

Fryeburg Budget Committee Minutes
February 27, 2023 – 6:00 p.m.
David & Doris Hastings Community Center

Budget Committee Members Present: Ed Price, Patrick Emery, Chiye Harper, Stephen Chase
Town Staff Present: Katie Haley, Ruth Antonucci, Kim Smith
Select Board Present: Tom Kingsbury, Tom Klinepeter, Kimberly Clarke, Jim Tyrrell

Haley called the meeting to order and declared a quorum. Introductions were made.

Haley asked for a nomination for a chair. Chase nominated Price to serve as chair, which was seconded by Harper and passed unanimously. Chase nominated Emery to serve as vice-chair, which was seconded by Price and passed unanimously.

Price reviewed the upcoming schedule.

The Committee began budget reviews. Dalyn Houser, Executive Director of the Saco River Corridor Commission, presented the SRCC budget. She provided a history of the commission and explained that they currently do water testing with annual reporting all along the Saco River. They also complete weekly testing at recreational sites in Fryeburg. They are asking for a total of \$1,050 for the year; this is a \$750 increase from past years and is intended to cover half of the cost of the yearly water monitoring in Fryeburg. Chase inquired about the steps if water quality results come back poorly; Haley responded that the town posts notice at the beaches and Houser confirmed that they re-test.

Harold and Mel Drew of Saco Valley Fire presented their budget request. It was confirmed that their overall budget request was for \$43,525. Questions were answered about proposed increases to building expenses (needed for general upkeep), insurance increase (needed due to discovery of accounting error to cover full insurance in 2 states), and turnout gear (needed due to a change in distributor and rising costs).

Haley presented the Eastern Slope Airport Authority budget request, due to airport manager Allison Navia being sick. Haley noted that the same amount of \$20,000 is being requested for this year. Airport revenues sources were pointed out, as well as improvements to airport management and operations. Price inquired about the Northern Borders Regional Commission and the potential of getting funding for Lyman Drive reconstruction; Haley noted that it is believed that we have a good chance at success with the grant program and overviewed other efforts to get funding from the MDOT, MDIFW, and other regional towns. Chase asked about hangar sales and ownership.

Haley presented the Debt Service budget which consists solely of the police department lease from Fryeburg Rescue. That is due to an increase of 5% to \$18,540.

Haley presented the Civil Services budget. There were questions about the proposed street light reduction and the hydrant reduction. Haley noted that the street light bills are tracked and that the amount proposed should be sufficient, even with some expected CMP increases. All street lights have been converted to LED lights. Hydrant prices were provided by Maine Water Company. Clarke asked if the \$5,000 budgeted for tree removal was going to be enough, given the extensive storm damage that occurred this winter. There was discussion about this and the committee agreed to increase the tree removal line by \$4,000.

Haley presented the Parks budget. Harper asked about the Graustein tennis court maintenance and repairs and suggested that the town be proactive in maintenance to avoid the need for complete resurfacing or

replacement in the future. Haley proposed adding \$2,000 for general maintenance of the Mountain Division Rail Trail for items like sign replacement, fence replacement, etc. There was discussion about the maintenance obligations of the rail trail and the need to plan for long-term capital improvements, such as repaving. Klinepeter provided a history of efforts to start a capital reserve fund for this, but it was not approved at a previous Town Meeting. Haley will add a capital line to reinstate the planning effort.

Haley presented the Miscellaneous budget. Kingsbury asked about cleaning increases. Haley noted that there has been changeover in cleaning personnel and that it is generally taking longer to clean buildings. Also the Legion is being used more frequently. Price asked about Community Concepts not submitting their standard social services budget request. Haley will add their standard allotment of \$1000 back in the budget. Price asked about the thoughts of giving SRRC additional funds. This was discussed and decided to tabled until further into the budget process.

Haley presented her suggested COLA/Wage increases that consist of a 5% raise, following union agreements, and adding some merit/equalization increases. Haley has looked at various wage studies and surveys and followed informal listserv polls about COLA raises to come up with these wages. Some specifics were discussed including CEO wages, given the move to contract assessing. There was general consensus to proceed with wage increases as presented.

Chase made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Harper and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:23.