

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, January 3, 2018

7:00 PM

Town Hall – Selectmen’s Meeting Room

Members present: Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, and Brian Boyle

Members absent: Joe Myerson

Call to order: Chairman Cote called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The entire meeting can be viewed by going to:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G64F42n9vE0>

Agenda Item #1: Tree Warden (294) budget

- Tree Warden Mark Caisse presented his budget:
 - To inform the public, Mr. Caisse explained what the Tree Warden does. Every town in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is required to have a tree warden. That person has care and control of all trees that fall within the town’s right-of-way. In Bolton, the tree warden also oversees the trees in our cemeteries, but that expense is paid from the cemetery budget.
 - There are four line items in Mr. Caisse’s budget:
 - Salary = the tree warden’s annual salary (\$3,472.27).
 - Police Details = to pay for police while tree work is being done (\$2,500).
 - Tree Trimming = to pay a service provider to trim or remove trees (\$37,000).
 - Disposal = to pay for the removal and disposal of waste, often as a result of tree trimming/removal by National Grid (\$9,000).
 - Mr. Caisse explained that in 2016-2017, National Grid took down about 92 trees, which left a significant amount of waste that needed to be cleaned up. The town of Bolton is responsible for disposal, and currently in FY18 we only have \$250 left in the Disposal line item (which was budgeted at \$6,000). Mr. Caisse is planning to use some funds from the Tree Trimming line item to make up for the shortfall in Disposal in FY18.
 - National Grid is planning to work on another section of town in the near future. There is a list of 70 trees for potential removal. Due to the increase in disposal obligations for FY18 and the projected obligations in FY19, Mr. Caisse proposed a \$3,000 increase in the Disposal line item, from \$6,000 to \$9,000. Mr. Caisse also proposed a \$1,300 increase in the Tree Trimming line item, from \$35,700 to \$37,000, because he anticipates increased activity in that area.
 - The Tree Trimming line item is used to contract with a service provider. Our most recent contract was awarded to Pathfinder Tree Service in July 2017.
 - **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to approve the tree warden’s budget as submitted, for a total of \$51,972; seconded by Ted Kirchner. **VOTING IN**

FAVOR: Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (5-0).**

Agenda Item #2: Public Works (190, 293, 421, 423, 424, 422, 433, 450, 491, 692) budgets

- **Operational Budgets.** Our new Director of Public Works, Joseph Lynch, along with Leslie Caisse, presented the various operational budgets that fall under the umbrella of public works. Mr. Lynch and Ms. Caisse had previously met with their Advisory liaisons, Ted and Ann, to review the budgets and make some modifications. Ted and Ann noted that the new DPW Director has a strong understanding of his department's mission and seems well-positioned to have a productive inaugural year.
 - 190 – Town Buildings
 - There is only a small increase of \$437 from the FY18 (\$143,505) to the FY19 (\$143,942) budget. In the liaison meeting, Mr. Lynch agreed to a “bottom line neutral” revision of two line items as follows:
 - decrease Heating from \$2,800 to \$2,200, and
 - increase Repairs & Maintenance from \$115,392 to \$115,992.
 - Mr. Lynch commented on his discussion with Chief Nelson about the possibility of utilizing DPW services to dispose of material from the Public Safety Building. Mr. Lynch said that the police department's current waste management contract is cost-effective.
 - The Grounds Maintenance line item (\$17,000) includes \$7,000 for maintenance of the new Town Common. Mr. Lynch noted that one of his future capital requests might be for a larger mower. Such a mower might cost less (in debt service payments) than the cost of hiring a contractor to mow the Common.
 - **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to approve the Town Buildings (190) budget as modified, for a total of \$143,942; seconded by Ann Hurd. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (5-0).**
 - 293 – Traffic Lights
 - This budget consists of only two line items: (1) Electric, and (2) Repairs. In FY18, we budgeted \$2,500, and for FY19, Mr. Lynch originally budgeted the same amount.
 - Due to the conversion of several old incandescent fixtures to LEDs, we have seen savings on the repair costs. Based on this analysis, Mr. Lynch modified his budget as follows:
 - increase Electric from \$600 to \$700, and
 - decrease Repairs from \$1,900 to \$800.
 - The net effect of those changes reduces the total budget from \$2,500 to \$1,500.
 - **MOTION:** Ted Kirchner moved to approve the Traffic Lights (293) budget as modified, for a total of \$1,500; seconded by Connie Benjamin. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann

