

Town of Atkinson
Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
October 23, 2012

Members Present:

Harold Morse – Chairman
Bill Smith Vice Chairman
John Feuer
Craig Schuster
Sue Carroll
Wendy Barker

Others Present:

Barbara Snicer for Bill Innes, Town Administrator
Sue Killam, Planning & Zoning Board
Ted Stewart, Road Agent

Chairman Harold Morse called the Budget Committee Meeting of October 23, 2012 to order at 7:05 PM in the Atkinson Town Hall.

Chairman Harold Morse asked Sue Killam, Planning and Zoning Boards, to come before the Committee to present the budgets for the Planning Board, the Zoning Board and the Capital Improvements Committee

Planning Budget - Ms. Killam presented the Planning Budget. The Recording Clerk line is \$3000. The Telephone line is \$1,000. Other Professional Services is \$10,000 which includes the Circuit riders contract at \$7,260. The Committee discussed the circuit rider. Sue Killam explained that the circuit rider is a professional planner from Rockingham Planning who services 3-4 towns and assists with Town planning. This line also includes \$2,000 for the Capital Improvements Program.

The Committee discussed the capital improvements committee. Sue Killam explained that the capital improvements committee had not been established but was about 75% there. There are about 21 activities including extra work from the circuit rider to complete the master plan and the long term capital improvements plan. Also the citizen's survey is completed, planning board members split up all handwritten copies of citizen surveys and input the data.

Printing and Binding is \$1,000 and includes the survey and the ordinance book. Office Supplies are \$300. Postage is \$1,000. Miscellaneous is \$1. New Equipment/Maintenance is \$1. Mileage is \$100 for driving plans to the Registry of Deeds. Recording of Plans is \$300. Education and Conferences is \$200. Sue Killam will be attending a conference in November costing about \$80.00. The Public Notices line is \$1,500.

Zoning - Sue Killam presented the Zoning budget.

Recording Clerk/Stenographer - \$2,100. This reflects 12 months at \$175. The clerk is on a contract and is paid \$175.00 per meeting. The clerk is a Town employee so there is Fica and Medicare. Fica is \$130 and Medicare is \$30.

The Office Supplies line is \$200. The postage line is \$1500. The New Equipment/Maintenance line is \$1. The Education/Conferences line is \$200. The Public Notices line is \$1,400. The Other/New line is \$1,500.

Chairman Harold Morse called for questions from the Committee. The Committee discussed the Planning and Zoning Budgets. Ms. Killam informed the Committee that \$2,100 reflected \$175 per meeting and 12 meetings. The \$2100 is actually less than the full amount for 12 meetings. Last year the Zoning Board only met 3 times, but she expects more applications this year.

The Planning Budget total went from \$30,062 to \$18,402 and the Zoning Budget total went from \$4,739 to \$5,561. The Planning and Zoning Budget show a negative 31% change. Also, public notices and postage are paid by the applicants, so the Planning and Zoning Boards do have a revenue line. The Planning Board change is due to Other Professional Services and the Zoning Board change is due to the change in the amount budgeted for the recording clerk.

Building Inspections Budget - Sue Killam presented the Building Inspections budget. The Clerk/Secretary line is \$1. Sue Killam fulfills that line; she is in Selectman's Budget.

Code Enforcement Officer - \$10,000. Bill Kirsh is budgeted at \$5000, around 4-6 hrs per week, were considering doubling the amount and hours, a lot is not getting done and it is specific work, writing up notices and violations and walking through until compliance is achieved. The Board is asking to raise the Code Enforcement Officer budget to \$10,000.

Building Inspector - \$21,000. Left the same as last year, she got revenues from Sandra through the end of September and could be as high as \$24,500 for the year. Revenues are generated from fees. Bill Innes supplied Fica and Medicare figures. The building inspectors are Town employees.

Electrical Inspector - \$10,000. Raised from \$6500 to 12,000. Revenues could be as high \$11,000.

Plumbing Inspector - \$6,500. This amount is raised from \$6,000 in the 2012 budget. Plumbing and gas revenues could be as high as \$10,800 given the rate through the end of September, the money comes into office bookkeeper enters into database at least once a week.

Anticipated inspections are charged through permits, the only one pure cost is for the code enforcement officer, all others are offset.

Telephone - \$1,500.

Other Professional Services - a check came in from charges owed to one of the engineers, Keche, Nordstrom, they were finally paid by the company that had incurred them, someone made an application to the Planning Board, but Ms. Killam does not anticipate any other professional services, postage is very little, a pretty large mailing went out under code enforcements but that is all.

The Office Supplies line is \$1,500. Postage is \$25. New Equipment line is \$1. Nothing is planned. Mileage is \$100. The only mileage is to conferences. The Education and Conferences line is \$400. The building inspector goes to some association conferences. The Other/New line is \$0.

To sum up, the budget was \$48,773 for 2012 and she is requesting \$54,602 for 2013. The majority is an additional \$5,000 for code enforcement and a plumbing inspector.

