

Fryeburg Budget Committee Minutes
March 7, 2022 – 6:00 p.m.
David & Doris Hastings Community Center

Budget Committee members present: Patrick Emery, Jim Tyrrell, Chiye Harper
Select Board members present: Tom Kingsbury, Tom Klinepeter
Staff present: Katie Haley, Ruth Antonucci, Rick Buzzell

Emery called the meeting to order.

Tyrrell made a motion to approve the February 28, 2022 meeting minutes, which was seconded by Harper and passed unanimously.

Fire Chief of Saco Valley Fire Department, Harold Drew, presented the departments budget request. He noted increases in fuel, electricity, and equipment. Haley pointed out that the budget request is for a total of \$36,925, as opposed to \$40,175 as noted on SVFD original request because the fundraising totals were not deducted. Kingsbury asked Drew if they budgeted enough for fuel; Drew noted an increase but is now unsure if it will be adequate. Harper inquired about the increase in office/bookkeeping. Mel Drew responded that a new computer is needed and that they have hired a bookkeeper. There were no further questions.

Haley presented the Conservation Committee budget request of \$5,000 to be used for continued trail work and to for a potential Project Canopy grant match. There were no questions.

Recreation Director Buzzell presented the Recreation Dept budget request. He noted that using the revolving fund is helping to keep programming costs down. He did note an increase in fertilizer prices. He also noted that Fryeburg Rec. Inc. will again match the \$10,000 requested for capital. Harper asked about other employee wages; Buzzell noted that the rec programmer wages are funded through the revolving fund and the teen center coordinator is funded by donations. Haley commented that the social security, Medicare, and workers comp for those 2 positions is included in the budget. There were no further questions.

Haley reviewed the Select Board and other boards/committees' requests. Tyrrell asked how frequently the Select Board is paid and if there is a requirement for board members to attend a certain number of meetings. Board members are paid twice a year and there is no requirement for attendance. Kingsbury asked about the Parks Open Space Beautification Committee's plans to anchor down the planned Adirondack chairs. Haley responded that the proposal is for a unit that includes 2 chairs with a table and that it will be quite heavy. Tess Dana confirms this and also notes that the planned location is near the intervalle, which will hopefully further reduce the risk of theft. There were no further questions on the board and committees budget requests.

Haley reviewed the Miscellaneous budget proposal, which includes various town buildings, insurances and social services. Heating and electricity lines are increasing. Retirement is increasing based on the pay raises and changed MainePERS contributions for first responders. Tyrrell asked if the Legion is getting rented and used. Haley confirmed that it is. Harper asked about plans to improve the building. Haley noted some piecemeal improvements that have been

made (roof, heat pumps) but that there are no set plans for further improvements. Related to social service agency requests, Haley commented that she presented either the historical amount given to each agency if no request was made, or the actual request. This led to an increase over last year's budget line. There was discussion about the process to request funds. It was confirmed that the Select Board will actually vote on the distributions after town meeting, based on the amount appropriated. There was discussion about some of the specifics of Community Concepts programs. Haley inquired about the preference of using last years budget or increasing it to match the requests/historical amounts given. Harper voiced support of the increase.

Haley reviewed a packet of information she compiled related to the budget process. This led to discussion about the possibility of creating a capital type account for expenses such as police academy. Haley noted that the plan is for the PD to request that the current amount budgeted for sending an officer to academy be carried forward. This would then create a specific assigned fund that would be in place and which would not transition into the general fund if the appropriation was not spent in the budget year. This was discussed at length. Tyrrell then asked if the revenue (state reimbursement) from GA could be saved and be applied to reduce that budget line. Haley noted that this would take a specific warrant article. Klinepeter commented about a similar methodology being used in the past and noted that it confused people. This was further discussed.

Haley reviewed the wages as discussed at the last meeting. She presented a spreadsheet showing 6% raises and 10% raises. Kingsbury believes that employees deserve 10% but that there needs to be caution based on what the voters would approve and what would be a reasonable raise the following year. Tyrrell inquired about bonuses. Harper is not in favor because it would create expectations of continued bonuses. After conversation, it was decided to propose the 6% COLA raises.

Haley noted that she adjusted the Professional Services, Legal Services line from \$25,000 to \$30,000 based on the need to retain new legal counsel.

Haley had provided information about the current fuel pantry program as follow-up to last weeks discussion about creating a program to help people that might not be eligible for GA. She noted that there may be latitude to expand or revise the fuel assistance policy so that it is more broad and more helpful. It would be burdensome to create an entirely new program.

There were no further questions or comments. Tyrrell made a motion to adjourn. This was seconded by Emery and passed unanimously.