Hurd, Ted Kirchner, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (5-0).**

- 421 – Highway
 - This budget represents the lion's share of the DPW expense. The total amount budgeted for FY19 is \$782,667.
 - During the liaison meeting, Mr. Lynch agreed to two adjustments:
 - increase Repairs from \$57,000 to \$57,190, and
 - decrease Stickers from \$1,000 to \$810.
 - Connie Benjamin asked about the Heating line item. The actual spend in FY17 was only \$1,869, but our budget for FY19 is \$3,185. The general view was that our actual usage in FY18 was still too uncertain to know whether this line item could be adjusted.
 - Town Accountant Ninotchka Rogers noted that because the DPW labor contract is still being negotiated, the Wages line items will likely change at some point.
 - Leslie Caisse pointed out a change from FY18 to FY19 in the Clothing Allowance and Parts/Supplies line items:
 - Clothing Allowance decreased from \$7,420 to \$6,300, and
 - Parts/Supplies increased from \$9,000 to \$10,120.
 - **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to approve the Highway (421) budget as modified, for a total of \$782,667; seconded by Ted Kirchner. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (5-0).**
- 422 – Construction and Maintenance
 - This budget contains three line items: Wages (for police details), Public Ways Safety, and Local Improvements. In order to be more accurate, we might re-name the "Wages" line to "Police Details." During FY19, Mr. Lynch is going to track the actual police details expense so that we know exactly how much it costs. Our previous practice has been to simply budget \$8,000 and then supplement that line item from other Wage lines if necessary.
 - The Public Ways Safety line item is being level-funded at \$8,100, which will be used for road painting and signage repair or replacement. Mary Ciummo, from the Public Ways Safety Committee, noted that Mr. Lynch's new approach to the use of salt and sand might allow us to repaint our road lines less frequently. Mr. Lynch believes that Bolton can probably handle snow and ice with less sand than it has in the past, and the reduction in sand would cause less wear on the road paint. Our prior practice had been to put down approximately 600 pounds of sand and salt (5 parts sand to 1 part salt) per lane mile.
 - **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to approve the Construction and Maintenance (422) budget as submitted, for a total of \$210,100; seconded by Ted Kirchner. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie

Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (5-0).**

- 423 – Snow & Sand
 - In the past, Bolton has funded the Snow & Sand account at \$180,000 every year. Because municipalities are permitted to deficit spend from the Snow & Sand account, we have declined to potentially over-budget (and therefore over-tax) for an expense that inherently varies based on the weather in a given year.
 - Members of the Advisory Committee expressed different views about how to approach this issue. Three members of Advisory and two selectmen expressed potential support for raising the budget to \$200,000. Town Accountant Ninotchka Rogers was able to provide thirteen years of historical data. The average annual expenditure over that 13-year period was \$345,000. Three out of those thirteen years were under \$200,000 and one year (2007) was under \$180,000.
 - We agreed to continue discussing this issue at future meetings.
- 424 – Street Lighting
 - The original budget request was for \$6,750. However, based on analysis of recent trends, Mr. Lynch recommended funding the Electric line at \$7,200 and the Repairs line at \$100, for a total budget of \$7,300.
 - **MOTION:** Ted Kirchner moved to approve the Street Lighting (424) budget as modified, for a total of \$7,300; seconded by Connie Benjamin. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (5-0).**
- 433 – Transfer Station
 - In the meeting with the liaisons, Mr. Lynch agreed to reduce the Maintenance line item by \$1,500 (to \$9,000). All other lines remained the same, for a total budget request of \$160,065. Ms. Caisse and Mr. Lynch noted that they are exploring the possibility of reducing Wednesday hours for the Transfer Station during winter months only, because the public's use of the station during that time is very low.
 - With respect to the Trash Disposal line item (\$58,136), Mr. Lynch anticipates going out to bid for that provider, and he expects the RFP process to be completed by late November or early December 2018.
 - **MOTION:** Ann Hurd moved to approve the Transfer Station (433) budget as modified, for a total of \$160,065; seconded by Connie Benjamin. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (5-0).**
- 450 – Water (Well Monitoring)
 - This budget is for monitoring wells. The monitoring requirement was triggered by a contamination issue back in 1997. This is a recurring expense and varies based on testing and follow-up testing. Mr. Lynch is requesting \$6,000 for FY19 because he hopes, through a round of

