



**Budget-Finance Committee**

**Department Head Review #1  
Minutes**

February 28, 2024, at 6:30pm

At Broadcast Studio & Via Zoom

**Committee Members Present:** Bob Gosselin - Chair, Karen Lockwood, Frank McDermott, Denis Morse, Deanna Lee, Shawn McKillop

**Committee Members Absent:** none

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

**Select Board Members Absent:** none

**Town Staff Present:**

Sue Look, Town Manager  
Charisse Keach, Finance Director  
Cathy Gosselin, Deputy Treasurer  
Curt Lebel, Assessor's Agent  
Alex Sirois, CEO  
Chris Hanson, Assistant CEO  
Bruce Tupper, Fire Chief

1. Called to order at 6:30pm by Chair Gosselin with a quorum present.

2. Election of Officers

**Nomination** of Karen Lockwood as Chair by Mr. Morse. Seconded by Mr. McKillop

**Motion** to cease nominations by Mr. Morse. Seconded by Mr. McKillop.

**Nomination** of Deanna Lee as Vice-Chair by Mr. Morse. Seconded by Mr. McKillop.

**Motion** to cease nominations by Mr. Morse. Seconded by Mr. McKillop.

### 3. Approval of Minutes

a) April 4, 2023

**Motion** to approve as presented by Mr. Gosselin. Seconded by Mr. Morse.  
**Unanimously approved**

### 4. New Business – Workshop with Select Board

Town Manager Look – Read a summary of the Proposed Budget for FY 2024-2025. The result is the Town is proposing an over increase of 10.69% or \$714,536, \$276,000 of which is the bond payment approved at last year's Town Meeting. The rest of the budget increased by 6.56%.

a) Department Head Review # 1

- Provider Agencies
  - Hawthorne Community Association-Abel Bates
    - A significant amount of work has been completed on the house including foundation and floor work, a new roof and roof cover, 2 sides of the house have been sided, and currently working on the last 2 sides.
    - Major projects left are to patch interior cracks from when the house was lifted for the foundation work and then a full interior paint job. They also need to paint the outside around the windows and rebuild the front steps.
    - Once the projects are completed, they will be out of their donation funds
    - Operating costs are about \$2500 a year, the annual dues and the funding from the Town just barely covers those costs.
    - The hope is to turn the home into a community rental for gatherings.
  - Raymond Rattlers – Larry Wood
    - Memberships are way down due to know snow, but he would like to continue their efforts and needs financial support from the Town.
    - The money is used for runoff and washout repair to trails and bridges as well as trail clean-up and trimming.
  - Historical Society – David Allen
    - Thank you for your past support.
    - Watkins Blacksmith shop is complete and operating.
    - Looking for financial support for their operating budget.
  - Sebago Lakes Chamber of Commerce – Robin Mullens
    - Thank you to the Town for past support.
    - 21 Raymond businesses are members of the chamber.

- Asking for funding to support their 501c3 – Feed the Need
- Last year they gave the Raymond food pantry \$1,175.
- Annual polar dip was postponed due to unsafe ice conditions. Will be held in April at Tassel Top
- Comprehensive Plan Committee – Peter Leavitt
  - The workshop was well received by the community, and they continue to receive valuable input and data.
  - Looking for funding to put toward the second half payment to Northstar Planning – Contract Planners for Comp Plan Committee.
  - Budget is off by about \$1000 due to unplanned expenses at the workshop.
- TIF
  - Mrs.Lockwood asked why there was such a high increase listed for Social Security and Medicare. Finance Director Keach said they were looking to move one of the Public Works employees’ salaries so that 95% is coming out of TIF. This employee is part-time (no benefits) and spends most of his time working in the TIF district. The increase in SS and Medicare is because they are attached to his pay.
  - TIF ends in 2030. The anticipated amount for this year is \$273,000. We are still working on unspent TIF monies.
  - Some of the dark fiber ring can be paid out of TIF. Town Manager Look thinks there won’t be an amendment needed since it should fall under communications. TM Look also thinks some TIF funds could be used toward the new PW garage. She has presented these questions to the Town attorneys.
  - Sebago Technics working on a TIF district map.
- Assessing – Curt Lebel
  - Budget increase reflects dual responsibilities of Commitment and the Revaluation Project.
  - Increasing admin support by 4 hours weekly to support the Revaluation Project.
  - Slight increase in Assessor’s Contract that is up for renewal this year.
  - Recommending \$45,000 to be allocated toward the revaluation.
  - Miscellaneous expenditures will be needed for the reval – equipment, PR, Appeals, etc
  - Contract Assessor hours will have to increase over the revaluation project.
  - The line item for Deeds also includes fees for the Tax Collector’s office for filing leins, etc.
  - Site work will be done starting Fall 2024 for the revaluation, but it won’t reflect until FY 26

- Code Enforcement – Alex Sirois
  - No budgeted change for salaries
  - No change for contract fees or services – ordinance work, GIS, and engineering come out of this budget line.
  - Software budget is going down a bit. We have transitioned to one working system.
  - Travel and Training budget coming down a bit based on the past couple of years.
  - Advertising and Supplies General both have no change.
  - Gas/diesel coming down slightly based on the past two years.
  - Postage and phone budgets stay the same.
  - Biggest change is the revenue – projecting to increase to \$175,000.
  - The goal is to make the department self-supporting.
  - Future ordinance changes could affect staffing levels in the future but likely not for this budget season.
  - Peter Leavitt spoke to LD2003 from the Comp Plan Committee standpoint and the unpredictability of what will happen when it goes into effect July 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - Mr. Morse asked if the Town could come up with additional ordinances for accessory apartments. CEO Sirois thinks we are ahead of some towns and outside of the village you will still be limited to one accessory dwelling.
  
