

MINUTES OF THE MILFORD BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, November 16, 2024, 6:30 pm
Milford Fire Station, Meeting Room

PRESENT: Select Board Members - Paul Dargie, Tina Philbrick, Tim Finan, Chris Labonte, David Freel

Budget Advisory Committee Members - Paul Bartolomucci, Chris Pank, Kevin Hunter, Peg Seward, Claudia Lemaire, Wade Campbell (zoom)

ABSENT: Karen Mitchell, Vanessa Sheehan

TOWN STAFF: Lincoln Daley, Town Administrator, Troy Neff, Finance Director

Meeting is called to order at 9:00AM by Tim Finan

Lincoln Daley reviews the Municipal Budget for each department .

Lincoln discusses the increase in the budget for the town . The largest increase is a consulting study that was done for 35k in regards to assessment and housing. Lincoln reviews the other increases that are in the budget packet, mostly inflationary in nature, for dues and other services. The time clock is mentioned again and if we are locked into the rate until 2025, under line item 11012, contracted services. More discussion is needed for 2026 on the time clock and recording people's pay. A brief discussion is made regarding health care for town employees and forecasting for the next few years increases.

Arene Berry of Recreation reviews her budget. Recreation is now in charge of pool maintenance. She discusses the line items related to the pool and how she is working with finance to keep various pool costs separated. Arene uses a PowerPoint presentation to explain the 100k increase to the recreation budget. The pool needs repair in several areas and repairing is expensive . The pool is 56 years old and it is recommended to have a professional company do the repairs and painting. A suggestion for a capital reserve fund for the pool and pool maintenance is made by Tim Finan. We could possibly use the Town Facilities Capital Reserve Fund to help pay for the pool. The current Keyes Capital Reserve would need to have the wording changed by town vote to be more general instead of only for limited purposes in the park.

Chris Gentry from Granite Town Media discusses his budget. There are a few line items and they are mostly partial salary pay, training, and consulting.

Troy Neff from Finance reviews his budget for the year. He discusses the move to digitizing the paperwork for financial documents. It aids in efficiency especially during audits. Some of his costs included training, Troy would also like to see A/R and A/P to be separated at the town level to prevent fraud and aid in securing the financial assets of the town. He would like to see restructuring of the finance positions to allow for specific roles in accounting to aid in employee retention and built in training for positions. We are looking at changing banks and looking closely at how we pay vendors and current bills. We would like less fees and to earn more

revenue with our bank. He is also looking at postage and cost savings with postage for each department. A discussion is made on transition plans for various employees since many of the town's staff are at the age of retirement.

Karen Blow reviews the human resource budget. Her budget is mostly salary for both herself and a part-time employee. She has cut costs on both postage and membership fees. She has had zero need for travel costs this year. A discussion is made on her receiving a town phone instead of her personal cell phone due to privacy especially with employee relations. Karen reviews the open town positions. Currently we have twelve open positions. Employees are encouraged to do an exit interview. This will help us better understand and predict better ways to encourage employee retention.

Information technology employee Randy Ippolito discusses his budget. Many items on the budget are related to computer equipment and replacement costs associated with the equipment. There are also costs for software and consulting services.

Lincoln Daley reviews the budget for assessing. Much of the costs are for re-evaluation of property. A discussion in regards to completing a complete review of both residential and commercial assessing ensues. Labonte remarks that it may be beneficial to complete a full assessment in 2025 instead of commercial first then residential the following year.

Lisa Emerson discusses the budget for welfare. The amount needed to help citizens has increased. Much of this has to do with increased costs of two bedroom rentals. Welfare could use a per-diem part-time employee. Lisa can then focus on case management. Case management and the more time spent with those that need help ultimately encourages less financial need. Lisa can give residents ideas and resources to help them be successful financially.

Library trustee Lynn Coakley reviews the budget. Wages are seeing the most significant increase. They discuss the warrant article for bathrooms in the lower level of the library. Members of the BOS and BAC ask for the details on the Warrant. Freel expresses concerns on library bathrooms being rated a top priority by CIP. They also briefly discussed the parking lot renovation.

Ken Flaherty discusses the budget on Fire. Fire shows an increase in wages for firefighters.

There was an increase in overtime for employees. There are increases in equipment, clothing, and training of new employees. There is a discussion on the warrant article for employing six new firefighters and also the state grant to help fund the new employees. Ken discusses with the board the need for more firemen. He states that the skills set, time, and lack of people volunteering are driving the need for full-time employed firemen.

Camille Patterson of Community development discusses the movement to online permits. She states it is difficult to get all the work done with the current hours of employees. She continues to discuss the roles of planning and community development.

Chief Viola discusses the Police Department budget. Labonte begins a lengthy discussion on police vehicles and lease versus buying vehicles.

Leo Lessard discusses DPW budget. He also hands out a breakdown of building maintenance items for each structure that DPW is responsible for in town. Freel brings up converting to LED for all town buildings. A discussion had been made last year and the plan should be moved forward as it would save the town money in the long run. The line item for resurfacing has increased to 500k. The warrant article will be less than last year. We will continue to increase this line item.

Paul Dargie makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:30, Tina Philbrick seconds. All in favor.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by,

Claudia Lemaire, Secretary BAC