- robust sampling and analysis, to get released from the testing requirements for future years.
 - **MOTION:** Ted Kirchner moved to approve the Water (450) budget as submitted, for a total of \$6,000; seconded by Connie Benjamin.
VOTING IN FAVOR: Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (5-0).**
- 491 – Cemetery
 - This budget has two components: \$3,000 for purchase of services, and \$5,000 for grounds maintenance.
 - **MOTION:** Ted Kirchner moved to approve the Cemetery (491) budget as submitted, for a total of \$8,000; seconded by Connie Benjamin.
VOTING IN FAVOR: Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (5-0).**
- 692 – Celebration/Memorial Day
 - This budget has one component: \$1,300 for supplies (largely flags and flowers for grave sites).
 - **MOTION:** Ted Kirchner moved to approve the Celebration/Memorial Day (692) budget as submitted, for a total of \$1,300; seconded by Connie Benjamin. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (5-0).**
- **Capital Plan.** Director Lynch and Leslie Caisse also presented the department's 5-year capital plan, focusing in particular on the items being requested for FY19. Mr. Lynch's capital plan has three main categories: (1) fleet, (2) roadway infrastructure, (3) building infrastructure and other projects.
 - FY19 Fleet/Vehicle Requests
 - Skid Steer Loader with Multi-Seasonal Attachments -- \$50,400 (Priority #1)
 - Bolton currently does not have this type of equipment (known as a Bobcat). It is a versatile machine that can be equipped with a snow loader bucket, sweeper, grinder, plow, or snow blower. In warm seasons, the machinery would be used for roadway shoulder maintenance, drainage work, and seasonal cleanup. In cold seasons, the machinery would be used for intersection snow bank removal, plowing, and sidewalk cleaning.
 - Mr. Lynch said that we are currently using manual labor or contracting out to accomplish the work that could be done by this machine. For example, he mentioned that the equipment would be very helpful in clearing the sidewalks in the downtown area.
 - 36-46 GVW Plow/Sander -- \$193,000 (Priority #2A)

- We have a total of six large dump trucks. Three of them are combination plow/sanders. The proposed funding would be used to replace whichever vehicle is in the worst condition.
 - In response to a question from Connie, Mr. Lynch said that he would have ranked this as his Priority #1 if it seemed like the funds could be available.
- Truck Repairs -- \$35,000 (Priority #2B - alternative to Plow/Sander request)
 - Ted asked for more specifics about how the \$35,000 would be spent; e.g., what is the scope and nature of the repairs that could be made to the current fleet.
- FY19 Roadway Infrastructure Requests
 - Culvert Replacement at Long Hill/West Pond -- \$250,000
 - This culvert has already collapsed and a temporary repair pipe was installed. Design, engineering, permitting, and bid documents were completed in FY18. Bidding for construction will take place during this winter. Engineering for this project has already been funded and is ongoing.
 - Engineering Study at South Bolton/Spectacle Hill -- \$43,700
 - The culvert at this intersection is in need of repair. It is insufficient to handle high water situations, and there is also increased traffic at this intersection. Mr. Lynch noted that there is some private impact that is affecting this area, so the Planning Board will have to work with the developer to determine its responsibility (if any). He also noted that we might need to work with homeowners regarding the appropriate run-off routes.
 - Chairman Cote noted that the Advisory Committee would ultimately like to see an overall inventory of all the town's culverts, with notes about their current status and anticipated future expenses.
- FY19 Building Infrastructure Requests & Other Projects
 - Water Supply Compliance Upgrades -- \$90,500
 - The town apparently has some legal/financial responsibility for the private water supply serving the residences and business located at 1076 Main Street. The existing well and water treatment system is non-compliant with DEP regulations. The town is currently implicated in a DEP order to make updates and repairs to return this supply to a compliant state. However, Mr. Lynch said that the town is exploring the possibility of getting released from its legal and financial obligations for this private water supply. He said this issue could be resolved prior to the Annual Town Meeting, so this request could potentially be removed from the warrant.
 - Sewage Treatment Plant -- \$80,000

- We are facing continuing costs for pump and treatment membrane replacements. At a Special Town Meeting in December 2016, we approved \$88,924 for pump replacements and some membranes. In FY19, Mr. Lynch thinks we need to pay for the remaining membrane replacements.
- We also discussed the fact that we established a special capital reserve fund for major repairs for the wastewater treatment plant. We set aside \$70,000 into that reserve fund last year at Annual Town Meeting (May 2017). Mr. Lynch said that he would ask our service provider, Whitewater, for short- and long-term maintenance forecasts.
- Because the school district previously agreed to accept some maintenance responsibilities, Selectman Stan Wysocki asked whether the school district would potentially contribute for these ongoing wastewater treatment maintenance costs.

Agenda Item #3: Advisory Committee business

- The committee briefly discussed the meeting schedule for January 9th and 10th.
- The committee also discussed possible ways of gathering or creating capital/fleet inventories for each department and committee/board.

Adjourn: **MOTION:** Connie Benjamin moved to adjourn at 9:30 PM; seconded by Ted Kirchner. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Connie Benjamin, Ann Hurd, Ted Kirchner, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (5-0).**

Documents Referenced

Departments' FY19 budget submissions

Handouts from Director Lynch regarding the DPW's 5-year capital plan

Approved by the Advisory Committee