

TOWN OF WILTON

March 31, 2025

SELECTBOARD/FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Members Present: Gwen Doak, Richard Lumb, Kyle Fletcher, Christian Waller, Randy Hall, David Leavitt, Tiffany Maiuri, Mike Wells, Keith Swett, Phil Hilton, Katharine Johnston, Maria Greeley (Town Manager).

(FULL RECORDING IS AVAILABLE AT www.mtbluetv.org)

Item # 1- Pledge of Allegiance

Item #2- Fire Department Budget Presentation

Maria stated as a group, the officers decided to discuss the wages for this year's budget so there is an increase in the employee compensation line. Everyone will be budgeted for the same number of hours to be tracked easier with the understanding not every officer is going to use the total amount of hours.

Katharine Johnston stated they have not been paid for office times previously, so the increase includes time used for office hours as well.

Maria states it includes training, writing grants, and those types of items that weren't being budgeted for correctly. As of last year, some of the radio budget was adjusted into the public safety building.

Kyle asked how much work was being completed while not getting paid for the work.

Sonny stated it was hard to say but the grants were a big part of that. The increase would cover hours spent on grants and training. On average, there were five people per call with 265 calls a year.

Maria stated the extra calls were not being recorded and submitted for payment.

David asked for the 16% increase, how much of that wage increases versus an increase in hours

Katharine stated everyone was given a 4% increase, so 4% out of the 16% is wages.

Tiffany asked which grants were successful.

Sonny states a door system from the Leary Foundation Grant. It is a training prop strike door that allows for training in forced entry. Sonny states other departments will be allowed to train with it as well.

Tiffany confirmed it was around \$10,000.

Sonny states the other grant received was the forestry grant for suits, pants, and other items.

Maria states the department also applied for a grant to pay for the diesel exhaust system inside the building, but it wasn't enough to cover the entire system. The grant would have been \$10,000 towards a \$26,000 job.

Mike questioned why there was a 70.5% increase on the employee compensation line when there was a 16% increase in hours.

Maria states in prior years, it was not being calculated correctly. Last year, an existing workbook was used, and it wasn't 100% accurate to gather the amount for the employer contributions. Maria is confident in this year's number.

Mike asked about how much money was in the account for another fire engine.

Katharine states \$194,000 and that money has been taken out and put into a CD and for this budget, it was budgeted under the TIF account.

Sonny states a new truck can take up to 700 days but wants to start now to get it all lined up to put it into a grant. A new truck ranges between \$800,000 to \$1,000,000.

Maria stated the \$55,000 pulled from the TIF that was put into CD was already allocated from the TIF and will not interfere with the appropriated money. Truck is estimated to be replaced in FY 29-30.

Keith states it is a 19% increase for the fire department.

Maria states using the TIF fund is a great use of carryover funds to help a department plan.

Katharine states the \$55,000 is locked into a six-month CD at 4.2%. \$500 has been earned on that money. If the budget is approved, another \$55,000 can be added and the CD can be renewed. There is not a huge impact on pulling the money out due to already exceeding the \$40,000 mark for budget. \$93,000 in interest has already been earned this year.

Sonny states the equipment capital account has been used for gear turnover. Last year, 10 pairs of boots and 10 helmets were bought. This year will be the same because there are 20 firefighters. A battery-operated Jaws of Life will also be purchased.

Sonny states are working closer with the PD to see what the building needs.

Mike states with the capital back in, this year's increase is still 7% and questioned if there was a way to keep it to 3%.

Randy states it is hard to budget how many calls are received.

Sonny states there were 95 calls from November 25th until March 25th, when normally there is only around 260-270 a year.

Tiffany mentioned the new proposed fire regulations from NFPA and if the new regulations had come out, the budget would be a lot different.

Maria asked if East Dixfield wanted to be brought up.

Randy states East Dixfield is in good shape.

Item #3- Public Works Department Budget Presentation

Maria noted that there was a decrease of \$500 in the mandated testing.

John states the testing is when they call them in for a drug test, the number can go up or down.

Maria stated John is working on getting his diagnostic scanner, which was budgeted for, the amount is for the yearly maintenance and yearly subscription fees.

John states it's about \$2,100 a year.