Chairman Harold Morse informed Sue Killam that the Budget Committee had no more questions for now.

Road Agent - Ted Stewart was called to speak to the Budget Committee by Chairman Harold Morse. Mr. Stewart distributed copies of the road agent budget to members of the Budget Committee and went through the Highway Department Budget line by line. Mr. Stewart gave all members of the Budget Committee a copy of the budget worksheets for the departments he supervises.

Highway Department

Superintendents Office - \$64,801. Mr. Stewart informed the Committee that there was a mistake in first section of the budget, it should be the mirror image of last years, got corrected on labor side but not in that section lines 43111.130.01 and 43111.130.02, 210.00, 225.00 all need to be all need to be adjusted, they should come to \$64,801 instead of \$65990, the same as the 2012 budget numbers.

Engineering - (\$18,450 from handout). Telephone stays the same, engineering stays the same at \$10,000, electricity is up from \$1,200 to \$1,350 this year, the department spent \$1,300 last year, heating is the same at \$3,300, education and conferences are up \$200 (from \$600 to \$800), there is an issue with turn over, and every new guy has to be trained to flag and go to safety seminars, so does not see that line going down at all.

The Committee discussed education and conferences. The amount for education and conferences was only \$50 this year. Mr. Stewart replied that was as of June and July, the average expenditure over is \$600 in that line, and to maintain the recycling center, a mandatory number of conferences is needed or licenses will be lost, too many conferences are mandated.

Legal notices - \$2,000. Last year the budget was \$1,500, and the department spent \$2,300 in 2011, all advertisements are \$175 each, the department spent the majority of that line this month, and Mr. Stewart does not see cost going down. The majority of bids are due Friday. The Committee should see a true expenditure in that line in the middle of November.

The Committee discussed whether the department could advertise electronically and save money. Mr. Stewart stated that legally the notices have to be placed in a newspaper and that the procedure was to advertise bids in 2 newspapers.

Cleaning and maintenance (\$191,396 from handout) – The first four lines are for labor, the same as 2012. Summer labor is the same at \$32,083. Winter Labor is \$25,229. Fica and Medicare stay the same. Radio maintenance is \$500. Equipment repairs line is \$5,000. Minor equipment/small tools line is \$1,500, the department spent \$1,400 in 2011 and overspent in 2012. Gas oil electric line is \$9,500.

Truck lease - \$13,000. Last year it was zero. The Road Agent is requesting to replace a 5 year old truck. The cost for a Ford F550 fully equipped is \$94,000. The warranty is over. The 2008 F550's are engineered to be extremely expensive to repair, and have a hard service life, they are used for plowing and sanding, and they average between 4-8 mpg, the mileage for new trucks is double or triple, the new models have a new engine and transmission design. The department had a 3 year lease before for an F550, and in 2008 had a 5 year lease. The F550's have had major repairs under warranty and it would be better not to keep one after the warranty ends. \$13,000 is the biggest increase in the budget.

The Gravel/Summer line is \$8,000. Loam/Summer is \$1,000. Patch material/summer & winter is \$5,000. The Culverts line is \$3,000. The Sealers line is \$15,000. This is the 2nd major increase, the department spent \$10,000 in 2012 on crack sealing and only did 2 miles of road. Crack sealing is the least expensive way to preserve roads. Every asphalt center says it's the least expensive way to repair roads, it can gain 5 years on the life of the road.

The committee discussed the cost for gravel, loam, patch materials and sealers. It was pointed out that gravel is for summer only and the department used \$1,657 for 2012. \$8,000 was budgeted in 2011 and the department used \$2,500. Mr. Stewart informed the Committee that \$1,657 does not reflect any of the money spent this month just graveled shoulders of Bryant Woods, Indian Ridge and Robie Lane. They were shimmed and overlaid 3 years ago. The department also spent a fair amount at Woodlock and on the parking lot at the recycling center. Mr. Stewart replied that the department spent \$8,700 in 2009, and that it buys 3 things a year, asphalt, gravel and loam, to do a lot of small budget repairs. Mr. Stewart reiterated that the expenditure lines will not be legitimate until the end of November.

The Other Materials line is kept at \$2,000. The Catch Basins line is kept at \$3,000. The line for Stone is \$2,000 up from \$1,850 last year to \$2,000. The New equipment/Summer line is kept at \$1,200. The Rental line is kept at \$5,000 and reflects rentals coming in this month.

Mr. Stewart explained that every time the department does paving it needs to rent a roller, it is no longer renting a chipper so they saving money on that, and the Town does not own a cut off saw, they rent equipment to do difficult trees, but the main rentals are asphalt rollers and asphalt equipment.

Mileage - \$2,000 - Cut from \$3,000 Mr. Stewart does not charge mileage for the pickup but he wants to keep the mileage line.

