the mowing on the Route 101 median. Chairman Duschatko wanted to know if that should have a different title other than professional services. Mr. Foote stated that they are hiring that out. Mr. Sawyer stated that it is in the contracted services line. They can add maintenance contracts if they want to have it under that, but usually when they bid something out or hire someone, it's professional services. There was discussion about where to put the Route 101 mowing and sidewalk plowing and maybe creating a new line specifically for that.

Mr. Foote stated that under Capital Reserve, they are requesting one 6-wheeled dump truck and a new additional sidewalk snow blower. Mr. Sawyer stated that there was \$268,300 taken out of that line item, because he's requesting that they authorize the purchase of that amount of equipment from the 2019 budget through year-end transfers of existing appropriations that will not be spent. That money would be for the 6-wheeled dump truck; additional funds for saving for a 10-wheeled dump truck, and the sidewalk tractor. The Council would typically authorize the use of those funds at their December meeting when they are confident they don't have some major issue come up in Town. If the Council is not going to approve that transfer, this budget is short by \$268,300.

Councilor Bandazian wanted to know if the Highway Department was fully staffed and Mr. Foote responded no, they've had two departures and are currently five people short. They've done some interviews with more next week, so they are hopeful. Councilor Bandazian appreciates the people that are pulling the extra load.

There was discussion about how the sidewalk plow gets to the sidewalks on Route 101 and South River Road.

- Winter Maintenance – Denise Nobert

Mr. Foote explained that through technology and training, their effort is to reduce the amount of chlorides they use to save money and they also have the environmental component, so there is a reduction in Winter Maintenance from last year's budget. Their salt use has gone down also. That's why they are asking for the sand shed under Facilities. They are offsetting the request for a sand shed in Facilities with the reduction in Winter Maintenance.

- Traffic Control – Denise Nobert

Mr. Foote stated that this budget was up mainly because upgrades were done in 2019 and they are going to be more aggressive in their maintenance of traffic lights and Fire and Police safety needs.

There was discussion about the 'move over' signs for bicycles and their placement.

- Transfer Station – Denise Nobert

Mr. Foote stated that revenues at the Transfer Station since 2017 have gone from approximately \$100k to the \$260k range this year. At the same time, the municipal solid waste (MSW) they take in has gone down, which computes to about 500 tons a year. They've been trying to keep the line item for disposal as flat as they can knowing that their contract allows for up to a 3% increase in MSW disposal fees a year.

Mr. Foote stated that they are trying to do a better job enforce the existing rules. They haven't proposed anything new.

Mr. Sawyer stated that they've increased anticipated revenue for next year by another \$35k for a total of \$225k. With the new positioning of the scale, they will be able to better monitor what comes in.

Mr. Sawyer mentioned that at the Transfer Station, Mr. Foote and his team have taken steps to put in handicapped parking spaces. Transfer Station staff will go to their car and take their trash and recycling, so those parked in the handicapped spaces don't have to get out of their car. Mr. Foote stated that they have also added a handicapped space at some of the ball fields.

- Recreation Field Maintenance – Denise Nobert

Mr. Foote explained that they had a contract to fix some posts and do crack seal on the County Road tennis courts, so that the high school could use the tennis courts as soon as the snow is gone. That was done in 2019. The contract will return after school gets out in 2020 to complete the resurfacing the County Road tennis courts. They were able to find some money in that location this year and the Town Manager has a plan to increase that even more. Mr. Sawyer mentioned the \$1m to do Sportsman Field, offsetting that with \$200k of recreation impact fees and his suggestion of \$800k of current Fund Balance. That \$800k is in combination with other Fund Balance uses to offset the budget. He thought Sportsman Field was the number one piece of the Recreation Master Plan that Mr. Foote and his team have put together. It's the field that gets the most usage and it's in the worst shape.

Councilor Bandazian wanted to know how certain they were that the School was going forward with their field replacement. Mr. Sawyer stated that it would be included in their budget. Councilor Bandazian wanted to know if they would be on the \$100k a year Capital Improvement program. Mr. Sawyer stated that future years of the Capital Improvement Plan have \$125k a year going forward anticipating having \$250k every other year to do to do another field piece of the master plan. If they wanted the fields done more quickly, they would have to come up with a different plan. In future CIPs they will have money for the eventual replacement of Sportsman Field, which will be about \$600-700k, which would be about \$75k a year in the CIP. He didn't include any revenue for any athletic programs including Sportsman Field in his budget, because they don't have a construction schedule for the field, so he didn't want to anticipate that they would have revenue in 2020, but it's something that the Council should continue talking with the Parks & Recreation Commission on whether or not it's something they should move forward. He doesn't support pay to play on the grass fields, but he thought it made sense for the turf field on Sportsman. He hasn't come up with a recommended amount.

- Sewer – Denise Nobert

Mr. Foote stated that there are a few increase and a few decreases in some of the line items, but it's the sewer enterprise fund that funds it and it's strictly for the users of the municipal sewer.

Mr. Sawyer stated that the biggest change they will see in the wages is the equipment operator that is fully funded out of the sewer enterprise fund and the truck driver position that the Council authorized in 2019.

They discussed the successful usage of the sewer vac truck.

Mr. Foote stated that for the Public Works budget, if they don't include Sportsman Field or the \$500k in Facilities, but they include the debt service of \$3.815m, on a \$500k house, it cost about \$1,177 for everything they do including plowing the roads, reconstructing the roads, bond for the roads, the buildings, the parks, administering the sewer, and electricity, heat, a/c, and plumbing in all the public buildings.

#### Fire – Chief Scott Hunter

Chief Hunter went through the Fire budget.

- Administration
- Operations
- Building
- Health
- Fire Hydrant

#### BCTV – Bill Jennings, Coleen Richardson

Bill Jennings, Station Manager, went through the BCTV and WBNH budget.

#### Library – Mary Ann Senatro, Miriam Johnson

Mary Ann Senatro, Library Director, went through the Library budget.

#### Human Resources – Pam Hogan

Pam Hogan, HR Director, went through the HR budget.

#### Information Technology – Chief John Bryfonski, Nate Gagne

Chief Bryfonski and IT Manager Nate Gagne, went through the IT budget.

The Town Council took a 30 minute lunch break.

#### Police – Chief John Bryfonski

- Police Administration
- Communications
- Patrol
- Detectives

Chief Bryfonski went through the Police budget.

Finance – Tammy Penny

Tammy Penny, Finance Director, went through the Finance budget.

Recreation – Rick Sawyer

Mr. Sawyer went through the Recreation budget.

Town Manager – Rick Sawyer

Mr. Sawyer went through the Town Manager budget.

Town Council – Rick Sawyer

Mr. Sawyer went through the Town Council budget.

Chairman Duschatko adjourned the workshop at 3:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Boufford