

Lebanon Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes

1-27-16

Members Present - Jeri Basko, Laura Bragg, Corinna Cole, Chris Gilpatrick, Bettie Harris-Howard, Nancy Neubert, Skip Wood

Selectmen Present - Chairperson Thompson, Royce Heath

Department Head - Tom Torno

Recorders: Jeannette Lemay (video)

Meeting was called to order by Secretary Neubert at 6:35. Minutes from last week were read. Corrections were as follows -

“Selectman Thompson” again asked for a line to be stricken from previous minutes was replaced with “The Selectboard” again asked.

Rescue/fire personal are paid \$35./night of coverage and \$10./hour/call.

The Night Schedule line was off by \$121,910. - it was added in twice.

The Fire/Rescue budget is not down this year but remains the same.

Chris Gilpatrick motioned for the minutes to be accepted as corrected, Bettie Harris-Howard seconded. The minutes were approved as corrected by a unanimous 7 - 0 vote.

The Committee discussed electing a new chairperson. Nancy Neubert nominated Jeri Basko and was seconded by Laura Bragg. Jeri was unanimously elected by a 7 - 0 vote.

Chris Gilpatrick requested that the Committee go into executive session. Ben Thompson called one of the town’s attorneys to get an opinion on whether the Budget Committee could go into executive session. The matter was discussed for approximately 15 minutes with the lawyer Anne Freeman. It was not clear if the committee should use executive session or not so Gilpatrick went out in the parking lot with those members (Skip Wood, Laura Bragg, Bettie Harris-Howard) who wished to hear what he had to say. Selectman Thompson stated to Tom Torno that if they did not return in 5 minutes, Tom could leave and Thompson would lock the doors. Nancy Neubert went out to inform Gilpatrick of this. Everyone returned in less than 5 minutes and the meeting continued.

Highway Department

Tom Torno was present to explain his budget. Regular wages will stay the same as this year. The Town employs Tom as a salaried supervisor. In the winter there is one other employee and in summer, 2 other employees.

Staff Development and Payroll Taxes remain the same.

In the Supplies section, Miscellaneous Materials and Supplies will be eliminated. The Budget Committee recommended dropping the Vehicle Fuel line from \$10,400. to \$9,000. due to drop in fuel prices. Torno receives \$50./week in travel expenses.

In Utilities, electricity remains the same and heating fuel is 0 due to the electric heat in the roads office. The Phone line is up \$50. This pays for the land line in the office and Torno's smart phone reimbursement.

The Repair/Maintenance section remains the same. This includes building, radio and backhoe maintenance.

In Equipment, the backhoe lease amount remains the same at \$34,403. The 2016/17 payment is the last of 3 yearly payments. Equipment rental may go up as chipper rental may be moved to this line.

The Services line has not been spent this year - \$500.

Traffic Signal will be the line for only the light at Depot Road.

The Sanding line is up by \$10,000. to a total of \$135,000.

Plowing is going up by \$20,000. to a total of \$175,000. Committee members questioned why "bonuses" were paid to people who plow for the town. Originally this was to buy cutting edges for the plows. Evidently this was illegal so now they just call it a signing bonus.

Excavating remains the same at \$30,000. Ditching will double to a total of \$15,000. It was noted that the Ditching line is already over budget this year by over \$10,000. The Hauling line is being eliminated and put into other budget lines.

Signs are down to \$1,000. This line will now include purchasing the signs and installing them.

Mowing will stay the same this year at \$8,500. The Town mows traffic islands, the old town dump and the sides of roads. Sweeping is in the budget this year but was not last year (\$1,000.).

Shoulder Work is a new line this year (\$10,000.). This line combines other lines in the budget.

The Paving line is back in the budget. This includes driveway approaches and hot top repair.

Brush Cutting is back in the budget. This line will be used for hauling the chipper and chips.

The Cold Patch line will now be for labor only. There will be another line for the cold patch itself.

Culvert work and Grading each now have their own separate lines. In the past, the town has replaced culverts in driveway approaches after the homeowner has installed the first culvert. This line is for the labor portion of installing culverts. The Town grades 13 dirt roads approximately twice a year.

The Loading and Dump line has been eliminated. The Cutting Trees line is down by \$1,000. to a total of \$29,000. The committee questioned whether hiring an independent company would be more cost efficient.

Advertising is down \$100. to a total of \$400.

In Highway Materials/Supplies, Winter Salt (\$65,000.) and Winter Sand (\$55,000.) remain the same. Gravel is down \$10,000. to a total of \$60,000. Cold Patch is also down \$3,000. to a total of \$12,000.

There is a new line for Hot Top with a total of \$10,000. This is material for small projects.

Miscellaneous Materials & Supplies is being eliminate. Guardrails remain the same at \$2,000.

The Culvert line remains the same at \$10,000. Tools and Safety Supplies is down \$500. to a total of \$2,000. This line includes small tools, batteries, etc.

This Grading line has been moved to Outside Services.

There is another Signs line which was for materials. This line is at \$2,500. and is for having specific signs made for the town.

There was much discussion about whether some of the independent companies work only in Lebanon or have work outside of town, especially in the cutting brush and cold patching areas. If a business works for the town only they are really employees.

This budget is up \$62,700.

Total Budget: \$795,168.

Next Week - Capitol Improvement Projects, Cemetery and Memorial Day, and Miscellaneous Items

Chris Gilpatrick motioned to adjourn and Skip Wood seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:50 with a unanimous 7 - 0 vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Neubert

Approved as corrected 2-3-16