Signs and line painting – \$12,000 - Increased by \$2,000. The department spent \$11,376 in 2011 and as of July, they have spent \$10,361. The \$12,000 figure is more representative of what the spent in the past. Mr. Stewart has put out yellow and white lines to bid and will have a fixed cost next week. Vandalism and stolen signs are variable costs.

Contract labor/Summer Hire - \$26,000 up from \$25,000, it has been \$25,000 for the last 4 years, costs are not the same as 4 years ago.

Tree removal – \$15,000 from \$10,000 a major jump. In 2010 the department spent \$17,000 and in 2011 it spent \$15,000. There are 50 miles of road to take dead trees out of the right of way, they try to take dead trees that are blocking drainage, the department can never have enough money to take dead trees. The tree work in town is all on state roads so the town is not benefiting from the Unitel cut.

Those are all the items for summer maintenance.

Winter Maintenance - Mr. Stewart is asking for \$500 less than in 2012. The Minor equipment line is \$2,000, down \$5,000 from last year because the department will have new sanders, new truck and plows. The Salt line is

\$50,000. The Sand line is reduced from \$1,500 to \$1,000. The Cutting Edges line is \$3,000. Contract labor is \$105,000, up from \$100,000 because they received a \$5.00 per hour pay increase.

The Highway Department Total for 2012 is \$436,836 compared to \$409,847 in 2011, a \$26,989 increase.

Street lighting – \$38,500. In 2011 the department spent \$37,793, as of July the department has spent \$28,600 and will over expend in 2012.

The Committee discussed whether or not to shut some lights off. It was suggested that the street lights could not be shut off if there were sidewalks. The Committee questioned if the street lights for state roads were separate from the Town budget and Mr. Stewart replied that the Town pays for the lights on the state roads, too. Mr. Stewart informed the Committee that a study was taking place, but shutting off the street lights is a very difficult decision. Most of the lights were granted to people by the Board of Selectmen. One member of the Committee added that his children wait for the school bus at 6:30 a.m. with no street lights.

Recycling Budget (\$35,022) –the 1st 4 lines stay the same as 2012, showing no increases in pay.

Other Professional Services - \$12,000 the same as last year and covers the costs for household hazardous waste recycling that Atkinson is hosting next year. Atkinson takes turns hosting recycling with 5 other towns. The money is reimbursed, so it is a wash item. It costs each town between \$3000 and \$4000 to pay for household waste removal. We have spent between \$2,100 and \$12,000 every 4 years and the average is \$4,000 per year. With the new contract, there are no more rentals or tipping fees, every ounce through the recycling center is free. The Committee discussed the difference in cost. Mr. Stewart informed them that it was about \$73 per ton.

The Equipment line was cut by \$100. The Education and Conferences line was cut by \$100. The Signs line is \$250, down from 450. The Contract labor line is \$13,000, the same as last year. It is for the company that grinds trees and brush and also covers the backhoe time to manage compost and yard waste.

Solid Waste - \$470,134 - In 2012 it was \$587, 100. Mr. Stewart explained that the new contract started in mid year and if tons generated over past 6 months are taken, then it is \$117,000 difference. Barbara Snicer informed the committee that the contract is for three years with 2 one year options.

Grounds Maintenance Budget (\$46,750) – reflects everything from the 2012 budget, and bids for lawn mowing and fertilizations, Bids are opening Friday and he will have numbers next week.

The Committee discussed road paving. Mr. Stewart explained that he planned to pave or repair Jericho, Saw Mill, Summit Drive from one end to the other, but Walker Road to Sawmill on Summit is going to be reclaimed. \$17,000 to shim some more of Meditation Lane. Chairman Morse asked if he had considered paving Old Coach Road because it is in bad shape. Mr. Stewart agreed and explained that he did an emergency shim on Summit 3 years ago, which has held up, but Old Coach Road is not slated for another 4 years in the 10 year plan. Mr. Morse mentioned that there is a “widow maker” on Sawyer Avenue in the west bound lane just before the culvert. The total is \$316,000 proposed. He does not have last 2012 figures in front of him from the Warrant Articles. Mr. Stewart pointed out that everything the committee discussed is maintenance not a single new road is being created.

Mr. Stewart stated that the Town goes through the Warrant Article process to maintain the roads. Road maintenance should be part of the Town budget and Warrant Articles should be used for anything new. The last ballot for road maintenance was 8 pages long. The Town has a 10 year plan for road maintenance and the costs should be reflected in the Budget, in order to present a true and factual cost of road maintenance.

Chairman Harold Morse informed the audience that the road agent budget is complete.

Chairman Morse asked if there was anything else. Mr. Smith said that he was having trouble accessing the server. The Committee agreed that Wendy call Mike and request read only access for

Next week the budget committee will review the Police Department, Elderly Affairs and Cable and IT.

Vice Chairman Bill Smith made a motion to adjourn. Sue Carroll seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor, Vote: 6/0 in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 pm.