



**Budget-Finance Committee**

**Department Head Review #1**

March 7, 2023, at 6:30pm

At Broadcast Studio & Via Zoom

**Committee Members Present:** Bob Gosselin - Chair, Karen Lockwood, Abigail Geer, Bob Jones, Denis Morse, Deanna Lee, Shawn McKillop

**Committee Members Absent:** none

**Select Board Members Present:** Joe Bruno, Rolf Olsen, Teresa Sadak, Sam Gifford

**Select Board Members Absent:** Lonnie Taylor

**Town Staff Present:**

Don Willard, Town Manager  
Charisse Keach, Finance Director  
Curt Lebel, Assessor's Agent  
Alex Sirois, CEO  
Chris Hanson, Assistant CEO  
Bruce Tupper, Fire Chief  
Lee O'Connor, Deputy Fire Chief  
Cathy Gosselin, HR  
Sue Look, Town Clerk

1. Called to order at 6:30pm by Chair Gosselin

2. New Business

a) Maine Public Employee Retirement System (Maine PERS) Presentation – Deanna Doyle, PLD Plan Administrator – Member Services

A true pension plan that is a set amount based on years of service and pay. Includes survivor's benefit. Comes with a disability benefit at 59% of income. Separately there is a life insurance benefit offered. Must have 5 years of service credit to be eligible. Have the choice to adopt the cost-of-living adjustment, or not. Base is 3 highest years of earning. Time to be vested is

prorated if part-time. Requires a Town Meeting vote to adopt.

b) Department Head Review # 1

- Provider Agencies
  - Raymond Waterways – Peggy Jensen
    - Requested \$7,000 for courtesy boat inspections, we need more staff for this.
    - Our dive teams have done so well that there is not enough for a team to do this summer. The Town of Raymond will be contracting to take this over. There is a grant that has been applied for, the Town's share would be about \$8,000 per year.
    - RWPA will continue to monitor Dingley Brook.
  - Raymond/Casco Historical Society – David Allen
    - Requested \$1,800 (and are requesting a similar amount from Casco).
    - The William Watkins Blacksmith Shop grand opening will be in June. The building is stable, and the outside is complete. The hearth is done, and we are finishing the chimney. The interior will be complete soon. We will start doing programming in August.
    - We will be offering classes on traditional crafts and skills.
  - Hawthorne Community Association – Abel Bates
    - Thank you for past support.
    - Starting 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of fund raising starting with a silent auction in June and hope to raise \$75,000.
    - We have many new members and have had a number of donations.
    - The roof, steps, and fencing will be worked on this year.
- TIF
  - \$30,000 – Change 69 ornamental streetlights to LED
  - \$50,000 – Comp Plan Update – bid was \$100,710 before negotiation
  - \$100,000 reduction due to moving the technology
  - \$100,000 reduction due to undesignated TIF projects (needs to be specific)
  - \$50,000 – sidewalk repairs – extending the sidewalks will probably be in 2025.
  - The TIF District is only along the 302 corridor. Bern Stein Shur will not come up with ideas for us, they will tell us whether or not we can do projects that we suggest.
  - We will capture about \$289,000 at commitment this year.

Town Manager Willard – The gross budget increase is \$455,392 or 7.3%. The net increase is \$358,382 or 9.53%. Revenues are up \$97,000 or 3.91%. New taxable construction is not included in this projection. Assessor's Agent Curt Lebel is estimating a conservative \$8,000,000 in new property valuation which is about \$120,000 in revenue.

- Administration/Compensation & Training
  - Increase on \$31,000 or 5.83%
  - Contract fees up \$13,000
  - Slight increase in Elections due to the March 2024 Presidential Primary
  - Costs of Advertising and Postage are up
- Assessing
  - Increase due to reallocation for Assistant
  - The Senior Stabilization Process is very labor intensive, there will probably be a statute change in the current legislative session – about 350 households have approved applications
  - Software fees have increased
  - Tax billing is a new item that is budgeted for sending tax bills in-house
  - \$100,000 for revaluation reserve will make the total \$300,000 and we can go out to bid soon
- Code Enforcement
  - This year we will be adding the Sub-Division and Street Ordinances to be updated
  - Revenue – we should bring in about \$164,000 this year – there is still a good deal of construction in Town
- General Assistance
  - This year we have expended over \$18,000 – we do get reimbursed 70% by the State
  - There are State and County funds available and the generosity of our citizens has helped many struggling families
- Town Insurances
  - Workers Compensation is up due to staffing levels and claim history
  - Liability and vehicle insurance is up by about 15%
- Employee Benefits
  - MEPEERS for Public Safety is the largest change
  - The Town of Raymond pays 100% of employee health coverage
  - There is a new health plan with higher deductibles and a corresponding larger amount of HRA for employees
- Debt Service
  - Some will mature in 2025

- ~~Technology moved to the March 14<sup>th</sup> meeting~~
- Public Safety
  - Animal Control
    - Budget developed by the 3 Town Managers
    - Increase of \$3,000 per town – more competitive salary based on KMRA survey – from \$18.21 to \$22.00 per hour plus a seasonal assistant
    - Our whole cost is \$34,291
    - Healthcare is based on Casco’s which is the MMA “Cadillac” Plan which is no longer available and is competitive with a school plan
  - Fire Department
    - New Deputy Chief Lee O’Connor – 19 years with Town of Poland – 30 years of service
    - Call volume is up and we have less staff
    - We are requesting a staff increase so we will have 3 people on 24x7
    - Not included in budget request:
      - Software increase that came in late increasing from \$5,000 to \$14,000 – looking for a different product and possible regional cooperation
      - Recommend doing a staffing study to evaluate staffing levels based on call volumes, etc. There is also a regional study that Cumberland County is doing.

3. Public Comment – none

4. Budget-Finance Committee Comment – none

5. Select Board Comment – none

6. Adjournment

**Motion** to adjourn at 9:11pm by Mr McKillop. Seconded by Ms Lee.  
**Unanimously approved**

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Susan L Look, Town Clerk*