Parts, repairs, and equipment went up for the normal amount of increase on costs of parts and outsourcing repairs.

Maria states bids are due to replace the grader.

Mike questioned if things were breaking more.

John states the older trucks break a lot more than the newer trucks, so the older trucks cost a lot more. We will replace them with the schedule we have. Prices are just going up and some parts aren't available at the parts stores so overnight shipping fees sometimes occur to get the trucks back on the road.

Maria stated utilities were decreased. \$50,000 is still being appropriated for a building.

Kyle asked if the price of propane went down.

John stated it had been over budgeted for the last couple of years.

Maria stated John met with the road committee and there were recommended roads on the priority list. Roads will stay at \$600,000 and are still putting away \$100,000 for the sidewalk reconstruction. The sidewalk reconstruction is from Depot St. around the academy which is hoped to be completed by the next fiscal year.

Tiffany asked if the Wilton Road priorities workbook is still the same or was it adjusted.

John states the work that wasn't finished last year will be done first to catch up and then will continue.

Christian asked if the paving index cost higher than it did before.

John states yes. A couple of years ago it was \$79 a ton and last year it was \$135 a ton. John mentioned he changed the type of gravel from screen gravel to truck gravel which costs more initially but will last longer.

Maria states gas and diesel increased due to increased pricing.

Maria states we are due to go out to bid for waste hauling.

John states siding was purchased for the building at the Transfer station. At some point, the parking lot will need to be paved.

Maria states for cemeteries, contractual wages increased and the capital account. There's a lawnmower, cemetery truck, trailer, and three mowers. The trailer was built in 2016, so money is being put away now for when a new trailer is needed.

Maria states there was a conversation with the cemetery committee about the maintenance that needs to be done. This year, ditching the Lakeview Cemetery will be focused on. Minor low maintenance repairs to stones will also be done.

David asked how much interest had accrued in the cemetery bond.

Maria stated she would find out.

Tiffany stated there were curious citizens about why we mow our own cemeteries and not outsource it.

John stated a full-time position was made to cover summertime and plowing. This full-time position could be done cheaper and better than subcontracting. Ten years ago, \$28,000 was being paid to contract it out.

Tiffany stated that having our own department gives us control to make sure that when somewhere needs to be mowed, it can be. It is a cost-saving method as well.

David states having a full-time year-round job benefits the winter and the people who were doing the cemetery before were doing less than satisfactory work.

Mike stated that it's not cost saving but more improved quality.

Tiffany stated it is cost savings because instead of two halftime employees, it allows a full-time employee.

John states from April to October pay comes out of the cemetery budget and the winter months out of highway. Outsourcing was just mowing, not maintenance as well.

Randy clarified the people we have now are doing the maintenance, not just mowing.

John stated another project is running a line of town water to the cemetery rather than a pump. If it can be squeezed in this year to do it at the same time as ditching it will save a lot of headaches.

Maria stated the increase in town infrastructure is the capital account. It is for the parking lot at the Transfer station and being the Town office, which needs paving. Other parking lots listed are the Public Works lot, boat launch, Canal St., High St., and the Wilson Stream parking lot.

Maria stated, in addition to a person within the public works team, to consider one being a facilities worker. The facility worker's job description includes tasks such as going through the town buildings and giving us an assessment or recommendations. This position would increase the compensation line by about \$1,500.

John stated the work would be done spring to fall, plowing will take priority.

Item #4- Parks and Recreation Department Budget Presentations

Maria stated there is a 12.6% increase under the employee compensation. This is due to increasing officer hours and expanding some programs that are offered. This increases employer contributions as well. There is a decrease in office supplies and materials due to overfunding in previous years. There is roughly \$1,300 increase in programming supplies to expand programming.

Jordan states for fees there's only one Red Cross swim license, softball league has 3 teams and is looking to expand the travel basketball program.

David asked if there was an estimate in revenue increase.

Jordan states we totaled last year's number up and there was an increase over the 2024 season. Most funds are taken at the end of June. As far as revenues go, there's a potential decrease in revenue for our facilities due to the lack of buildings available to rent.

Kyle asked if more stuff was being provided.