- Public Safety
  - Animal Control – Sue Look
    - Animal Welfare fees are fees we pay toward Animal Refuge League for surrendered/wounded/lost animals.
    - Assessment fees are 1/3 cost of sharing the ACO with Naples and Casco
    - Vehicle Maintenance – done by the Town. Working on quarterly check up schedule with her.
    - Supplies – no request
    - Gas – ACO is gassed in Raymond and they split the bill with the other Town
    - The insurance is out of Casco but cost shared in the assessment line
    - The office she uses is in Naples.
    - They are also looking at brining in Harrison to share the costs.
    - Looking to bring in someone part time so ACO can have days off and share weekends.
    - Select Sadak expressed concern over ACO being able to handle 4 towns alone.
  
  - Fire Department – Chief Bruce Tupper
    - Salary increases – running 4 crews of 3 people, a few members will be advancing this year after certifications, shift lieutenants are on

- each shift, so they get a slight bump in pay.
  - Maine EMS Stabilization is picking up part of the cost. Raymond was awarded a little over \$18,000. Later this year there will be another application process to be awarded additional grant monies.
  - Salaries are based on current pay and anticipated overtime.
  - Health and safety items, training, building maintenance have all dropped a bit.
  - Dispatch costs are up 3% - contracted.
  - Turnout gear put into capital budget.
  - Heating and fuel are staying the same.
  - Receiving EMS grant monies that is going toward purchasing armored vests.
  - Working with a vendor on a Braun Ambulance
  - Looking at CIP budget and overall fleet and how to plan for 10 years ahead.
  - Looking at upgrading radio communications in the future
  - Looking into applying grants
  - Place holders in CIP for safety equipment if not awarded a grant and planning for new ambulance.
  - Select Chair Bruno asked how much of the salary line was for OT. Chief Tupper indicated it was \$79,978. 2190hours of OT to date this year.
  - It's not uncommon to have 2-3 call outs per day – up to about 1000 calls this year.
  - Equipment repair budget is for required hose testing.
  - Peter Leavitt stood up to encourage the Town to think about the PFAS in turnout gear. Also to think about staffing issues and to not get too wrapped up in thinking about a few hours of OT
- Technology – Kevin Woodbrey
  - Operating budget mostly staying the same.
  - All the Town's technological needs are covered under one budget.
  - Networking area – Infrastructure servicing account has a lot of comments as we don't know exactly what budget those funds will come from. Working on a multi-year lease of fiber with a dark ring provided by Sebago Fiber.
  - Dark Fiber Ring – Presentation by Andrew Davis with Sebago Fiber
  - Looking to pay for some of the cost of Sebago Fiber through the TIF
- Administration/Compensation & Training
  - Salary line includes stipend for Select Board
  - Contracts – changing payroll vendors, there is a one time set up cost but over the long run we will save \$2500 per year and receive a better product.
  - TRIO – used by the clerks are having an 8.5% increase.

- Legal and Audit is increasing significantly.
  - Rescue Billing moving back under administration.
  - Roadrunner fees to Windham Eagle are increasing slightly.
  - Travel and Training budget is being reduced.
  - The advertising budget is also being reduced.
  - Elections have been lowered.
  - Looking into paying more payments online to avoid postage.
  - Equipment lease is for the 2 in-house copiers.
  - Compensation and training are up \$10,000.
- General Assistance – Finance Director Keach
    - GA will be reimbursed 70% by the State.
    - Have received a couple of very generous donations allowing this line to be level set.
- Town Insurances-Finance Director Keach
    - 10-12% market increase budgeted for insurance and bonds
- Employee Benefits-Finance Director Keach
    - Health insurance had a 14% premium increase last year, budgeted for 15% increase.
    - Rates are \$611.50 for single, Employee and child is \$1131, Employee and Spouse is \$1223, Family is \$1895. 34 Full time employees.
    - Mr. Morse suggested going out to bid for insurance. Select Chair Bruno indicated the pricing doesn't really change.
    - Retirement \$257,000 – represents the union employer rate at 12.8% and staying the same. Non-union employer rate is 9.9% and is prorated for 10 months. If Maine PERS is not going to be offered to non-union employees, then that would be about \$43,000 back to the budget. Select Chair Bruno wants to look at the interest of the 20 eligible employees.
    - Select Chair Bruno suggested looking at the personnel policy and the probation period length and other things that could be done to help employee retention.
    - New law – paid medical family leave starting in January 2026 – the Town will need to think about funding that.
- Debt Service – Finance Director Keach
    - New debt on the \$1.150 million bond - \$276,000 due this year and drops every year
    - Retiring two bonds after this year
    - School payments will be reflected in the school budget in 2025.

## 5. Public Comment

- None

6. Budget-Finance Committee Comment

- Will have a date tomorrow night to set another B-F Committee meeting

7. Adjournment

**Motion** to adjourn at 10:13pm by Mr. Morse. Seconded by Mr. Gosselin.

**Unanimously approved**

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Melissa McConkey  
Town Manager Admin*