

Newport Selectboard and  
Budget Committee Joint Meeting  
Minutes  
April 7, 2021 @ 5:30

1. Call to Order

All Board members present except B. Clarke who came in at regular meeting time.

Present from Budget Committee:

1. Phil Brown
2. Barbara Brown
3. Rick Peck
4. George Phelps
5. Ginger Phelps

Meeting moved directly into the first of three budget workshops scheduled for April 7, 14, and the 21<sup>st</sup>.

Manager presented the following budgets where no formal votes were taken, either by the Selectboard or the Budget Committee.

1) Public Works: \$467,865 Increased primarily due to the additional full-time position added which negated the need for part time. Manager spoke of the increase in pay due to the hardship in locating quality employees and the need to acknowledge and retain a trained staff.

2) Cemeteries: \$44,199 It was explained that 12 weeks of pay for one Public Works employee is deducted from the cemetery account with all benefits deducted. The second cemetery worker is also a full time Solid Waste employee who is simply reassigned in the months requiring mowing duties. His actual pay is split between the Solid Waste and Cemetery accounts.

3) Trees and Parks: \$15,000 Maintained the same budget as the past 3 years, moneys expended on an as need basis, primarily for tree removal.

4) Road Construction and Paving: \$475,000 Increase of \$75,000 to address the annual equipment and maintenance requirements of storm drains, street sweeping, cutting edges, etc. \$50,000 would be earmarked for gravel road repair with \$23,000 already earmarked to complete work on Camp Benson and Maplewood.

5) Solid Waste: \$407,668 This account is increased due to the need for part time replacement labor this summer for the employee being transferred to mowing and to replace another for maternity leave. Manager stated there has been no applicants after one month of advertising for both positions. \$7,000 was reduced from this account after discussing the need for another metal container.

The following accounts were also reviewed, and some discussed:

- 1) Bad Debts \$200
- 2) Professional Services: \$55,850 Increase in audit service and deduct in legal
- 3) Planning Board: Reduction to \$1,900
- 4) Elections: \$3,099 Increase in overall budget, but only two elections identified
- 5) Board of Appeals: \$1,018
- 6) Code enforcement: \$23,506 Manager spoke to the lack of qualified individuals in this position.
- 7) Streetlights: \$26,320 New LED has resulted in a savings of \$22,604 after debt service payment and Capital equipment account created.
- 8) Municipal Insurance: \$82,047 Simple increase of approx. 4% as we will not know until mid-year what increases there may be.
- 9) Hydrant: \$252,000 same cost to the Water district as the past 7-8 years.

Selectboard thanked the budget committee, in which the majority left prior to the regular meeting.

Regular Agenda:

Communications:

1. Approval of minutes from meeting held 3-17-21 K. Rush / G. Demos, unanimous
2. Manager reported that the harvest of trees from the towns lot has yielded approx. \$14,648 when forest operations were halted due to the early spring. He anticipates at least that much more in stumpage before operations conclude.

5. Old business:

- a. Street lights: The second phase on installation to commence within the next few weeks. All three lights at the school were eliminated due to current visibility being sufficient.
- b. Town Office heat pumps: Final approval has been granted and all contracts are signed, awaiting delivery.

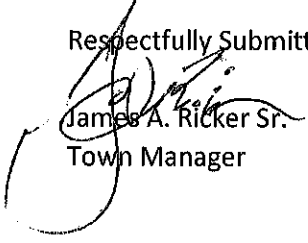
6. New Business

- a. Labor Market: Manager stated that there are five positions open with the town, 1-full time and 4 part time without a single applicant. He identified the abundance of funds for the unemployed and the fact everyone is trying to hire both full and part time help.

7. Warrant: K. Rush / G. Demos, unanimous

8. Adjourn: K. Rush /G. Demos, unanimous

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James A. Ricker Sr.", is written over the typed name. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "R".

James A. Ricker Sr.

Town Manager