Jordan states they are trying to bring back field hockey and they are in communication with the Children's Task Force for their summer program. It is a six-week program that goes from 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM. Trying to build a program that extends hours to create a more accessible time frame. Jordan states trying to find the older demographic something to do would be beneficial.

Tiffany asked where the boat ramp falls in the budget.

Maria states it is not in the budget.

Jordan stated within the last six months he has been going through paperwork and has found easements for the boat ramp at the head of the lake. Within the past work was done to improve it and the state reimbursed for the work done. It's been in discussion about finding out where the ramp and docks lie, whose possession they are in, and when it is time to update them, how to go about it.

Tiffany stated swim buoys came in last year.

Jordan stated yes, they will be put out this spring for everyone to use for a safety zone. It is a message for boaters to stay out of that space.

Maria stated for Parks and facilities there was a misclassification last year and the parks gates attendant was moved into the parks and facilities budget. This caused an increase in the employee compensation line. Work hours will also be increased to complete the work needed. There are a lot of buildings that need repairs, the reunion barn and the tractor building will be worked on this year.

Jordan stated the tractor building's roof has received some quotes and it was anywhere from \$9,000 for shingles and around \$9,800 for metal. Jordan stated the other big increase is in the ground maintenance line. Jordan received his certified playground safety inspector in the fall and there are a lot of updates needed to make legally. Starting with the impact abrasion material and trying to save as much of the old playground equipment as possible.

Keith mentioned between the two it's still a 19% increase.

Jordan states he is trying to account for everything done and trying to grow the recreation to have a bigger offset with revenue.

Item #5- Community Services Budget Presentations

Maria stated general assistance was increased by \$2,000 for unforeseen circumstances. The ACO was increased by 4%.

Mike asked for clarification on the actual unaudited numbers. He questioned whether we set aside six grand but paid out \$47,000.

Maria clarified we get reimbursed for 70%.

For outside organizations, Community Concepts and Safe Voice's came. \$9,300 was requested from everyone.

Maria states Care and Share Food Closet, Community Concepts, Maine Public, and Safe Voices completed everything.

Tiffany states the only one that interests her is Life Flight didn't because Life Flight relies on the municipalities, they get donations from. Tiffany suggests Life Flight be put on for consideration because of the importance of Life Flight.

Gwen stated they requested \$959.

Maria added Life Flight in.

Maria stated the outside organizations currently stand at \$10,259. Last year, \$7,000 was raised for the watershed survey.

Keith questioned why there were three lines for events and if they could be combined at some point.

Jordan states part of that is for the Christmas tree lighting and the trunk or treat. It is a breakdown for specific events.

Maria states there were a lot of questions about what was spent on the Blueberry Festival.

Item #6- Other

David asked where the Care and Share Food Program was.

Maria stated Farmington. Before the next meeting, she will go through and make sure everyone who requested is in there.

Gwen asked to get the total on the cemetery fund and the TIF accounts.

Maria stated there is a tab for appropriations in the workbook. Maria is confident of being able to appropriate \$400,000 from the undesignated fund. The \$50,000 listed is the unanticipated expenses that come off the emergency contingency. \$159,000 is everything including the \$55,000 being pulled for the fire truck this year.

David questioned if after we appropriate the money out of the TIF there will still be a balance of \$190,000.

Katie stated there is currently \$192,000 in the TIF so the \$55,000 will be drawn from that. There would still be money left over from whatever comes from the tax.

Maria stated the balance would be \$190,000 minus \$55,000 plus anything that is not appropriated from the current value.

Tiffany stated looking at the total percentage increase, is 2.4%, correct?

Maria stated correct, that is including the county and RSU which final numbers are not out.

David asked for the next meeting to have a refresher on what the TIF can be used for.

Katie stated public safety equipment, public safety building, and anything related to public safety. The TIF account is evolving and can be used towards public safety buildings. Revenues are looking good, right now in the quarter we are at we should be at 75%. We are under that. Same thing for revenue, we are at 91%.

Maria stated we have a short audit and are confident in the UFB. There was a discussion around policy change but there was no actual vote.

David stated it is good to have targets, but it doesn't mean everyone is hit every year.

Mike states there are things we need to do that we are getting behind on.

Item #7- Adjourn

Motion by Tiffany/Second by Keith- to adjourn.

Unanimous