

**Board of Selectmen
January 6, 2024
Selectmen's Workshop Minutes**

Present: Selectmen Ed Haskell, Bob Berti, and Isaac DeWever
Town Administrator: Joe Chivell

8:45 PM Meeting was called to order by Board Chair Ed Haskell.

The Workshop was scheduled to review the proposed 2024 Town of Rumney Municipal Budget.

Selectman, Bob Berti, reported that he attended the Russell School Budget Hearing earlier this week. It is reported that the 2024 local school budget is having an anticipated total impact of a 13.7% increase

The Board members conducted a line-by-line review of the Department Heads' Proposed Operating Budgets. Only lines that were adjusted will be noted in this set of minutes.

The initial request to replace the 2015 F-550 Highway Department truck. Road Agent, Nick Coursey, has asked that a warrant article be presented in the amount of \$105,000 to replace the truck. The Board of Selectmen determine to propose a Warrant Article in the amount of \$90,000, to be completely funded by the Highway Department Equipment Capital Reserve Fund, to purchase a replacement Highway Department truck, outfitted with a plow, dump body and sander.

The Conservation Commission requested funding in the amount of \$17,000. Included in the funding request was the regular \$2,000 amount, \$5,000 for updating the 20-year-old Natural Resources Inventory, and \$10,000 for a "Rumney Clean Up Day". The Board discussed the planning needs, DES policies, and total impact on the Transfer Station operations of a "Clean-up Day" being hosted. The average cost for a weekly 40-yard dumpster used at the Transfer Station is approximately \$1,700.00. The Board reduced the total amount of the Conservation Commission funding to \$9,000 and would like to see an action plan if a "Clean Up Day" were to be planned.

Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, had recommended the Selectmen Salary line be increased by \$900. After discussion, the Board reduced that to a \$600 increase.

The Fire Department budget reflected a line item for Hose funding of \$9,500. \$5,000 to be used on any needed hose and \$4,500 for hose and ladder testing and cataloging. The Board determined to fund the testing and cataloging with the Fire Department Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. The operating budget will reflect \$5,000 for hose and a warrant article will be drafted in the amount of \$4,500 for the hose and ladder testing and cataloging.

Selectman, Ed Haskell, suggested the amount to be provided to the Health Agencies that had requested funding. Selectmen DeWever and Berti agreed. See attached list.

The Highway Department Outside Labor request was reduced from \$14,000 to \$12,000. The Justification form provided to support the initial amount listed payment for Grading of the roads and mowing. Those two items are paid by the Part-time Employee line item created last year.

The Highway Department New Equipment line was reduced from \$7,500 to \$3,000. The Justification form provided to support that initial amount listed the purchase of an end wall for the newly constructed Sand Shed. During discussions of this project, it was determined the end wall should be built not purchased.

The Highway Department Winter Sand/Salt line was reduced from \$16,000 to \$14,000. It had been discussed that keeping the winter sand in the new sand shed would reduce the amount of salt used.

The explanation of increase in the Workers' Compensation line was that in 2023 the Town enjoyed a "payment holiday". In 2022 the Workers' Compensation premium was \$13,494. In two years, the actual increase was \$125.

The Planning Board Clerical line was reduced from \$8,000 to \$6,000. This was based on actual expenditures for the past several years.

The Planning Board New Equipment line was increased from \$200 to \$500. Selectman, Isaac DeWever explained that the Planning Board has talked about purchasing equipment for live streaming.

The Town Clerk retirement line was reduced from \$6,045 to \$3,000. The Town Clerk/Tax Collector position is one of very few optional participation positions in the NH Retirement System. The current Town Clerk/Tax Collector has not opted to take part in the system. Funds were left in the line in case the member chose to join.

The last items discussed were salary adjustments for all full-time and part-time employees, and if any adjustments were to be made to the benefit package offered to full-time employees.

A Dental Plan for the Full-time employees had been discussed as an addition to the benefit package that is offered. The dental plan discussed is part of the Health Trust Insurance plan that is already in place. The monthly cost per employee is \$50.27 and could start July 2024. The Board discussed offering the plan to the full-time employees, covering 100% of the cost. Employees would have the option of increasing their plan to a Two-person or Family plan, covering the additional cost through a payroll deduction. Following a discussion of benefits and retaining employees the Board agreed to add \$2,413 to the Health Insurance line item and begin to offer dental as a benefit.

Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, provided a spreadsheet to facilitate a discussion of salary increases. 2024 Social Security Administration Annual increase is reported to be 3.2%. The spreadsheet showed all part-time and full-time employees current hourly payrate. A column then showed a 3.2% increase for each employee. Chivell explained that historically straight percentage increases have not been used, in that it creates a larger gap between the lower paid

employee and the higher paid employee. Chivell went on to explain that the Police Chief has an employment agreement that provides for a minimum salary increase based on the Social Security Administration Annual increase, plus up to an additional 5% based on achieving goals and merit. To provide the Selectmen what this represents the columns showed the Chief's 3.2%, equaling \$1.08/hour, 5% equaling \$1.69/hour, and 7% equaling \$2.36/hour. Following a discussion on each regularly scheduled full-time and part-time employee, Selectman, Ed Haskell, made a recommendation for an increase for each employee. The changes are reflected in the proposed 2024 budget worksheet.

Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, will adjust all the line items discussed, draft the appropriate Warrant Articles, and have each ready for review during the January 15, 2024, Board of Selectmen's Meeting.

12:50PM Selectman, Ed Haskell, made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion received a second from Selectman, Isaac DeWever. There was no discussion on the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

Sincerely submitted,

Joe Chivell
Town Administrator
Rumney, NH

Up-coming Meeting Dates

Board of Selectmen Meeting	January 15, 2024
Primary Elections	January 23, 2024
Planning Board Meeting	January 30, 2024
Board of Selectmen Meeting	February 5, 2024
Public Budget Hearing	February 12, 2024
Board of Selectmen Meeting	February 20, 2024