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Selectboard:
Jan Gaudio
Walter Reitz
John Spear

SELECT BOARD MINUTES

Date: February 25, 2021 **Time:** 9:00 am **Zoom Meeting** **Rev:0**

Select Board Present: Walter Reitz and Jan Gaudio
Others Present: Terri-Lynn Baines, Mo Dube, Bryan Calderwood and David Elwell.

Note:

I. Call to Order

Reitz called the meeting to order at 9:12

II. Adjustments to the Agenda

There were no adjustments to the agenda

III. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

There was no Public comment

IV. New Business

A. Presentation of the following budgets

- **Mo Dube – CEO/LPI**

Reitz told Mo to put in a 2% cola increase in salary. It is at the board's discretion to add up to 1% after her evaluation.

Code books are an annual purchase. Dube didn't purchase new books last year and would like to get the latest updates.

Gaudio pointed out in the 2019 budget \$1500 was in mileage/training but wasn't used. He wondered if \$1000 would be enough. Dube agreed to adjust that line. Reitz asked her certification status. Dube said she has completed certification.

She meets once a month with local CEOs. Gaudio asked if the cost of the association is in the budget. Dube said there is no cost. Reitz asked if she would give a report on these meetings in her monthly Department Head report. Gaudio suggested that Dube bring the certification in to be put in her personnel file.

Dube is dealing with the solar farm. They have filed an informal permit with her, and she will put the solar farm on the next planning board meeting agenda.

Dube received calls from citizens concerning the solar farm. wanting to know if an application had been submitted to the town. She informed the citizens and the newspaper an application has not been received by the town. Dube called the company and they will be filing a report in 20 days. This was not a complaint about her it was a complaint about the solar farm. Citizens that called thought the solar farm had been approved without hearings etc.

Gaudio inquired if the personnel issue has been resolved. Dube feels that it has been.

- **Bryan Calderwood & David Elwell – Fire Department**

The discussion started on 2020 Wages. Actuals were lower than budgeted. Chief said this is because there were no truck nights or training because of COVID-19.

Chief Calderwood started with salary and stipend. He added 3% across the board for six months and 12 months. Wages fluctuate between personnel. Reitz asked if that brings wages into the competitive range. Reitz asked if they had more fire fighters than last year which they do. Wages are based on training and firefighting. Chief Calderwood used the same call hours as used in 2020.

Contracted services

A lot does not get spent in the first six months in any given year that's why there isn't a lot in the six months. Increased pump test and maintenance because that line went over last year. We spend more money on the third due truck than on the first. There was a discussion of when the town was due to replace a truck. Replace in 2023 or 2025. Chief thought 2023.

Deputy Elwell questioned about waiting to spend money. The department will usually wait for tax money to come in. Now there will be two tax bills money will come in October and April. Pump maintenance is usually done in the fall after tax money has started to come in.

Fire pond maintenance line last year was \$7000 and was to come out of the reserve account. It wasn't done. The chief asked if we can still move forward with it. Gaudio thought so as did Reitz. Reitz told Calderwood to put it in the budget and it will come from the reserve.

Gaudio question the amount of wages being so much larger. What is driving it? Chief replied it is the training. The department is doing an in-house fire training program every Monday night. Gaudio said he still does not understand the \$11,000 jump. Calderwood's explanation is the department is catching up on the trainings they lost in 2020 due to COVID-19. Gaudio asked how many fire fighters the department has. The Department has 20 fire fighters. Chief will look at the wages again. Gaudio suggested he be prepared to explain to the budget committee. Gaudio asked about the substantial increase in the hose testing line. There is money so Fail Safe can do the ladder testing. 2020 actuals are lower because Fail Safe was only able to do one truck.

Fuel and phone

Not much increase

Dues/ Fees/Travel

Not much change. Most expenses will be in the year budget.

Supplies

Not much change. Guesstimate on what the fire department will spend.

Equipment

Gaudio asked for explanation on the increase in turn out gear. Chief said some equipment need to be replaced. Some members are coming off probation and needed to be fitted properly. We have two or three more coming out of training program that need to be fitted. We must keep the supply up because equipment can get ruined at a fire. We have to have some in stock. Gaudio asked if there was a life span on the gear. Chief replied yes 10 years. There are different types of gear for inside and outside fires. Gaudio would like a break down on the turn out gear. Reitz agreed. This line was overspent in 2020.

\$1200 for SCBA masks. Older masks don't work with the new bottles.

The Chief would like to purchase 6 new air packs that are \$8000 apiece. He would like to use money in the reserve account to knock the \$48,000 down to \$32,000. Current air packs are getting older. The department tests them monthly, but they need to be upgraded. Some are the 1997 version, and some are the 2007 version. Chief Calderwood said probably 60 to 70% of the time the crew use them at a fire.

Repeater for radio frequency is removed.

AFG Grant has been submitted. The Town's share would be \$3000 for a \$60,000 project. We could find out in April or June if we are awarded the grant.

Exhaust system -If we are not approved for the AFG Grant.

Chief talked to Clean Air Technology. They have offered to sign a contract for \$18,000 for the next three years and they would install the system. The black stains in the building are from the exhaust coming into the building. Reitz wondered if we borrow as a capital improvement. Interest rates are very low. Gaudio asked the chief if he thought this is an air quality issue. The chief feels it is. Gaudio wanted to know if the ducts have been cleaned. Chief didn't know. System has been an ongoing issue. New system would be hooked to the exhaust system of the truck. This would also include the ambulance. Gaudio agreed this would be a capital improvement.

Thermal imagine camera. The current camera is 15 years old. It still works but often at a scene crews must wait to use it. There was a discussion on the crew's roles on a mutual aid call. Chief Calderwood said the fire department is busier now than they were 15 years ago. They are being called on to help other towns more than in the past. Chief feels we have a strong department with a great morale. Our fire department is on the top of the list to be requested for mutual aid. Reitz suggested Calderwood educate the budget committee / community more on the scope of the work the fire department does.

Survival suits

To replace some of our current suits that were given to us by the Coast Guard. This will purchase 6 suits. Old ones are used for training.

Gaudio suggested chief look at his budget and maybe spread the purchases out over a few years.

Reserves

Fire Pond Maintenance 0

Fire Truck Reserve. Normal increase of 15% from the year prior. Chief asked for an explanation of how the repayment goes back into the fire truck reserve account. The Town took funding from the Ambulance reserve. A Special town meeting allowed the town to borrow from the fire truck reserve. The money will be paid back by 2023 in time for the 2023 acquisition of a new fire truck.

Fire Equipment Reserve

Used last year would like to replenish in 2021 so we can use in 2022.

Fire SCBA reserve

Would like to take out so not asking to put in.

New additions

Cascade air system reserve

\$5000 This is the system we use to fill our air bottles the department purchased it in 2002 or 2003 Someday it will need to be replace. This system cost \$40,000 when it was new.

Reitz asked if Thomaston, St. George or Owls Head have one? If they don't, what do they do? Chief replied they travel to Rockland and take bottles out of service until they can be filled. A discussion followed about looking at other towns for partnerships.

Gaudio recommend a cap on the reserve accounts. Maybe \$50,000 for cascade and \$10,000 for the communication. Chief agrees. He will get a price on cascade system and communications to come up with a cap.

Communication Reserve

Not for repeater more for common equipment. Working on a communication grant with Knox County. The Town would only need 5%. When the county changes frequency and goes digital, we would be ready in the event we needed to replace our communication equipment.

V. Adjourn

Gaudio moved and Reitz seconded a motion to adjourn at 10:37

Motion passed 2-0

Minutes approved by Selectboard 3-9-2021