



## Town Council Budget Meeting Minutes



Wednesday, January 18, 2023, at 6:30 PM, in the Matthew Thornton Room

### **Call to Order**

Chairman Rothhaus called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Present at the meeting were Chairman Rothhaus, Vice Chair Harrington, Councilor Healey, Councilor Hunter, Councilor Koenig, Councilor Murphy, Councilor Woods, and Town Manager Paul Micali.

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman Rothhaus led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Before beginning, Mr. Micali stated that the second Tuesday of February is the 14<sup>th</sup> and that is when petition articles are due. Additionally, petition bonds are due the Friday before, the 10<sup>th</sup>. There is a meeting scheduled for February 9<sup>th</sup>, and he is recommending he is changing the public hearing and budget review to February 16<sup>th</sup> instead so there isn't three meetings in the month of February.

**MOTION** made by Councilor Koenig and seconded by Councilor Hunter to change the February 9<sup>th</sup> meeting to February 16<sup>th</sup>.

**MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0**

The Town Council will hold a public meeting to review the 2023/24 budget, to include the following departments:

### **Public Comment**

None

- Solid Waste Disposal

Kris Perreault, Solid Waste Foreman, was present to discuss the budget. He stated that the budget is fairly straight forward, with a few changes:

- Printing has gone up as the stickers have changed and are larger.
- Fuel has increased.
- Dues and fees have slightly increased.
- Maintenance and buildings increased, he is trying to introduce a pressure washing schedule to have one building done every year.
- Maintenance to vehicles and equipment- there are three aging pieces of equipment that get frequently repaired and they will need a new loader and new tractor in the near two or three years.
- Tipping fees have gone up, dictated by contracts. They have decided that for single stream they are going to go with a conservative route and the \$150 per ton is a yearly average.
- Special waste disposal has been allotted for an increase.
- The office trailer is from 2004 and the whole edge along the scale side is starting to rot, it will need to be replaced and the bidding is around \$80,000 to have a replacement delivered to the facility.

- Wastewater Treatment Fund

Leo Gaudette, Chief Operator, was present along with Mr. Micali to share the following Wastewater budget:

- Personal services has increased about \$47,000 in aggregate.
- Teamsters contract (DPW supervisors) is scheduled for a 3% raise.

- Gas has increased about \$9,000 for usage in compost; some remote buildings are using more natural gas.
- Water has increased about \$7,500 for usage.
- Electricity has decreased \$19,000 because of the new and more efficient equipment.
- Sewer is with the city of Nashua, which is charging them \$32,000 per quarter; this is a \$60,000 increase as their rates went up significantly.
- Chemicals went up about \$17,000 due to chemical costs; bulking agents for compost is going up about 65 cents per yard.
- Manhole covers increased about \$10,000 due to the cost of a manhole (steel) increasing; about 25 get replaced per year.
- Capital Reserve Fund to increase by \$50,000 based on the CIP going forward with projects.
- Sewer rate charges for apartment buildings may be changing.
- Bond payments- one bond outstanding (Phase II compost and upgrade of the plant).
- Highway

Lori Halverson from the Highway department shared the following budget items:

- For this winter season, they have had 17 winter events, 6 plowable, and they've spent about 19% of their salt budget.
- They have decreased in office supplies and log books, so that has been reduced from \$2,200 to \$1,500.
- Maintenance supplies have gone up since the office space has expanded.
- Salt and sand budget has been lowered for next year in anticipation of their Magnesium working. Additionally, they have been using a stone-sand mix on gravel roads to get a much better product on the roads.
- Cold patch has gone up as they are expecting a cost of \$160 per ton compared to \$112 per ton last year.
- Hot top has also increased from \$69 to \$83.75 per ton. Pavement markings have gone up considerably, at about 10 cents per linear foot compared to 6 cents last year.
- Street sweeping has also gone up due to contract increases.
- The cost of seeding and fertilizer went up about 10%.
- Under buildings, they added replacing one overhead door in the old garage per year, which is \$12,000, as well as the updated fuel distribution system for \$1.4 million.
- Mr. Micali then shared that paving went up \$800,000, but the SAFER grant is helping to offset some of this. Councilor Hunter asked how they are able to keep the cost down for this, in which Mr. Micali stated that they're getting about \$135,000 in for the \$5 registration, which is \$10,000 higher than expected. Further, Mr. Micali was able to reduce \$160,000 out of the paving budget because there are other paving projects that will happen along with drainage, so they will fit in as much as they can with the reduced budget.
- Lori also discussed brine and brine making, stating that there is a computerized device that ensures that the brine is being made correctly.
- Councilor Woods asked about traffic lights and signals, specifically if there is an issue with electricity costs, in which Mr. Micali stated that the lights were switched over to LED so the rates for consumption are fixed.
- Equipment Maintenance

Lori shared that there were no changes since the two major changes they budgeted for are going to be purchased out of some significant savings within the department.

- **Buildings & Grounds**

Mr. Micali stated the following for the buildings & grounds budget:

- Capital Projects- Paving project for the church parking lot near the Adult Community Center has gross appropriations of \$92,000. The Town's portion of that is \$41,000 and is part of the lease agreement signed with the church.
- \$150,000 for sprinklers- there are significant leaks in the sprinkler system that was installed in the 1980s. The valves have been replaced in both buildings, but the lines need to be replaced throughout the buildings.
- Public Works Administration

Mr. Micali presented the following information to the Council:

- The major change in the budget is for the environmental deputy director, which is currently not filled but there are applicants for.
- The environmental coordinator position has been eliminated and the salary was moved into the deputy director position instead.
- \$2,000 for a new computer unit

**ADJOURN**

**MOTION made by Councilor Woods and seconded by Councilor Healey to adjourn the meeting.**

**MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0**

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Steagald