

**APPROVED MINUTES**  
**Select Board Budget Work Session**  
**Tuesday, December 11, 2018**  
**6:00 p.m.**

**Members present:** Rick Ebel, Steve Gutowski, Jim Benoit, and Jessica James

**Town Employees present:** Deb Healey

6:00 pm - Rick opened the meeting. Deb discussed the updated budget that was handed out, detailing the two front pages with a difference showing revenue total based on line items on property taxes. Deb stated we need to figure out how much more in property taxes we will need to cover the budget.

Rick stated that he received an email from Marsha Hoffman regarding the Bixby Memorial Library asking if a presentation was necessary for their budget request and that the proposed budget was level funded at \$61,050 on line 9400.

Discussion on health care insurance coverage. Deb said that the 4 town employees who have health care insurance have decided to go with the option of joining the Addison County Chamber of Commerce and being included in their health care insurance coverage option. Deb said it would cost \$15 per person per month for chamber membership, and overall it is a modest increase in cost over last year.

Rick stated that we will be removing the line item for recycling line 3640-00. Rick stated that R&L Haulers will be working at the Vergennes location beginning January 1, 2019, and will be fee based, as discussed in previous meetings.

Rick asked Deb to clarify the Railroad tax budget line 2000-00-20. Deb stated that those numbers are declining, that the state sets the tax rate, this year approaching a conservative revenue expectations, and she has been working on this with Pam.

Rick asked about the Land Recordings and other clerk fees. Jess and Deb said the state statute sets the prices for the land records, free copies for residents and .10 cents for any additional copies that are not from the vault. Discussion on increasing fees. Jess stated that Carl and Justus mentioned an office fee during the previous budget meeting and asked Rick if he had received any email regarding this. Rick stated that he had not. Discussion on tax appeal process and assessments losing money on lake frontage. Steve stated he felt that the town is losing money from approving tax appeals for lake frontage properties and then the homes are rebuilt and sold for much more than what appraised at.

Deb stated that she set the legal fees on the budget line 3510-60 for \$10,000, level funded, and currently we are at 83% of the budget. Jim stated we should leave the amount at \$10,000.

Deb asked about adding another budget line item for tax sales. Discussion on last tax sale that was held some time ago and not necessarily a needed line item, and agreement on hiring Jim Carroll to assist Deb with the process. Discussion on hiring a new tax collector by March.

Jim asked about the money in the contingency fund to cover payroll wages, annual raises. Deb stated that the money in contingency was \$4,063 and how it becomes actual wages at the end of the year with a 2% increase in wages raise. Rick asked if we could move the contingency line below the minute taker budget line. Discussion on minute takers, being Jean and Tim, with Tim's zoning bylaws rewrite taker time coming out of this line item.

Discussion on salary positions and hourly positions and how this will be discussed during review time in June. Steve said this is not a critique but an effort to understand all payroll costs. Conversation ensued around overtime pay across departments. Discussion on cross training and work being done by Gloria and Jean for the selectboard and possibly a selectboard clerk needed. Steve stated that we need to look at the long term, we need someone who could properly manage these budgets that grow every year, possibly a town manager should be something we need to think about within 5 or so years. Jim said we need to contain costs and efficiency. Jim asked why the line item for road foreman actual paid looks so much larger than the budgeted line item. Deb explained it was the 40 hours of regular pay, 5 hours of overtime pay on Friday and on call time all together. Discussion on payroll and how to create transparency with the budget lines to show that we are on budget and not over. Jim stated a line item for Road Foreman for 5 hour Friday overtime pay should be a separate line item. Discussion on how it would be easier to communicate to taxpayers that it is just the road foreman overtime. Deb could still key it in separately for payroll processing, keeping the budget line item 5100-10.10 Wages- Overtime for the entire Highway Department, including the foreman's additional overtime pay.

Jim stated that he had emailed Jon Bull regarding the proposed new truck for the highway department. Rick stated that equipment will be discussed at our next regular select board meeting.

Motion to adjourn by Jessica James and seconded by Steve Gutkowski. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 7:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica James